

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

A. I grew up in the shadow of St. Philip Neri Convent. The schoolyard joined our house. The convent was across the schoolyard, so I was accustomed to seeing the sisters. I would be called from their back door to come over and help them with something. So, it seemed like a natural fit. I went to St. Phillip's from kindergarten through eighth grade. In eighth grade, I decided I wanted to go to the Aspirancy, but my parents thought that I should wait another year to try high school out in Indianapolis. So, I went to St. Mary's Academy and for my sophomore year I transferred here to Saint Mary-of-the-Woods. All my life I wanted to be a sister. The call was there when I was very young. I was attracted to the sisters. I was attracted to what they did. But, what is ironical, I was not attracted, necessarily, to teaching. I wanted to be a librarian when I was five years old. I taught myself to read when I was five years old so I could get a library card. The sisters told me I could be a librarian and still be a Sister of Providence. I never looked back after that. I went to high school here. I entered in 1965, and ultimately left in February that year, partially because I was having health problems and I was also having questions, too. But, I never really lost the desire. I came back in 1967 and I've never looked back since. I think it was good for me to be out for a while to see what kind of real decision I was making. In those days, of course, we entered younger. This time I got to go out in the work place to see what I might be missing on the other side. I still had that huge call and huge desire to serve people and to become a Sister of Providence. So, it was kind of an easy task for me because I was so familiar with the sisters.

Q. How did that strong desire to be a librarian develop for you?

A. From the time I was very young, my mother said I was always very curious. I loved to read. I couldn't wait to get a library card because my sister, who is five years older, always had these stacks of books. I would look at the pictures and stuff. As a very small child, I had these Golden Books. I'd look through them. Mom realized she wouldn't have to read them to me any more because I knew what they were saying. I was reading them myself. I loved the children's librarian at the public library near my house. I got to know her really well. I was there constantly. And you could only get six books a week. But I would sometimes be back after three days, return the books I had and get more. In the summer, my sister who was two years behind me in age read all the time. We both lived at the library in the summer to the point where my Mom said, "Now, you have to quit reading and go out and play. Don't just sit here and read." I can still hear her say that. We did, we played outside. We are both librarians. I have always loved books. I love researching things and finding things for people. There is not a day that goes by that I don't get questions about a lot of things that don't pertain to any kind of Archives thing at all, but I still try to help because I

think it's interesting. A lot of people don't know how to search things out for themselves. They don't have the experience.

Q. How did you teach yourself to read?

A. I really don't know. My sister read to me a lot and I would watch the words as she was reading. I began to learn the phonics. My mom had these phonics books. I think I learned it that way. I had one of those old victrolas. All of the little round records were yellow. They had no pictures on them whatsoever. They would say, "What song do you want to play?" I'd pull the one out and give it to them. My mom was so shocked that I could read those. Obviously, I was reading the titles.

