

I was taught by the Ursuline Sisters in Bruxelles, Manitoba from Grade 1 to 12. While the order came from Tildonk, Belgium, the sisters themselves were from Ireland, the USA and during my time mostly from Manitoba and Belgium. They taught my mother and they may have taught my maternal grandmother as well.

They were very dedicated teachers who took a very broad and very comprehensive approach to teaching. Besides the basic requirements, during our elementary school years we were taught to sing, dance, play musical instruments, recite poetry in English and French, gymnastics, many different sports, art and theatre. Many of these acquired skills were tested by participating in musical and poetry festivals where, like on the sports field, we learned to win and lose. As the years go by, I am reminded that many of my friends and colleagues did not have an opportunity to learn these skills and develop their talents. During my high school years, only one or two teachers were Ursuline sisters. We were taught important subjects by them such as chemistry and physics.

Finally, one of these sisters in particular inspired me to develop my dreams of travel, discovery and learning languages. I am happy to have had the chance to visit these sisters a few times over the past decades to say hello and thank them personally for their contribution to my education.

John Jonk (in Tuscany, Italy)