

My Vocation Story

Sr. Gloria Schultz

My vocation story started when I was in the 3rd grade. I grew up in Bessemer Township and was a shy child. I have a fall birthday so I started school when I was four. Not being ready, I struggled all through school and felt like I was stupid. I never went to a Catholic School so I attended catechism classes on Saturday. When I was in the third grade, I felt drawn to be a Sister. This was rather strange as I really didn't like the Sisters before this year. I was afraid of them, however the Sister teaching me this year was very kind so I really like her. Soon after being attracted to becoming a Sister, I realized that I would have to get a job and become a teacher or nurse as a Sister. I soon gave up the idea of becoming a Sister as I knew that I was too stupid to be able to have a profession.



Some time later that same year during a catechism class my teacher was talking about Sisters who made sacrifices, slept on boards, and prayed. I was really excited as I knew that I could do that. I didn't understand that she was talking about contemplative Sisters as I didn't know the difference between Sisters. I only knew the call felt real. I was very excited so I told my parents as soon as I got home. My mother responded very normally. She said that I had lots of time to decide what I wanted to be. Somehow I heard that she didn't want me to be a Sister. Being shy I decided that I wouldn't talk about it any more to anyone.

Being a third grader, I didn't think about it all of the time. However, moments would come when I felt strongly inside of me that I was being called to be a Sister. These feelings of being called didn't seem to be connected to anything specific. When I was in my senior year in High School, after daily morning mass during lent, a Sister came up to me and said that I would make a good Sister. It enlivened within me again the call that I had heard.

I was taking a business track in high school as I still felt stupid and had trouble in school. An English teacher took interest in me and encouraged me to go to college. The principal let me take extra classes in my final semester to prepare for college to become a teacher. Still being shy, I didn't talk about my calling to anyone. I just went on to college. During my third year of college the call was very strong. I felt that if I didn't do something about it, I would be eaten alive. Being shy and having made the decision to never talk about my vocation, I didn't know what to do. I saw an add in the Catholic paper and decided to respond to the add for the Franciscan Sisters.

I sent a letter saying that I wanted to enter the Peace Corp or to become a Sister. I received a very encouraging letter back. I showed the letter to my mother and she encouraged me. The vocation director for the diocese was the assistant priest in my hometown. My mother mentioned that I was planning to become a Sister so he asked her to have me come to see him when I came home from college on one of the week-ends. I did just that. He introduced me to the Sisters of St. Paul de Chartres. Since I didn't have a specific attraction to a Congregation at the time, I decided to go to see them and liked what I saw. I was called to give my life to God. At that time it didn't matter what Congregation. Today I understand so much clearer how the Holy Spirit was leading me to the Sisters of St. Paul. I carried the value that we have for community life and prayer. Our Christocentric spirituality that is lived out in the fullness of the paschal mystery was what I was looking for even though I would never have been able to put it into words at that time. I am so thankful for the guidance of the Holy Spirit that I had in leading me to the Sisters of St. Paul de Chartres. Each year I grow in my relationship with God, my understanding of my vocation, and my call to live a vowed life. I could not be more thankful for my call and for the love of God.