Q. You talked about your familiarity with the Sisters of Providence at a young age. How did you know you had the call?

A. I was drawn to their life. I was drawn to a life of prayer and that prayer would lead to an outreach of service. I think from early on, my life really was providential. I was not supposed to even be here. I was very premature at birth. They baptized me when I was born because I weighed three pounds and 13 ounces. I kept losing weight. My mother desperately wanted to make sure I lived. They baptized me in the hospital. I was born on January 15th, but my baptism wasn't until March 6th on my dad's birthday. They took me back to church and did the whole ceremony. The priest, he's still alive, said to my mother, "You never know. She might grow up to be something after all. You can never look at them at this stage and wonder if she's going to make it." So, you know, I feel like my whole life is providential. I could see in the sisters that they were happy and that looked good to me. I grew up in a large family, so being with a lot of people didn't bother me. I was in the convent a lot to help clean, decorate the Christmas tree. I did all kinds of stuff. We worked in the sacristy. They had a bowling alley down in St. Philip's gym. Dad would set up the pins because you had to set them up manually. I had a familiarity with what their life might be like. Seeing them march into church together, it seemed like a mysterious-type thing. And I genuinely liked the sisters who taught me. I was in the era that we had all nuns, except one year I had a lay teacher. The rest of the time from kindergarten through eighth grade, I always had a sister. I liked what I saw in their life. We would go into the convent and we would hear them chanting. I thought that was interesting too. I thought, "Gee, I'd like to try this." But, I never expected to teach. I thought I'd be a librarian right off the bat. But then I found out that librarians have to have an undergraduate degree first. So, obviously, I had to wait a little bit. I taught primary grades. After I took perpetual vows, I could go to grad school. Naturally, I applied for library school. At that point, I found medicine absolutely fascinating. Probably, in different circumstances, I would have liked to have become a doctor, or a research doctor, or something like that. In those days, they weren't encouraging that kind of thing. My undergraduate degree is in elementary education and history. Loved history! I've always been attracted to historical stuff, historical stories. When I got ready to go to graduate school, I happened to be in a workshop. At that time, sisters were going into different works. This is really funny. They only needed a couple

more people to fill out the quota before the people would come in and do the workshop. They asked me if I would come to this workshop. I said sure. So, I went. We took tests. My scores came out very high in medical, very high in library education. Sister Anne Doherty said, "I don't know how to put these things together, but there is such a thing as a medical librarian." Well, that flipped the trigger. So, I started looking for schools that trained medical librarians. They were not in Indiana. There were three in Illinois. I went to Rosary College in River Forest, Illinois. It's now called Dominican University. I ended up with a scholarship. They wanted to know why I was interested in medicine because I didn't have a good science background. I told them I found medicine fascinating. They let me in. I took literature of the sciences along with medical library science at the same time. The professor said if I did badly in either one of them, I had to into some other type of librarianship. Turned out I got A's in both of them. I had an internship at the Westside VA Hospital in patient education. I had a certification in medical library science, but I was very big in educating patients about their conditions. They asked me to come back to work at the VA Hospital, but in the meantime I had been offered a job at Community Hospital in Indianapolis. It's on the east side. My family is on the east side. So, it was a pretty big draw. The second time they called from Chicago, they wanted me to be the patient librarian. I often wonder what would have happened if I had taken that road instead. But that's all behind us. It's God in your life, you know. I spent many long years at Community Hospital. I worked for a group of hand surgeons near St. Vincent Hospital. I worked for Crossroads Rehabilitation Center. Then, I came full circle and helped out at Holy Spirit School with kids who were having a hard time, mostly with reading. I worked a lot with reading. Then, they needed a librarian at Holy Angels School and I took that job under Sister Terri Boland. She left after one year. There was going to be this gigantic grant that we were going to try to get. I was going to resign and not go back. I didn't want to start working with a different principal. Turns out, it was one they had before, a Sister of Saint Joseph. She begged me to stay. They needed someone with a master's in library science to work with this grant. So, I decided that was what I was supposed to do. I worked there four years. We got the grant through, got all the books. It was very different for me because it was an African American school and I didn't have any inner-city experience. I learned a lot. It's a different culture. I struggled at times. After I was there four years, I ended up coming to Archives.

Q. What do you value most about the ministry opportunities you've had?

A. They allowed us to discern. In the beginning, I had to teach. I think I was a good teacher, but I was always a little nervous because I never felt like I was good enough or that I was doing the right thing. I always felt kind of ill-at-ease with it. I always enjoyed working with the slower kids. I also appreciate the opportunity sisters gave us, from a young age really, to discern other ministries. And the career workshop I went to was extremely helpful. It changed my life, even though I had not signed up for it. That's providential too. When I said I wanted to go to library school, they were fine. When I told them about the medical, it didn't seem to bother them either. Now, my credentials are such that I could be in any kind of library. I have always felt I was

very well supported by the Sisters of Providence. The ability for us to discern with people and the ability to be able to really have your wishes fulfilled in many ways. I remember I was nervous when I first went to Rosary College, especially with the medical. I thought maybe I was biting off more than I could chew. Turned out I did very well. You usually do well in things you love. I'm probably one of the few people who has had nothing but Catholic education from kindergarten through my master's degree. I just happened to go a Catholic college for my master's. They are still turning out degrees there and they are the third-ranking library school in the country.

