



School Sisters of Notre Dame
Central Pacific Province

Transforming the world through education

2017 Jubilee

Celebrating 60 years
First Profession—7/17/1957

Sister Therese Marie Merth, SSND

Sister Therese Marie's first assignment following her first profession of vows was teaching middle school students at St. Joseph grade school in Cresco, Iowa. That ministry lasted seven years, after which time she returned to teaching in Minnesota. She served in administration at St. Michael grade school in Madison from 1972 through 1974. In 1974-75 she attended the ARC Program in Rome, Italy. The following year, she followed SSND's call to Mankato, Minnesota, where she served as director of initial formation for the province through 1980. She returned to the classroom, first in administration at St. Francis Xavier in Sartell, then in teaching at three more grade schools in the St. Paul area. She concluded her full-time ministry in teaching with an eight-year role at St. Mary's Cathedral in St. Cloud and an additional five years at various Catholic grade schools around Mankato. From 2005 through 2014, Sister Therese Marie served as full-time staff at SSND's West African novitiate. Returning to Our Lady of Good Counsel in Mankato, she continues today to volunteer and tutor at the Reading Center. She earned a bachelor's in Latin with a minor in English from Mount Mary College in Milwaukee.



A memory I have to share...

On August 4, 2004, we were celebrating province days in Mankato with the theme, "If you want to walk on water, you have to get out of the boat," taken from the Gospel of Matthew, Chapter 14. At that time, I was teaching in an elementary school and loved the ministry. One of our sisters ministering in Africa happened to be on home leave and was invited to speak to us. Her message spoke of the need for professed sisters to come to Africa and live in community with the many young sisters who were entering. On hearing that, the thought popped into my mind, "You could do that!" My immediate response was, "Heavens, no! I'm a homebody, and very happy in my ministry here. I've never had a desire to go to the foreign missions. That's way out of my comfort zone!" But the thought kept persisting, and though I kept it a secret between God and me, it became a treasured invitation, though still so unbelievable. It didn't go away with the beginning of the school year, but always was in the back of my mind and heart. So as time went on, I spoke to our provincial leadership who gave me support, and I shared it with a few friends. After finishing the school year, I waited to see where God was taking me on this adventure. After spending some preparation time at Maryknoll, I received a call in late summer of 2005 to go to Ghana. By late September I was in Sunyani, Ghana, living and working in our novitiate. I spent nine happy years there, so grateful to God for the grace to have gotten out of the boat!

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