



Sisters of Providence

OF SAINT MARY-OF-THE-WOODS
Breaking boundaries, creating hope.

all things possible

is a publication for women sharing with you who we are as a Sister of Providence.

Contact us for more info at:

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800-860-1840 ext. 2895.

Visit our website:

www.SistersofProvidence.org



I look forward to meeting you and sharing with you the ministries of the Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods.

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*Breaking boundaries,
creating hope.*

all things possible
Love



Mercy



Justice

Sister Mary Montgomery

current ministry: Director, Terre Haute Deanery Pastoral Center



Sister Mary Montgomery

Current ministry: Director, Terre Haute Deanery Pastoral Center
Years in the Congregation: 45
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Quick Connect

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

The campus. The spirit. The sisters. Gosh, it's hard to pick just one thing. The sisters!

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

Walking, or with friends, volunteering.

Q. What the world needs now is ... A.

Justice and peace for all.

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

Having time to play.

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

Welcome home.

Q. What is your biggest pet peeve? A.

Intolerance, my own and others.

Q. How did you meet the Sisters of Providence?

A. It was when I was a little girl. My mom had a cousin who was a Sister of Providence, Sister Rose Angele Spalding who died in 2006. And, Sister Charles Ellen Turk was also a first cousin to my mother. So, it was a tradition that the Montgomery family and the Ryan clan and the Spaldings met at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods every summer for a huge picnic. Probably before I was born the families were coming up here for a summer gathering. And, I had the Sisters of Providence in school as well at St. John School in Loogootee, where the Sisters of Providence ministered for 124 years.

Q. Did you have a good relationship with your mother's cousins when you were young?

A. Yes, a good relationship, in that only for us kids it was like "Oh, great!" It wasn't just hot dogs and hamburgers. We had fried chicken, fresh tomatoes from the garden and this campus was so delightful. Rose Angele was always so happy to see us little kids and she always had something little to give to us, probably a holy card or something like that. She would invite us to run around on the grounds. We would collect buckeyes and tried to catch chipmunks to take home as little pets, but that never worked out. We had our gathering on north campus at the lodge. Actually, we're having another gathering in October.

Q. What kind of personal relationship did you have with them?

A. Rose Angele and I had such a big age difference, but my mom had a close relationship with her. They kept very regular correspondence with one another. When I was getting ready to come to the convent, we had a favorable, pleasant relationship, but we didn't correspond like my mom and she did. I looked up to her and wanted to know what she did. We went to her missions in Indianapolis and Greenfield. And Rose Angele and Charles Ellen were friendly, supportive and were praying for me. They weren't pushing the sisters on me. I'm glad they weren't. Sister Rose Angele was a great baker. The fudge I make on special occasions is Sister Rose Angele's recipe.

Q. Do you remember the day you entered?

A. I remember exactly. Aug. 30, 1967, very hot and muggy. Beckett, the dog on campus, just had puppies. Sister Rose Angele prepared quite a number of things for me. I didn't have to

bring this and that because she already had it stashed away for me. That was nice. She had a clothing list. I didn't wear the habit. I had the old postulant outfit. Black skirt, black stockings, black shoes, black blouse and a black cape with a white Buster Brown collar. It was definitely what you don't see around anymore. The very next year, we did take the habit, but it was the modified habit. The hair was showing, a shorter skirt. We were the last group to take a religious name. Things were changing rather quickly.

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

A. In seventh and eighth grade, we had made two trips to Saint Mary-of-the-Woods as a class. The girls got to come to Saint Mary-of-the-Woods and the boys went to St. Meinrad. My recollection is that we actually came both of those years. I loved my seventh-grade teacher, Sister Celine Therese Heck. She had to come back to work in the Express Hall at midyear. She would play softball with us on the playground. She gave us study guides for our tests. I loved that. She was so considerate. They all were. But she was one of my favorite teachers. I was fascinated by religious life. In third grade, my brother, Frank, had rheumatic fever and had to be home for many months. He didn't want to get behind in his school work. After a period of time, the sisters agreed and my parents agreed I could go into the sixth grade classroom, get his homework, bring it home and bring back his homework the next day. I lived in a very, very rural area. Loogootee, itself, is rural, but I lived seven miles north in Bramble, very close to a Catholic Church, St. Joseph in Bramble. The sisters would come out to teach catechism on Sunday mornings. They would stop and see Frank. Not every Sunday, but occasionally. That spoke volumes to me, even though I was a third-grader. They were people who always seemed to be extending themselves in very helpful ways, besides teaching in the classroom. By seventh grade and eighth grade, I was seriously thinking about the Aspirancy. The seeds were planted more significantly then. I wanted to help people like those sisters did. It was pretty innocent and basic. I never really explored another order. I told my mom I wanted to go to the Ferdinand (Indiana) Benedictines because it was closer to home. I thought she would say yes, and I had a cousin who was three years older there in high school. This was my idea about psychology because I really wanted to go to Saint Mary-of-the-Woods. She

said, "If you are going to go anywhere, you are going to Saint Mary-of-the-Woods." My insides were dancing. I didn't let her know. I was attracted to follow Jesus.

Q. Why do you think religious life would be an attractive choice for women today?

A. I think it depends on what a woman is looking for. I think in all walks of life there are people looking for meaningful relationships, meaningful work. The mission orientation of this calling is so important and by that I mean I have felt most engaged in who I am called to be when I am really extending myself, engaging with people who are either in need, who are in an educational setting, working with other people who are trying to make the world a better place and helping one another. This is a lifestyle that is designed with a support system, a spiritual basis, a bedrock of faith. This attraction for me was there was something inside that felt connected. I think the Gospel stories, the invitation to "Come, follow me," whether that's a marriage state, or a single state, or the religious life, what is Jesus calling us to do? There is a challenge to be a good disciple and feel the dare to follow that invitation. It was a natural progression for me. It wasn't a turmoil time trying to decide, "Will I do this, or will I not?" Religious life today offers women many areas of service, support, community, sharing of faith, life and work in the name of Divine Providence.

Favorites

Movie: August Rush

TV show: NCIS

Hobby: Baking

Sport: Walking, swimming, Tai Chi

Holiday: Easter

Author: Maeve Binchy, Joyce Rupp

Scripture passage: "I have come to bring you life and life more abundantly." John, 10:10

Comic strip: Peanuts

Childhood activity: Ice skating, sledding with family and friends

Hero or heroine: Martin Luther King Jr. and Dorothy Day

Read full interview with Sister Mary, including additional questions at:

www.SistersofProvidence.org.