Q. Share with us your thoughts about your on-the-job ministry opportunities. What have those meant you?

A. If you are not happy in the work you are doing, you might get the work done, but it takes a toll on you; spiritually, physically, mentally. I think a person who is happy with what they do tends to be more optimistic. I think from the moment I started working, especially in the medical library field and seeing what I could do and how doctors used the information I could get for them, it was a tremendous pat on the back to what I had learned. This is not a patient library. This was for division nurses, anybody who worked in the hospital. In those days, people didn't have the computer background that we do. Ironically, when I started at Community Hospital, I had no computer. Everything was done with those large indexes. You had to go through every year. You had to look in several places because you had to do your own cross-referencing. It took a lot of time, and most physicians didn't have the time to do that. I was looking things up for them. You would give them a sheet and they would tell you what they needed, then you give them a whole packet of information. It's really unlike any other kind of library. Very seldom did anyone check a book out. Mostly you hand-picked what you would give them, and they crossed off what wasn't helpful. You learn a lot. They realized I was very interested in educating patients. I started a small collection of patient books with information that patients could understand. What hurt was a couple times they sent cancer patients down who didn't really realize what they had. I think they were in denial. I had some real touchy situations there. I had to go back to that doctor and say, "Please, don't ever send anybody here who doesn't know what their diagnosis is." The more I worked with patients, though, the more I loved it. I began to have my own health challenges at that time. I was diagnosed with rheumatoid arthritis. It became even more apparent to me how important it is for people to know what they are dealing with and to get education and how to handle their diagnosis. It's kind of my freelance job here now. I get a lot of questions. Through my own experiences and not knowing enough, I am VERY helpful to anybody who comes in and says, "I want to know about this." I think it has made me more empathetic and more sympathetic. They gave me an award at Community one time called Super Sleuth because I would go to the bitter end to try to find the information someone needed. Sometimes you're lucky. Sometimes you're not. Sometimes it's just not there. Experience shows you when to stop. Otherwise you just keep searching, searching, searching and it might not be there. I am happy in what I do. I feel very supported by the administration here. I like Archives. I like history. I've lived with history. When I have trouble with such and such, I'll be sitting

with sisters at the table and I'll say, "Do you remember ..." and they will help me. To be a researcher in historical material you really have to be curious. I try to be very creative. Sometimes I have to go to the public library. To me, that's just another natural progression. I've done research all my life, medical mostly. You can adapt research to anything. My Mom always said, "You've been curious since the day you were born. Drop Marianne off at the bookstore and she'll be pleasantly occupied."

Q. What would you tell a woman today who might be thinking about religious life?

A. It is a very good life. You are able to use your potential in ways you never would have imagined. With the help of other women, you have a great deal of support. What you cannot do as a single person, you often can do with others. That's just the service part. Most young people today are looking for prayer. They are looking for silence. They are looking for God in their life. You will find that as a sister. Prayer life is very important. The Eucharist is very important. And, lastly, living in community with other sisters, that's your support. You absolutely need that the same way wives need their husbands and children. Here, you have these other sisters who support you and it feels very good when you have to go out and represent yourself to know that they are behind you. I think it is still a viable life. It's not like it was when I entered and that's because there are so many opportunities out there for women that didn't exist when I entered. You were either a secretary, a nurse, a teacher, a nun or you got married. Now, you can be a social worker and still be a sister. You can be a doctor and still be a sister, but you would have to be creative. What the blessings for me have been is the Sisters of Providence have helped me utilize my skills and they're always there to help you. Like the sisters who helped me figure out where to go to school. They've always been very supportive. In my case, most of the things I have done have been fairly mainline. I imagine if I wanted to do something really wild, they might question me. I believe in the support, prayer and community life and they say that's what young people want today, along with service opportunities.

