

## **Sister June Wilkerson, OP – The 2002 HMA Wilkerson-Droege Award Recipient...**

It was with great pleasure and deep admiration that the Health Ministries Association announced the inauguration of the Wilkerson-Droege Award in 2002, created in honor of Sister June Wilkerson and the Reverend Thomas (Tom) Droege. The award is presented annually to an HMA member who is known for creative leadership, compassionate ministry and visionary faithfulness to the faith health movement. Sister June has exemplified these attributes throughout her life and throughout her dedicated membership to HMA.

As a Sinsinawa Dominican, Sister June initially taught high school in Illinois, Wisconsin, Alabama and Minnesota for over 30 years. She then moved into work with Catholic Charities and community organizing. After completing her degree in Theology from Loyola University, Chicago she began her third career as Director of the Parish Nurse Partnership program at Providence Holy Cross Medical Center in Mission Hills, CA.

This multi-talented and humble woman is acknowledged by her peers as a contemporary prophet and lovers of God's people. After celebrating 50 years as a professional religious, in 1999 Sr. June began a new ministry for the new millennium – the Tattoo Removal Program at Providence Holy Cross Medical Center, serving youth and former gang members trying to change their lives. Both the Parish Nurse Partnership program and the tattoo removal program are still going strong today as Sister June enjoys her retirement.

Health Ministries Association was in its infancy, when Sister June served on the board of directors, acted as an advisor and was in a mentoring role to both the organization and its members. She has contributed in diverse ways to HMA and continues to lend her wisdom and support to the organization today.