

Sister Patricia Murphy, SSND – 60 Year Jubilee!



*"God's grace has been
ever-present."*

When I am asked why I entered the convent, my response is always that I entered for a very different reason than I stayed.

I entered expecting to become a teacher and remain in a classroom until I retired. In fact, the summer before I entered SSND, my mother and I took a train trip to New York City because we both thought that would be my only opportunity to have such an experience.

The reality unfolded differently.

Initial formation was the beginning of a much broader experience than I expected, of God and spirituality, ministry, and community.

My 13 years in the classroom were superseded by 42 years in administration (10 in schools, 7 in the JPIC office, 9 on the Provincial Council, 6 at the NAMA Coordinating Center, 4 at Villa Assumpta, and 3 at Caroline Center). While these ministries anchored me, I also was gifted with the opportunity to be a delegate at four General Chapters and the site coordinator at a fifth one.

Through these and other opportunities, I was able to see much of the congregation and much of the suffering world. They enlightened my worldview, challenged me to conversion, and deepened my commitment to SSND mission, ministry, and action for justice.



Provincial Council 1996-2000

**L-R: Srs. Jane Burke, Patricia,
Carleen Cekal and Joan Meyer**

Cont'd...

Sister Patricia Murphy, SSND – Cont'd



Pictured Left: 2012 General Chapter Preparatory Commission

L-R Front 2: Srs. Carolyn Anyega, Rachel Michalik

Mid 3: Srs. Bernadine Marie Fontanez, Patricia and Csilla Makai

Back 3: Srs. Maureen McGoey, Bridget Ehlert (facilitator— not SSND) and Irena Ksiazak

This story illustrates how and why. It was January. I was in El Salvador with Cathy Arata (Sr. Cathy pictured right), walking into a town on a very hot day to pick up crafts for me to take home.

Suddenly, it began pouring rain (which is a rare event in January). I was wearing flip flops that broke as I stepped into a puddle. I couldn't continue, so Cathy assured me she would get the crafts and return.



A woman was standing on the other side of a fence nearby. She and I talked in my very minimal Spanish. She left and returned with a basin and towel. She asked me to hand her my shoes which she washed and retied. Of course, my feet were filthy. She led me to an area where I could put them through the fence. She washed and dried them, and then put my repaired shoes back on.

I experienced Holy Thursday at that moment. I remember her washing my feet every Holy Thursday.

One thing that life in SSND has taught me is that regardless of where I was sent and whether I wanted to go, God's grace has been ever-present. I am most grateful to the congregation and to those with whom I have lived and ministered.