

Q. Why did you choose to become a Sister of Providence?

A. The grade school I attended in Washington, D.C., was staffed by the Holy Cross Sisters and from the moment I laid eyes on them I wanted to be a Holy Cross sister. However, my reason was superficial: I loved their habit (full disclosure: I have always been vain!). It was just assumed that at graduation the girls would attend the Academy of the Holy Cross, then in Washington, D.C., and very easy to reach by public transportation. However, in the mid-1950s it moved to a suburban and somewhat rural Maryland. Public transportation was not good so when I was ready for high school, the Academy was no longer a feasible option for me. Coincidentally (read: Providentially) when I was ready for high school, Immaculata, a college preparatory school conducted by the Sisters of Providence in Washington, D.C., was dedicating some new buildings on a Sunday afternoon. My father had seen the notice in the archdiocesan newspaper and asked me if I wanted to attend. I agreed, and as a result, I fell in love with the campus. Subsequently, I decided to apply and I was accepted. During my high school years, my superficial attraction to religious life evolved into a grounded and centered awareness that I chose to pursue. Another factor that has become more significant over the years is the fact that I had a congenital heart defect that probably would have incapacitated me after about 35 years, if I lived that long. Fortunately, (again read: Providentially) by the time I was a high school freshman, medicine discovered a way to surgically correct that problem. When my father told the principal about my pending surgery, she commented that she would contact the motherhouse and request that a votive candle be lit in the Blessed Sacrament chapel on the day of the surgery. I came through the surgery and recovery period with ease and have lived a normal life with no medical restrictions whatsoever. However, as a result, this circumstance and my being given extra years on this side of Heaven have been significant factors in any discernment I have made regarding ministry.

Q. What do you value most about your ministry opportunities?

A. Twenty-eight of my 45 years in ministry have been in education, all but two in secondary education. I value the contact with these young people, as they are our link to the future. I like to think that we are imparting to them a solid moral foundation.

Q. Why would a woman today find being a Sister of Providence an attractive lifestyle choice?

A. I would have to say our community spirit would be appealing. Not many congregations can call their motherhouse “home,” as we do. We are a dynamic community in the sense that we are responsive to current conditions and we look to the future, trying to anticipate ministry needs. I believe our spirit is a significant factor in our relationship with one another. Whenever we gather as a total group, I know I come away with a heart filled with gratitude that I am a member of this committed, prayerful, and wholesome group of vowed religious women.

Q. What advice would you offer to a woman in discernment?

A. Make time for God: pray the Scriptures, especially the Gospels; participate in the Eucharist. Basically try to develop a personal relationship with God and be sure to allow time for God to

speak to you. Try to determine if God is your “significant other,” your pearl of great price.

Q. What role does prayer have in your life?

A. It is primary. I begin my day with it; the length of time depending on my teaching schedule. I include in my morning prayer those with whom and to whom I will minister that day and those with whom I have had a previous relationship in ministry. I always begin class with a prayer, usually with the Psalms as they are also poetry and they touch every human emotion. I also incorporate current tragic events as an object for our prayer.

Q. How important to you is the community lifestyle that congregations have to offer?

A. It is of paramount importance for me. I have always lived with other women religious, primarily SPs, ranging from a very large group (40 sisters) to a very small (one other – my current situation). I find I need this support for ministry, for my prayer life. I am nurtured by those who share my values and have chosen to commit themselves as SPs.

Q. How much influence does Saint Mother Theodore Guerin have in your life?

A. She is definitely a role model. I look forward to spending eternity with her. When I reflect on all her trials and tribulations, I am just in awe of her. I love reading her **Journals and Letters** because she comes across many times as so human, not as some unrealistic plaster statue. I keep one of her relics in my grade book, asking her to guide me with my students: to be kind and fair. I like to look at the daguerreotype of her; I think that copy shows her strength.

Q. Of all the things you learned from your parents, which do you believe was the most valuable?

A. Integrity and honesty, primarily. My parents taught me a sense of awareness of our neighbors and of helping people out. They also had a deep prayer life; they were active members of the parish: attending services and participating in parish functions.

Q. Do you have a particular philosophy about life that you could share?

A. I like the line from Psalm 46: Be still and know that I am God. I try to live my life in a spiritual context – doing so facilitates decision-making.

Q. What give you your most pleasure or satisfaction?

A. My ministry. I really enjoy teaching.

Q. What gives you hope?

A. My faith [faith is the substance of things hoped] for (Hebrews 11).

Q. What would be the one thing you most want people to remember about you?

A. That I am content, faith-filled, and have a sense of humor. I don't take myself too seriously.

Q. What energizes you spiritually?

A. Certainly the Eucharist and informal prayer. Also, my ministry because I find it worthwhile: life-giving and fulfilling.

Quick connections

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

A. Reconnecting with so many of the sisters and just the whole environment; the peacefulness.

Q. When I am not officially at work or involved in ministry, you are likely to see me ...

A. Probably doing things around the house, doing everyday chores we need to do to live.

Q. On weekends, I love to ...

A. Correct papers. Maybe do some shopping, take a walk, or catch up on correspondence.

Q. I am passionate about ...

A. Religious life. I really am. Religious life as I have known it.

Q. Name one thing you miss about being a kid.

A. It was such a carefree life. Wouldn't you long for the day when you were concerned about what color backpack you would have?

Q. What would you like to hear God say when you arrive in Heaven?

A. Well done, good and faithful servant.

Q. What is your biggest pet peeve?

A. People using cell phones while driving.

Q. What is the highlight of your week?

A. Friday afternoon, knowing I have some time to relax. Having time for community life. It changes.

Q. Have you ever met anyone famous?

A. I don't think so. When I was a patrol girl, I saw Vice President (Richard) Nixon coming to a church. Being in Washington, D.C., you see people in church, or at the store.

Favorites

Candy: Peppermint patties.

Flower/plant: Gladiolas and pussy willow.

Book: I'm an English major and I can't choose just one.

Vacation spot: Any beach along the Atlantic Coast.

Sport: Any sport for which we have a school team.

Music/song: Susie Snowflake; O Holy Night.

Animal: Giraffe and my imaginary dog, Fru.

Pizza topping: The works.

Holiday: Easter; Feast/Foundation Day and March 17, the day I received by acceptance letter to the Sisters of Providence.

Scripture passage: "Be still and know that I am God." Ps. 46 and "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life." (St. Peter in [John 6:68ff](#))

Dessert: Lemon Meringue Pie.

Time of day: Early morning, dawn.

Season: Mid-Spring.

Comic strip: Zits and Baldo.

Childhood activity: Sunday afternoons accompanying my father to a store in Georgetown to buy homemade ice cream and macaroon cookies.

Course in school: English, of course.

Saint: Mother Theodore, of course.

Sinner: My fellow SPs

My least favorite food: any food with milo.

My least favorite course in school: chemistry.

My best friend says I'm another form the Energizer Bunny, type 2 personality, disciplined, loyal.

If I weren't an SP, I'd probably be a Holy Cross sister, still a teacher, perhaps married.

My favorite non-liturgical prayer: The Reunion (Congregational prayer)

Other

Years in Congregation: 50

Current ministry: High School English teacher

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