

Michelle, fcJ

Canadian



I was 37 years old when I first heard the call to religious life. Up until that time I had been working as a teacher, paying a mortgage and living a very comfortable existence in Calgary, Canada. I was aware that something was missing, that I wasn't living my fullest life, but I seemed to be doing okay most days. I felt strong and independent and managed to keep thoughts of God or religion or church relegated to Sundays, for the most part.

I then entered a particularly difficult time in my life, dealing with the sickness and death of a loved one. It was in that space that I had a profoundly personal experience of Jesus, an experience that could not be ignored or forgotten, and it spurred me over the coming weeks and months to want to know God more deeply. As St. Augustine said, "You touched me, and I am set on fire to attain the peace which is yours."

My journey eventually led me to meet the Sisters Faithful Companions of Jesus. The FCJ charism of accompanying people in the experience of their contemporary crosses takes its roots from the witness of the women who stayed with Jesus at the foot of the Cross before going on to spread his message of the joy and hope of resurrection. For me, this mirrored my own extraordinary experience of Jesus entering with me into my suffering in order to lead me to new life. I felt at home with the FCJs and their charism resonated with me. And so, over the next several years, I took the plunge, entering into the formal stages of religious life.



During the first stages of formation I spent time in FCJ communities in Canada, England, France and Spain. As I lived in community with the Sisters and integrated Ignatian Spirituality more and more into my daily life, my relationship with Jesus grew.

My Novitiate experience allowed me opportunities to meet and work with individuals in hospices, care homes, schools, churches, prisons, soup kitchens, retreat centres and many other places. I had the privilege to learn from people of all kinds of ethnicities, religious beliefs and socioeconomic backgrounds. God continued to call me to a greater commitment through my encounters with these groups and through the living of my FCJ formation. I asked and received permission to take my First Vows on September 1, 2016.

Today, I am a Temporary Professed Sister and my formation continues, as I now know it will all my life. My life is different in many ways from the one I was living when I first heard God calling me to Religious Life in 2011. I no longer dismiss thoughts of God to Sunday church services, but strive to be aware of the sacred in the ordinary existence that is my day. My journey as a Religious Sister continues to raise my awareness of the deep need we all have for connection with God, with each other and with all of Creation. And I now wear the FCJ Cross, a sign to me and to all that I meet, that God walks with us no matter where we go, as the most faithful companion of all.



“ Hargailah namamu yang indah dengan cintamu pada Yesus - cinta yang tidak sekedar ditunjukkan dengan kata-kata atau hasrat yang kosong, tetapi dengan keberanian dalam pelayanan Tuhan. ”

Marie Madeleine d'Houët

Sahabat Setia Yesus

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