

Sister Kathy Jager, SSND – 50 Year Jubilee!



"I found my vocation at Woolworths!"

Sister Kathy Jager laughs as she recounts the story of two SSNDs visiting her during a shift in the Woolworths' toy department, where she worked during college. "The Sisters always came to see me. This seemed significant. I believed I was being called to test religious life out, because the nudges weren't going away."



Kathy—1974



IND

Kathy's awareness of religious life had begun in her own family, with her aunt (a Daughter of Charity) hosting her on Visiting Day, gifting her with Blessed Mother Statues and a peak into community life. Kathy liked what she felt there, but didn't feel an actual nudge until high school, while attending IND.

"IND built my foundation. I knew I wanted to be a teacher, and got involved in school activities. One Sister teased, 'We're going to get you!' I teased back, 'No you're not!' But something tugged at me."

As high school graduation neared, Kathy felt drawn to something different. She had attended Catholic school for all 12 years (her mother had said she would 'scrub floors before allowing Kathy to attend public schools'). She enrolled in a state university. It didn't provide the difference she longed for.

"I had been spoiled by IND English teachers. As an English/Education major, I was disappointed in that department at the state university. I transferred to NDMU where I began to realize I wanted to be more than just a teacher. I got a clue when I taught religious education, because I loved it so much. I thought, 'What's going on here?'"

Kathy had much to mull over. If she was being called, where was she to respond? She had been taught by the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur in grade school, and she knew her aunt's congregation as well. *Cont'd...*

Sister Kathy Jager, SSND – Cont'd



Kathy and her Mom

"My SSND teachers called forth in me a sense of self, and belief in self. They wanted me to fulfill my potential. They helped me to recognize my gifts and my weaknesses, to trust in God and in myself."

By the time of the Woolworths encounters, Kathy knew she must respond to the nudge to explore religious life with the SSNDs.

With her family's support, she sent her letter requesting entrance during her senior year.

"My group was the first to grow up totally on the first You Are Sent. The rules did relax some. We could wear slacks to a picnic but still had to wear skirts around the elder Sisters in the Motherhouse. We were the first group to have the option to not wear a veil. For my first vows ('promises' at the time), I wore a mint green dress."

The days of the large Postulancy filled with young women straight out of high school were past. Kathy's group had just six members.

"Only one entered straight from high school. Four of us were in college, one was a recent college grad, and one was 58 years old, married and widowed. We were not a bunch of kids. We brought lived experience with us. It was such a transitional time."

Their group was the first to stay out all year during the second year of their Novitiate. When they returned to Baltimore, the Interprovincial Novitiate had been formed, including Baltimore, Chicago and Wilton.

Sister Kathy's experiences have ranged from serving in Honduras to participating in the first grassroots international gathering in Rome, the International Education Seminar.

Her passion for internationality and interculturality are matched only by her passion for serving in SSND sponsored ministries. Currently, Sister Kathy serves as NDP Middle Level Campus Minister and NDP's Mission Effectiveness Coordinator.

"I have been blessed with many opportunities and, more importantly, with faith-filled Sister companions in my life. I wouldn't be who I am without the SSNDs."