

Sister Marianne Roderick, SSND – 60 Year Jubilee!



"All change is a sign of growth..."

When asked to describe her favorite ministry, Sister Marianne Roderick, SSND, hesitates. She has loved them all, but she shares a favorite moment. "I loved watching kids light up when they 'got' something."

It's been 11 years since Sister Marianne taught kids, most recently at Mother Seton Academy, Baltimore (MSA). She helped open the middle school one grade at a time, first as painter and decorator, then as teacher and school bus driver. Located in the heart of an underserved Baltimore neighborhood, the academy is a beacon of light for the children and families who call it home. She reminisces:

I wanted to work with the poor, so I left my position as principal in Pittsburgh to come to Baltimore in July of 1993. Mother Seton Academy was getting ready to open in the fall. We had two classrooms upstairs and an office downstairs.

We decided to paint the place because it didn't look very good. It was on church property. The pastor came in and I jokingly asked him to give us a hand. He clapped!

We started with 6th grade only, ten girls and ten boys. The next year, we moved into the old convent at Saint Stanislaus and added 7th grade. We added 8th grade the next year. We moved into our permanent home at the old St. Ann School in 2009.

The first year I had three girls who couldn't read. Imagine getting to 6th grade without knowing how to read. I brought in phonics books and worked with them.

One girl still keeps in touch with me today. She thanks me for teaching her how to read. Another student went to law school.

Mother Seton Academy is about more than academics. It gives students a chance to learn, increasing their self-esteem and making everything possible. (Cont'd)

Sister Marianne Roderick, SSMD – Cont'd

Sister Marianne may not work in a school anymore, but she still drives a 15-person bus for Sisters who live in Independent Living with Support at Villa Assumpta. As Local Leader, she brings the same high-energy, positive attitude to this ministry as to Mother Seton Academy.

"All change is a sign of growth," she says. It's a message that resonates for anyone moving between ministries, as she herself did when she came to Villa Assumpta. "I try to help new residents feel good about living here. I encourage them to use their gifts and talents with us. It helps us all grow together. I'm an example of that!"

Sister Marianne's 20 years of service to Mother Seton Academy is recognized on the Founders Award commemorative plaque displayed at the school.



Sr. Marianne catching butterflies with
a student at MSA