Q. Did you ever have a moment in your life when you paused and said, "Yes, this is where I need to be?" Did you ever have a defining moment like that?

A. I had a defining moment when I decided to return to Saint Mary-of-the-Woods. Very definitely. I resisted it. Not because I didn't want to be a part of it. I was used to the people in Indianapolis. I had all my doctors in Indianapolis. I had my support system there. To suddenly pack up, bring all my stuff here and live here was a little bit scary. But yet, after I kind of put Sister Paula off for two or three weeks, she finally called and said, "Can we meet for dinner?" I said sure. On the day I met her, I said, "I've been praying about this. I've been asking different people. I think I should utilize the gifts that I have been given." I've never looked back after that. It was hard to leave my support system. I only spent two years in Chicago getting my degree. So, other than that, my whole, entire life in ministry has been in Indianapolis someplace. Up until the time I went to Holy Angels, it was all on the east side where I grew up. Going to Holy Angels took a leap of faith because it's on the west side and it's a

totally different culture. But, you learn by all these different experiences. My defining moment was when I swallowed my pride and decided that this is where I needed to be. I always tell the sisters this. I experience more community prayer in religious life here than I have experienced anywhere. I was here between 1993 through 1997, but I was trying to recuperate from some health issues. I worked in the Central Business Office for a while, and that's when I also did the medical research for the Cause (Saint Mother Theodore Guerin's Cause for sainthood). Other people feel, and I do too, that it was providential that I had no other job at that point. Sister Nancy Nolan asked me and Sister Emily Walsh said, "Boy, am I glad we have you. I would not have known where to begin." Most people wouldn't. Several sisters said how Providential it was that I was here to do that kind of work at that time. It had to be God. I didn't think about it at the time, but later I did. I had to resign at Community Hospital because of my health issues. I thought that it was going to be the end of my medical research. How ironical! We got it all in and it was approved unanimously by the medical commission. People say they don't usually do that. I said to Sister Nancy Nolan, "If I never do another thing in my life, that is the pinnacle of my whole medical librarian career, to be able to do something like that. If I never do another thing, I think I paid back the investment the community made in me to get this advanced degree.

Q. What did you find while you were doing that medical research on the Cause?

A. The research based on a series of questions that came from Rome. It was a series of faxes actually. Probably the biggest find I had, which was really going to be helpful, they wanted the credentials of this Dr. Willem, who was here in 1909. They wanted me to get ahold of his colleagues. Now this is 1994, you know. How many of his colleagues are going to be alive? Well, by obituaries, you often find what their degrees are. I had to go through this filthy box in the basement of the IU library in Indianapolis. The librarian said, "Well, we have the old ones, but you're going to have to go through the boxes and they aren't real clean." I said I didn't care. The second to the last thing in the bottom of the box, when I was beginning to despair, there it was. I remember saying, "YES!" really loud. There were medical students at a table and they said, "Wow, you must have found a gem." I said, "If only you knew!" I copied it and he had two medical degrees. I believe that was one of the clinchers. They knew he wasn't a quack. It was odd because they wanted to know why there were no X-rays taken of Mother Theodore. X-rays weren't even around much at that time. I turned all of this in and I waited 14 months to see what they were going to say about it. That was the pinnacle of anything I've ever done. Nowadays, when you want to prove a miracle, the doctors are hanging around. Just when you think your life is about over, and you're not going to get to do something, God plays tricks on you. It happened for a reason and my being here was supposed to happen.

