

Q. What led you to become a Sister of Providence?

A. I think it is God's call. It is very obvious to me, although at that time I didn't know it was that kind of call. Three generations of my family are Catholics. My faith comes from my family. My family is all in Beijing, China. In 1947, my parents moved from Beijing to Taiwan. My parents planned to stay only one year. My father had a pretty good job in a sugar company. There were no other Catholics around us. My parents taught us about faith. My father had a prayer book. We had a rosary. There were holy pictures around our house. In 1948, I was born. Three years later my brother was born. There were only two children in my family. My parents always talked about guardian angels with us. They would teach us to pray: "Thank you God." There were pictures on a wall at our home. I always felt God was with us, with me. God is everywhere. My father and mother, when they grew up, they said a prayer every day in both families. My grandfather was the head of the church, the leader, in Beijing. My father and mother both went to a Catholic school. They served as altar boy and in the choir. I think where they grew up, there were all Catholics. They came to Taiwan and there were no Catholics, no church. We had to travel for big feasts, like Christmas. From where we lived, it probably took three hours; not good roads, bumpy roads. This was in 1948 and 1949. When I was growing up, I liked to pick flowers and offer them to the Blessed Mother. We went to church any chance we had. So I think prayer, God's love for us, parents' love us, God helping us, that is what started me on the way.

Q. Can you share some of your memories about what it was to grow up with your family's roots in China and Taiwan?

A. Our parents moved to another city. That city had a church, but it was not very near. I had to ride a bicycle about a half hour. But then we went to church every Sunday. I liked to pray longer. When Mass was finished we stayed and prayed longer. My parents encouraged us to go to confession. After confession, my parents always patted my head, like, "Good girl." In Taiwan, Catholics were few, maybe one percent. So, my neighborhood is not Catholic. When I was a little older, I went to high school. I stayed in a school dormitory. There were eight students in one room. I remember, every day before I went to bed, I prayed. They kind of knew I was Catholic. They respected me. I went to church every Sunday. My neighbors thought I wanted to be a sister. I only know that I love God and God loves me. I like to help people, to serve. That is in my mind always. When people would come to our home to work, my mother always gave them water or something to eat. At New Year's time we prayed and father always was thinking about people who don't have as much food as we do. So, they always were thinking of other people's needs. That's the way of my life.

Q. How did you connect with the Sisters of Providence?

A. I graduated from high school. We went home for two weeks. They would prepare exams for us to take to go to college. My family had a Catholic newspaper. On one of the days that I was home, it was about 10:45 and the postman came. I was checking the newspaper. In that newspaper, it was advertised that the Sisters of Providence wanted to open a novitiate in Taiwan. What interested me was the contact person, Mother Mary Pius, but she left. You had to at least graduate from high school. The other thing was you had to have good health and you must want to serve the church. So I looked at that

newspaper, and said, "Oh, I'm so touched. I feel this message is for me." It seemed like an invitation. I didn't know the Sisters of Providence. But I was so moved by that advertisement. I said, "Oh, I want to go." My father worked. At noon time he came home for lunch. I showed him and he asked, "Do you really want to go?" I said yes. He said, "OK, you write." He corrected my letter. This was really unusual. No matter where I would go, my mother and father were so afraid I would get lost. They would always wait for me to get home from school. For me to go to the Sisters of Providence and not know who the Sisters of Providence were, was unusual. My parents didn't ask too many questions about what I decided. All my life was home to school, home to school. When school was out, they would take us to some park for a picnic. They would not allow us to go with school groups. They were afraid we would get lost, I guess. They knew of the place where the Sisters of Providence were, but they did not know what it looked like. We didn't know anything about the Sisters of Providence. The sisters wrote back and said when do you think you could come? My father went with me to visit.

Q. What was it like when you got there?

A. That was the Providence girls' college. So we went there and talked to a sister. I said, "This is my father." They chatted a little bit. They got to know each other. We talked more. Then we went home. It was a long travel. We didn't have a train yet. It took us 10 hours on bad roads. We just felt like that's the place. We came back and talked to the pastor. The pastor was French, an older priest. He didn't know how to write Chinese. He told my father what to say and my father wrote the letter, and the priest signed it. The Sisters of Providence said if we finished the process we can join. They didn't know me. They didn't know my family. All of the sisters spoke English. I knew very little English. I just followed their life. When they would go to pray, I prayed. At the table, they spoke almost all English. I didn't understand most of it. But that was OK. I told myself, I came here to serve God. Sometimes, they translated for me. Sometimes, they forgot to translate. That's why I say it is God's call. I don't care too much if I don't understand. If they wanted me to understand, they would tell me. I tried to listen. All through the years up to now, I have felt so at home. I feel like I am where I need to be.

Favorites

Food : Beef and noodles

Movie: Sound of Music

Sport: Ice dancing

Animal: Horse. My name "Ma" means horse

Chinese pizza: I like vegetables

Holiday: Chinese New Year

Dessert: Pumpkin pie

Recreation: Music, visiting my friends

Season: Spring, it gives life and hope

Time of day: Morning

Childhood activity: Jumping rope

Favorite course at school: Music. I am not good at music, but I like it

Least favorite food: Black olives

Least favorite course in school: Oh, math

My best friend says ... I'm faithful.

If was not a Sister of Providence, I probably would be ... A teacher

Someday I'd like to... Go snow skiing

Quick thoughts

Q. What do you like best about Saint Mary-of-the-Woods?

A. Oh, this is the holy ground. It is a peaceful, historical place. The trees are full of life.

Q. Do you have any hobbies, or things you like to do in free time?

A. On weekends I like working with yarn, or taking a walk. I like music. It is very relaxing.

Q. When you think about God, what is the first thing that comes to mind?

A. God is with us always, no matter where we go or what we do. God promises, "I am with you."

Q. Can you name two things you are very good at?

A. I am easy with people and I'm pretty flexible.

Other information

Years in ministry:

Current ministry: Director, Miracle House

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