

I would like to honour **Sister Carmela Lukey SSMI and Sister Hilary Lenyk SSMI**, in the telling of their impact on my life.

The first time I met Sisters Carmela and Hilary was when I went for instruction on the presentation of catechetical lessons in 1995. They transformed, in my mind, a heavy responsibility into a “sacred calling”. Catechesis became more than the transmission of information, but rather helping each child to understand that they were uniquely created and beloved of God, always keeping in mind how the “information” in the lessons focused and further strengthened that relationship of the child with God. Sister Hilary prepared resources that enhanced the lessons for us.

Sisters Carmela and Hilary gave regular presentations at the UCREC for catechists that enabled us to deepen our faith, grow in confidence and develop a sense of community with catechists from other parishes.

They presented Faith Enrichment sessions that further enriched my spiritual life.

Sister Carmela organized Icon Writing classes with the Prosopeon School of Iconology and Sister Hilary kept encouraging me to attend, and what an amazing opportunity that was! I attended 7 classes over the years. They opened something within that I don't have words to express.

The Emmaus Workshops were a Tri Diocesan opportunity held over a three year period and once again personal encouragement and enthusiasm contributed to 5 or 6 catechists attending from our parish with 4 of us graduating.

Their sound council did not end when they were no longer at the UCREC but continued throughout the years. Sister Carmela would advise me of presentations to attend that were spiritually enriching.

In 2003 Sister Carmela invited me to attend a Scripture Study Class for Christians; to study the Hebrew Scriptures from a Jewish perspective using Jewish sources and commentaries. This was an answer to prayer as I had for years wished I could study Scripture from the perspective that Jesus would have; with the insights He would have been familiar with. Bat Kol has been a continual blessing!

In 2008, with a lot of encouragement from Sister Carmela, I went to Jerusalem for the month of July to study the book of Leviticus. I was responsible for an Opening Prayer Service for one of the days and because of Sister Carmela's presentations which always began with prayer, and often a prayer service, I felt quite comfortable with what was expected of me. She gave me suggestions that enhanced the Prayer Service with Icons, music and incense and provided materials.

As my mentors and role models, I am very blessed to have had their friendship, council, and encouragement over the years.

They have been a Blessing to me!

Gwen-Ellen Dankewich