Q. You had another interesting workplace experience. Can you share some information about that with us?

A. I was the state of Indiana's representative to the Immune Deficiency Foundation. I would go to meetings and disseminate information to people in the state of Indiana and have what they call patient meetings. I had one in Indianapolis at a hotel. We had a doctor speak and pharmaceutical companies were represented. They would bring their stuff. At that time, I didn't know much about what they did. At the dinner table, there was this woman I was talking to. She asked me about my background. I told her I was a Catholic sister and my master's thesis was in patient education, so I firmly believe in disseminating information about a rare disease. I'm a medical librarian and I worked for years at Community Hospital in Indpls. Now, I am at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods in Archives, still doing research. She called me up after that meeting and started talking about being an advocate for patients. I thought she was talking about a volunteer position. I said, "How many hours would I need to do this. I do have a full-time job." She gave me some idea like 20 hours every two weeks. I wanted to know if I would have to do a bunch of driving and go to all kinds of places. I really couldn't do that. She said, "No. It's by telephone, computer, email." I still thought she was talking about volunteer work. She said, "When are you going to be in Indianapolis next?" I told her I was coming for a check-up and she wanted to take me out to dinner that day. So, she did. We were sitting there eating dinner and she said, "I think you would be a wonderful advocate for our company." It's a specialty pharmaceutical company called BioRx. It's based in Cincinnati and they have a very innovative delivery style. Usually, when you go to one of these pharmacies you call an 800 number and you get somebody different every time. Each patient who comes on service with BioRx has an advocate. What that means is I call that person when they are first diagnosed and they are ready to start ordering their medicine. They may not know anything about their disease. Unfortunately, physicians sometimes don't tell them much, or they don't understand, or they might be terribly frightened. So, I send them information from the Immune deficiency foundation and we talk about the therapy and how it works. Are they going to get it at home? I work them through the process. If they have an insurance problem, it goes through reimbursement. If they have a nursing issue, it goes to nursing. If it's something I can answer, I answer it. They only hire advocates who have the disease themselves or who have a child who has the disease. It's a very innovative program. I was about their third or fourth advocate. We now have about 17 or 18. Sometimes I write articles. They will call and ask if I can research something. I wrote an article on chronic disease coping which was published and sent to all of our patients. I'm working on coping using humor now. I now have 30 patients. I panicked when the woman offered me a job. I said, "I can't just do this. I have to go back to talk to our administration because I really do have another job. I don't know if they will go for this. So, I made an appointment with Sister Paula Damiano and said, "Honest to God, I was not looking for another job. This came to me." She asked how I felt about it. I said it was very exciting because I love to help people anyway. I had to resign from the Immune deficiency foundation because it would be a conflict of interest. She said she thought I should do it. That's why I'm so happy. I'm doing my Archives work which incorporates history and my background and love and history for the community in general. Plus, I'm getting to use my medical expertise to help other people live a better life and feel better about themselves. Many of the patients they pick for me are Medicare patients

because they say I do very well with older patients, which might be because of my experience here. I feel like I have the best of both worlds here. Sometimes it gets tight and I'm working all weekend long. Then I get to thinking. See those people's faces? They thank you and they are so happy that they can talk to someone about their issues. They don't feel alone. The coolest thing about it is, all my life I tried to hide the fact that I had rheumatoid arthritis or that I had anything wrong with me. I would go to work feeling just absolutely horrible. I didn't want anybody to know I was sick because I was afraid of losing my job. This job, I was hired because I was sick. The day she offered me the job, I started crying. I explained to her that I had never been given a job because I was sick.

Q. Complete this sentence. Sister Marianne is ...

A. I feel like I am a very optimistic person, very happy. Even with all of the setbacks that may look terrible to other people, I am somehow able to overcome them. Dr. Lenardo told me I am the most optimistic patient he has ever met. So, I feel like I have grown in sympathy, empathy and I would love to go with all people to their doctors and help them. I have a lot of things I would like to do. I'd love to work at St. Ann Clinic.

