



# *Marian Sisters of Santa Rosa* **Ex Corde Ecclesiae**

ALL FOR JESUS, ALL THROUGH MARY

Fall 2019

## *Laudetur Jesus Christus!* *Praised be Jesus Christ!*

Dearest Friends in Christ,

Salve Regina! Hail, Holy Queen!

In late summer, four beautiful young women stepped away from the security of their life with family, friends, and the dazzle of the world, to follow their vocational call to give themselves wholly to Christ as a Marian Sister of Santa Rosa. Suddenly, they found themselves one of a growing family of religious Sisters in strikingly different surroundings of silence, discipline, and preoccupation with God.

But that is not all! With the quiet intensity of life as a Postulant (the title given to those in the first steps of Religious life), there also comes joyful community living which features shared gifts, conversations, edifying example, and good humor. With every new member comes an increase in the joyous "hundredfold" that Jesus promised to those who follow Him. So, we have not just grown in numbers but in the spiritual and human treasury that escapes the view of so many outside the convent gate.

Although the first months spent in the convent are typically veiled to the outside world, we decided to offer you a special treat in this issue of our newsletter – a privileged glimpse into the lives and hearts of our newest Sisters in their own words.

We are all deeply aware that your prayers, encouragement and financial support have greatly contributed to our community's establishment and growth. We pray that the content of this newsletter will encourage you. May it also bless you with the knowledge of how you are making a difference for the growth of the Marian Sisters of Santa Rosa who belong to the life and holiness of the Catholic Church.

One last note of ongoing thanks to our MSSR Council Members whose tireless efforts have brought us very close to paying off the loan on our convent home. Deo Gratias!

With Prayers and Sincere Wishes for a Blessed Advent and Christmastide,

From all the Marian Sisters of Santa Rosa,

*Reverend Mother Teresa Christe MSSR*

Reverend Mother Teresa Christe, MSSR





# New Beginnings

*"During this time of transition from life in the secular world, the postulant learns to grow in intimacy with Jesus Christ through Eucharistic prayer, the practice of recollection, generous self-sacrifice, and joyful community life."*

- Constitutions of the Marian Sisters of Santa Rosa

Entrance day! For the Community, it is an occasion of great joy. We have been communally and individually praying for our newest Sisters for years. Even before we met them, we prayed for them and entrusted them to the loving care of St. Joseph. The months immediately preceding their arrival were filled with loving preparations united with our Blessed Mother's spirit of joyful expectation.

A woman who reaches the point of seriously considering Religious life has come to this point because her heart is yearning for more than the world has to offer. As Spouses of Christ, that "more" is not a thing or a possession, but a Person and a relationship. Christ invites, the heart is drawn to joyfully respond, but there ordinarily remains many human reactions to the idea of leaving everything one knows and loves - even when one knows the Pearl of Great Price is to thus be obtained. We asked the Postulants to share a little about their experience of discernment and entrance.

## **What was discernment like for you?**

"It was a mystery. Even though I wasn't quite sure what I was doing, God led me from one step to the next ... I knew that I wanted to have a better relationship with Him and that He was all that mattered, especially during great hardships."

"A rollercoaster! I remember that I first thought about it when I was 12 or 13 (before I'd ever actually talked to Sisters). I toyed with the idea as a teenager but lacked the conviction to make the leap of entry. I was too wrapped up in what I would be losing by entering Religious life that I didn't weigh the gift to God and the Church - and, ironically, what God would in turn give me - as more important than those sacrifices. I remember sitting in a college class, while we were being talked to about graduate school, thinking, 'I want more than this!'"

## **What was leaving the world like for you?**

"Both liberating and terrifying ... God let me taste the emptiness of the world's happiness - I did not feel fully understood or happy, even with people I loved - and yet, I was also experiencing the natural side of things - the doubt of whether I had discerned well and the recognition of the sacrifices I would be making."

"It was therapeutic, in a way. Possessions can hang like a burden on you, something I had never appreciated before. Donating my things was a lessening of that burden. I found it relieving to get rid of social media; all of a sudden, I had so much more time to focus on God and myself."

"Difficult and then not so difficult. Parting with the things that couldn't give true love was easy. Parting with family and true friends who truly love me, and I them, was hard. But now I am showing them my true love for them by my willingness to give up my life for them in this way. I want to be with them all forever in Heaven."

"In many ways, it was wonderful! ... To step away from a society that is constantly searching for value and meaning while ignorantly looking right past or deliberately belittling the most valuable thing we can have - a relationship with our loving and merciful God - has been a great joy and relief!"

## **How did your family react to your decision to apply? What would you have liked them (or others) to know about Religious Life then?**

"They were supportive. There were those feelings of 'No, I don't want you to do this', but as my parents went on the journey with me, their prayer life deepened as well."

"I would want everyone to know of the true joy and fulfillment that Sisters have in living their vocation."

