

SISTER STORIES

by Sister Patricia Cushing



I knew at age four that God was calling me to become a sister. Holding a copy of a Maryknoll magazine, I declared to my parents that I was going to become a sister and a doctor to help the babies. Years later, having been taught by them, I knew that the Sisters of St. Joseph were the sisters to join and I have never looked back.

My graduate studies in Music and post graduate studies in Liturgics gave me an incredible background and advantages for the work I was called to do. I can truly say I loved all my experiences in religious life from teaching elementary school in Canton, Somerville and Milton to directing the offices of worship and music in Kansas and Connecticut. During those years, I was an active member of the North American Academy of Liturgy, Societas Liturgica – ecumenical, liturgical think tanks that were mind and soul stretching.

The warmth, welcome and openness of people to learn and implement their roles in worship was amazing to experience.

In 2000, while still in Kansas City, I became a licensed Massage Therapist and Reconnection Practitioner. I also received certification as a Spiritual Director from Souljournies, at the Benedictine Center for Spirituality, a program of prayer, praxis and intense study. The blend of spiritual direction, retreat work and healing arts led me to develop “The Dear Neighbor Center” for Spirituality and Healing in 2002 and which flourished in the Mid-west until 2010.

Returning to Boston, I became engaged in retreat work, spiritual direction and the healing arts. I had the honor to minister as massage therapist at Bethany Health Care Center where providing our sisters with a healing touch was a sacramental experience. I cantored the Bethany Masses and Funerals and gave lectures and seminars to the Sisters on Vatican II and enjoyed lively discussions.

I find great comfort in the true knowledge that God is with us with every breath we take. Along with Psalm 27 I declare: “The LORD is my light and my salvation. Whom shall I fear? The Lord is the stronghold of my life-of whom (what) shall I be afraid?”