Q. What would you do at St. Ann Clinic?

A. Whatever they would want me to do. I would register people in. I like being with people. I'm supposed to be an introvert. That's another thing the Sisters of Providence teach you is to stand up on your own two feet and talk even when you don't want to. I do like people. Whatever I think I would do, ultimately, would have to have people contact, which is why I enjoy Archives. I work with all kinds of people in Archives. I work with them on the phone. I work with them in person. I meet staff people.

Q. What role does prayer have in your life?

A. It's very important. It steadies me. I wake up real early. I get up at 5:30 a.m. so that I have an hour to pray. I have a spiritual journey book to read. I also do the Office. I also spend time journaling. How was my day yesterday? What were the high points? How did I see God in other people? What can I improve? Recently, Sister Marie told me that is like a St. Ignatius examination of conscience, which I've never done. I find it's a really calming effect and I think it's a central part of my life. I don't think I could do the things I do without being God-centered and without praying, not by myself, but with other sisters too. In the morning I pray by myself. In the evening, I am in a small prayer group where we say the Office.

Q. How important to you is the community lifestyle the sisters have?

A. I think it's very important. That's what feeds your ministry. Prayer feeds your ministry and people you live with and are around feed your ministry because they are

your support system. For a while I had to live by myself where I was working. It was very hard not being with sisters. It's not the same thing.

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

A. She's very important to me. I always associate with her, especially from the time I started having medical problems. Not that I am profound or anything. I realize that I had some of the same kind of battles she had. She is an inspiration to me, to think that she would actually come to this country with bad health and lead that group of sisters. I find her courageous. I have read every book about her. I think I became even more excited when I did the research for the Cause. She's very important. I feel like she walks with us. I think she helps me get through my day. I often pray to her for various things, for my family who might be having problems, for job problems, for money problems. I just ask her to help me get through the day. I don't like driving that much. I pray to her, "Mother Theodore, now you get me there." She had terrible travel problems. I feel akin with her. I'm certainly not going to be as good as she was. I remember, Pope John Paul II said to me at the beatification, "Now you be a good daughter of Mother Theodore. She is a good example." I always wanted to be a good daughter of hers. The fact that he said that was really neat. I was one of the people who got to go to the audience with him because I had done the research. I was so amazed with him. It was an overwhelming experience. I remember getting off the altar and leaving. I was crying. Other people were too. It wasn't unusual that you would be touched like that.

Q. Was that because of the man, or the status of his office?

A. I think it was the man. I really do. I think he was a people person. Even with youth. He was good with you. If you look at his history, he was persecuted. I think that kind of helped temper his character. He was funny too. When I did a recent talk, I brought him up because he said, "I'm fat, short and I have big ears." But he was comfortable in his own skin. He was in Rome shortly after he was elected, not at the Vatican, but in Rome. He heard two women talking. They said, "Why would they elect him? He's so fat!" He couldn't resist. He went over to them and said, "They don't elect people at the conclave because it's a beauty contest." I thought that was a scream. The papacy, itself, doesn't do that much for me. I think it's the men who hold the position. They are human like everyone else.

Q. What is the most important thing in your life right now?

A. The most important thing right now is furthering the mission of the Sisters of Providence, keeping my prayer life going, be present to the sisters I live with and to continue to do so as long as I can.

Q. What were you like as a child?

A. We played outdoors and we were very creative. We played stop and go and all the games you hear about that kids used to play, but no longer do. I liked kickball. I was never very good because I was very small for my age and frail. I was probably in every choir anyone asked me to be in and I still do that. People always said I was kind of quiet. Maybe that's why I did so much reading, because I couldn't do some of the active stuff. We used to go to movies every Saturday. I belonged to several organizations like Legion of Mary where we would work in the parish and take things to shut-ins. I had a happy childhood. We weren't wealthy by any means, but I feel like I had good preparation for being in a community with others because I learned it at home.