**"God led me from one step to the next."**



**God let me taste the emptiness of the world.**



# I have so much more time to focus on God.

After saying goodbye to their families, the Candidates are led into the Presence of Our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament. There Jesus and Mary welcome them into our spiritual family. The first days in the Convent can be quite an adventure! There is a new schedule to follow, duties to learn, and brand new customs to discover. Just finding where things are (and where you are supposed to be) can be a bit of a challenge to begin with! Most importantly, the Postulants are introduced to the spirit of the Community, our life in union with Jesus through Mary.

**Are there any reactions to Entrance day, the Ceremony, or your first days as a Postulant that you would like to share?**

"One of our Sisters gave me a big hug and said, 'Keep that joy: the way you live your Postulancy will be how you live your whole Religious life.'"

"I told Jesus, 'This better be good,' and interiorly I heard, 'It will be.'"

The first duty of each Postulant is to seek Christ in union with Mary. While a Postulant is not vowed to Religious life, she is learning to live it. The early months of formation are spent learning the life of the Community through classes and duties. She will be taught all the practical aspects of Convent life: sacristy work, cooking, laundry, cleaning, and care for the grounds. By being instructed in etiquette and Religious decorum, she will learn to comport herself as a Religious Sister. Finally, she will be formed in the spiritual life and given the opportunity to fall deeply in love with Christ Crucified.



## "Oh, right, me, I'm 'Sister'!"



**What is it like to be a Postulant? What surprised you?**

"It's still pretty surreal to look like a Sister and be called "Sister" – sometimes I still pause before remembering, "Oh, right, me, I'm 'Sister'!"

"It's literally like being a child all over again ... learning new things, asking permission and being obedient to Mother, cleaning the house for Jesus, play-time with my sisters. What surprised me the most was the formation, schedule, and the ability to still have humorous conversation and activities."

"I was surprised to learn that my primary duty (besides studying) would be as an assistant Sacristan! I knew the Sisters were trained to be Sacristans, but I assumed that would happen much later since it is such a privilege."

"I've realized how much can really be done in a day! (And consequently, how much time I wasted in the world.)"

Human formation is an important aspect of our life. The Sisters are encouraged to cultivate hobbies and skills. The ability to make something, particularly something beautiful or at the service of the Altar enhances our natural skills. When elevated by a supernatural purpose, they can be powerful means to draw us closer to God.

**What are some of the hobbies that you are enjoying now as a Postulant?**

"I am enjoying working on embroidery projects and relearning to play the piano."

"I have enjoyed the challenge of maintaining a section of the convent grounds. It is soothing to work in the quiet outdoors of my little area."

"Card-making, embroidery, crochet, playing the piano again ... I think I've become more proficient in all the above in the past month in the convent than I had in the past year in the world!"

The early years of formation provide the Sisters time and guidance to determine if God has truly called them to our Community and if they have the necessary qualities to live our way of life. Please join us in praying for the grace of perseverance for all of the Sisters, and for our Postulants in particular. *All for Jesus, all through Mary!*







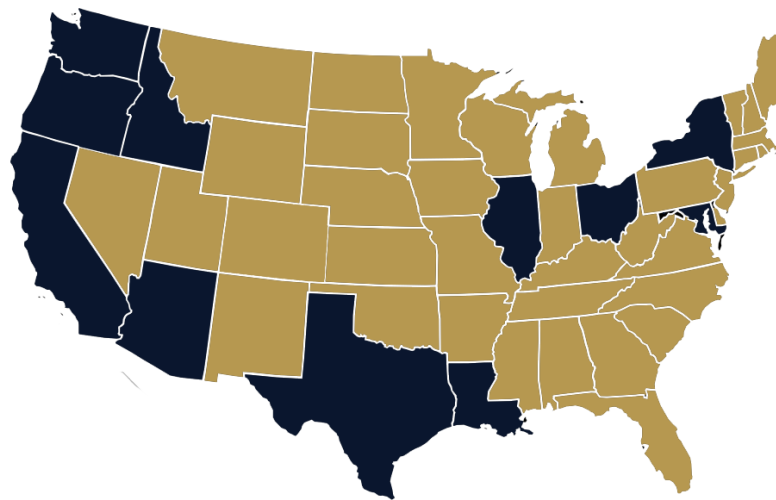
*Marian Sisters  
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## Deo Gratias!

We thank God for the growth in our religious family and we thank you for your support. Your prayers for our fidelity and the spiritual success of our apostolates sustains us. We in turn bring you before Our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament each time we visit Him throughout the day. In a special way, each gift you give to the Community allows you to actively participate in our apostolates. Your generosity makes it possible for the Sisters to receive the ongoing education and formation they need to serve where God calls. It puts food on the table and a roof over our heads. Thank you and God reward you!

To give online, please visit [mariansisters.com/giving](http://mariansisters.com/giving).



## *We're from all over!*

God calls from where He wills! With the entrance of our new Sisters, we now have 16 Sisters from 11 states - California, Arizona, Idaho, Illinois, Louisiana, Maryland, New York, Ohio, Oregon, Texas, and Washington.

Many of our Sisters learned about the Community through friends. Share our website or Facebook and you might be the friend that helps someone find their vocation.



[www.mariansisters.com](http://www.mariansisters.com)



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