



Sister Nell Murray, MSC
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People Want to Know

Sr. Nell Murray, MSC responded to these questions sent to her by a young adult as part of a Confirmation Project. The depth and sincerity of Sr. Nell's responses are meaningful to inquirers of any age.

1. How would you describe the word vocation?

To me the word vocation means "calling." All persons have a vocation - a calling - in life. Each individual has a unique calling from God to fulfill a special mission in her/his lifetime. Some are called to the married state, others to religious life to become priests, religious sisters or brothers while others are called to the single state. Each calling is special and one is no greater than the other.

2. When did you feel a calling to serve God?

When I was growing up and attending primary school I remember how various religious communities visited and spoke about vocations and in a certain sense encouraged us to consider a religious vocation. This frequent exposure made such a life very appealing to our young minds. When I was about 14 I seriously began thinking about becoming a sister. This thought and desire never left me. In fact, it just became more real as time passed. So in 1952 I responded to God's call and entered the Marianite Sisters of Holy Cross in New Orleans, Louisiana, leaving Dunmanway, County Cork, Ireland.

3. Can you describe what this felt like?

As I said previously we had religious visit our school on occasion so this allowed me time to think about what I wanted to do with my life. I felt a deep desire within me to become a "nun." I guess I would say that I had a longing to do something worthwhile with my life. In hindsight I can see how God was the initiator of that desire and also that He was the one who gave me the grace to respond to that longing.

4. Do you think that you have fulfilled your role in life.

Yes, I feel that I have tried to fulfill my calling to the best of my ability. My mission, energized by my life in my religious community, is to incarnate the love and compassion of Jesus Christ. In my earlier years I served the Church as teacher and principal, and loved the catholic school atmosphere for evangelization. Now as Director of Religious Education and Spiritual Formation, I continue to bring the good news of Jesus. I would do it all over again, if I had the opportunity.

5. Does anything you are asked by your superiors upset you, for example being moved to another area?

Not really. When I entered the convent I made the vows of poverty, chastity and obedience. Thus, requests or assignments made by my superiors were a part of my choice in response to my calling. Actually, I don't remember any time being required to do anything that was contrary to my conscience. I have always felt that if I got the grace to leave my parents, siblings and country, God would also give me the grace never to attach myself so deeply that I couldn't pick up and leave. Yes, there is always sacrifice involved in leaving friends and ministry in places and with persons who have become part of one's life. However, the grace is always present to help with any and every sacrifice involved.

6. What advice would you give to a young person who feels a calling to serve God?

My advice would be to listen to her/his inner feelings, pray and ask the Lord to help in making a choice or decision. Get advice from someone who is wise and in whom one has a lot of faith and trust, such as a priest or religious.

7. Do you ever regret your decision to become a sister?

No, on the contrary I feel privileged to have had such a calling and as I said previously I would do it all over again!

9/30/10