Q. What is your fondest childhood memory?

A. My fondest memory is when I would go to my maternal grandparents' farm in North Vernon, Indiana. My one aunt, who was not married, used to take me there. On her vacations, I would get to go with her. I could spend two weeks at the farm doing whatever I wanted to do like petting horses, playing with cats and dogs, playing with my cousins. It was so good that I didn't want to come back to the city. I'd hate it when my parents would come and pick me up and I'd have to go back home to start getting ready for school. I didn't dislike school. It was just that I had such a good time at the farm and it was such a different lifestyle. I loved my grandmother. She was such a holy woman. I got closer to her because my grandfather was out in the fields. I saw him at meals mostly because he was out farming.

Q. Why do you say she was holy?

A. Because of the way she treated people. She was so generous. She went to Mass every single day. Her prayers were very important. I would see her sitting in the living room. There was a big pot-belly stove. She had a book of prayers in German. We still have that book. She would also be journaling. She would write stuff down in a notebook. I remember watching her. When she would come to Indianapolis, she would stay with us. I got to know her really well. Even there, she would walk over to church every single day. As a kid, I was very impressed with her.

Q. Anything else that people would like to know about your family?

A. I have three sisters and two brothers. We're very close-knit and always have been. It's harder since my parents are gone. My mom had cancer, and when she was dying, her one goal was to stay at home. She didn't want to stay in the hospital. We could have put her in hospice. We wanted to take her home. One social worker said, "You realize it's around-the-clock care? Which one of you are going to be able to do this?" All six of us immediately said, "All of us." I got to know my brothers better because they are younger than I am. We worked together and had shifts. When my mother got really hard to lift, my brothers took turns staying with me because I was the night person. People at hospice were shocked because they said most of time care like that falls upon one person. They expected it would fall on me because I was a sister. I see it happen all the time. She got her wish. Mom died in her own bed with all of us around her. That was a pivotal moment

in our lives. We had no regrets because we knew we did everything she wanted us to do. Also, I have two sisters, a cousin and a niece who are Providence Associates. It's kind of neat to know that you have that kind of support.

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

A. They gave me my faith and they gave me respect for religious. They were happy when I came to religious life. My mother said of all the kids, she thought I would be the last one who would go because I used to have trouble in school with some of the sisters. She thought my younger sister would come. She never got in trouble.

Q. Do you have any particular philosophy about life that you would like to share?

A. My philosophy of life is to try to create joy every day of your life. My glass is half full, not half empty. I try to live that way. I try not to get down. I try to lift other people up because I am so optimistic. I think it helps you. I'm willing to take risks. It's paid off. Don't concentrate on the negative.

Q. Besides working yourself to the bone, what gives you your most pleasure or satisfaction?

A. I enjoy reading, of course, I like to go to the infirmary and visit people there because they are living history. I also enjoy spending time with the sisters here at Owens. I enjoy singing. I sing in Schola any chance I get. I never play cards or anything but a sister brought a game back when she was on vacation called Skip-Bo. We laugh ourselves silly. I swore I would never play cards, because I've seen people play for blood. I love living here because it's like Grand Central Station. I get to meet many interesting people.

Q. What gives you hope?

A. I feel that we as Sisters of Providence are hopeful. We may be older but we are vibrant. I think our Providence Associates give me hope too because they are in with us for the mission. I don't know how they are going to fit in as we go down the road. And people like Arrienne who just entered. Some people see that we still have a mission and that we are viable. We have people who support us. We have wonderful donors. We'll just have to see where it goes. It's in God's hands.

Q. Do you have a favorite vacation destination?

A. Any place that's historical. I love Washington, D.C. I like Boston. I like Florida too. I'd love to go see old plantations in the south.

Q. Any particular crafts or hobbies?

A. That is one thing I'm not very good at. I've never sewn much. I probably put the sister who taught us sewing into her grave. I had a terrible time with sewing. I used to enjoy ceramics, clay and painting. When I am on retreat, I do draw designs, nothing fancy. Believe it or not, I like coloring books. I do word finds too. I find them relaxing.

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

A. I would like them to remember that I was instrumental in Mother Theodore's canonization. I would also like them to remember that I researched things tirelessly in order to help other people. I would like them to think I was a force for good and provided service to other people. If you were going to do my obituary, the crowning thing would be the medical research for Sister Mary Theodosia (first miracle for the Cause).

Q. What would you do differently today if you knew Jesus was about to return?

A. I don't think I'd do anything differently. I'd keep on living the same way I am living. Mother Theodore said you have to live every day doing what you are doing. You don't have to do anything extraordinary.

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

A. Love. I think of love and support. God is always there for me. Two things I live by: I can do all things in God who strengthens me. That's God. And the other is nothing can separate me from the love of God. Be they trials, persecutions. In my dark moments, that's what I pray.

Q. What energizes you spiritually?

A. Living with a lot of Godly women. That energizes me. Spreading the word of Mother Theodore energizes me. And working with companions here. We have fabulous people who work with us. I am just really in awe with how dedicated they are. They are our partners. We need the help. We need people to work with us.

Q. If you were sitting down to write this story, what would your focus be?

A. I think my focus would be you could lead a very joyous life as a religious. I would hope to spread the news to people in discernment that it is a good life and there are many supports for you. IF it's your call, you can end up with a very satisfying and joyful life. You don't have to do things alone.

Quick thoughts

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

A. Its peace and tranquility, and its beauty.

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

A. Either reading or talking with friends or playing Skip-Bo.

Q. On weekends I love to ...

A. Get up early and sometimes I go shopping. And I spend a little more time in prayer, ordering my life for the next week. I also do extra reading and attend the Sat. and Sun. night movies.

Q. I am passionate about ...

A. Research.

Q. What the world needs now ...

A. Is more happy people, or more giving people.

Q. Name one thing most people don't know about you?

A. I think people don't realize that I am an introvert.

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

A. Doing what you want when you want to do it. Not really having worries.

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

A. Welcome. I've been waiting for you. And here's Mother Theodore, she's right here.

Q. What is your biggest pet peeve?

A. People who are negative.

Q. What is the highlight of your week?

A. Whenever I can relax. I think the weekend is the highlight for the most part.

Q. Have you ever met anyone famous?

A. I met Pope John Paul II, Robert Kennedy, Red Skelton.

Q. Least favorite chore?

A. Cleaning. I absolutely hate house cleaning.

Favorites

Website: www.refdesk.com.

Food: Fried chicken.

Flower or plant: Daisies.

Book: Too many to list a favorite. I do like mysteries and Amish books.

Movie: Gone With the Wind. Civil War period is interesting to me.

TV show: CSI, Bones.

Vacation spot: Anything historical.

Hobby: Reading and listening to music, going to movies and plays.

Sport: Football (Colts), basketball.

Music/song: Theme from Sound of Music. (I love all music.)

Pizza topping: Mushrooms.

Quote: "Have confidence in the Providence that so far has never failed us." – Saint Mother Theodore Guerin.

Holiday: Christmas.

Author: Mary Higgins Clark and John Grisham.

Scripture: "I can do all things in God." Romans 8.

Dessert: Angel Food cake.

Time of day: Early morning.

Season: Spring.

Childhood activity: Playing at grandparents' farm.

Hero/heroine: Saint Mother Theodore Guerin.

Course in school: History.

Saint: Mother Theodore Guerin.

Sinner: Saint Paul.

Least favorite food: Lima beans, chicken livers.

Least favorite course in school: Math.

My best friend says I'm ... empathetic and a good listener, funny and optimistic.

Other information

Current ministry: Archives researcher and patient advocate for BioRx.

Years in Congregation: 44.

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