

# GOD'S



Spring 2016

# TIME



## **What I do...as a Ferdinand Benedictine**

### **Sister Jill Marie Reuber**

**Current Ministry:**

1st grade teacher

**Name of the place you minister:**

Saint Patrick Catholic School

**Location of the place you minister:**

Louisville, Kentucky

**How long have you ministered there?**

5 years

**Approximately how many people do you serve?**

26 students

**What ages of people do you serve?**

6 and 7 year olds

**What is a typical day like in your ministry?**

I arrive at school at 6:45 a.m. I like arriving early to get ready for the day and spend time just in the quiet in my classroom. The students arrive at 7:30. The mornings are filled with reading, math, and religion. The afternoons are filled with social studies, science, and writing.

### **Tell a story about something that has happened in your ministry.**

When I taught 4th grade, we studied about the great state of Indiana. At the beginning, we talked about how Indiana is divided in three regional parts. I had received from another sister a cookie cutter in the shape of Indiana because she knew that I taught Indiana history, and I thought of a great lesson about where the regions are using cookies. The night before, I made Indiana-shaped sugar cookies. For class the next day, I took white icing and three colors of food coloring. Each student received a cookie and the three colors of icing. They then iced their cookies with the three regional parts of Indiana. Of course then they got to eat their cookies. My students can still tell you the three parts of Indiana and where they are located.

### **How do you do what you do differently (from someone else in your position) because you are a Ferdinand Benedictine?**

I help my students become a community - working together and respecting one another. I also include prayer every day in my classroom. I also bring many aspects of my Benedictine community to my classroom. One of the rules in my classroom is: "Respect all things as vessels of the altar." This is directly from the Rule of St. Benedict and something that I live by as a sister, and I want my students to also take responsibility for their belongings and items that they have borrowed from me.

### **How do you find meaning in ministry in which you are presently engaged?**

I find that teaching students is very life-giving to me. I love to see when a student begins to understand and is really engaged in an activity. I find it life-giving to have a student grasp a concept and run with it and succeed. I love it when we can have a discussion as a class and I can see that everyone is engaged and I can see that learning is happening. That is what makes me want to continue to teach!

### **How does your Benedictine, monastic community life support you in your ministry?**

It is great living with and having other sisters who have taught or are teaching to help me with ideas and for support. I also feel support from other sisters when I can share with them and receive a listening ear for my burdens and joys. I also feel I receive support by having great friends in community to spend time with outside of work.

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## **Tools for discernment: gathering evidence**

There are various tools which we can use when we are discerning God's call in our lives. One of those tools is to gather the facts, to gather the evidence. As we discern, we need to look at our abilities and limitations - spiritual, mental, and physical. Gathering such evidence can be hard work, but it's important to try to obtain all the pertinent facts that are available to us. Some questions you might ask yourself in order to reflect on your experience include:

- What is the most life-giving choice for me right now?
- Where is my deepest desire?
- What are my gifts?
- What are my commitments?
- What do I hear God saying?
- What motives are driving me to choose one choice over another?
- When/where do I feel a gentle nudge or a tug toward a choice?
- What do people who know me say about my gifts and abilities?
- Where am I resisting God's invitations?
- If I were on my deathbed, what choice would I wish that I had made?

These would be good questions to share with a spiritual director, someone who can listen to you and what is happening in your life and in your prayer and who can help you keep your focus on what God is asking of you at this time. If you don't have a spiritual director, consider contacting your pastor, campus minister, or diocesan office to ask for a list of trained spiritual directors in your area.

As we gather the evidence of our lives, we need to ask ourselves how open we truly are. Do I have an agenda? Or can I present God with a blank check, and let God fill in the amount? Sometimes I need to let go of whatever my plan happens to be and be able to give God a blank check, not one that I've already filled in. However, while it is important that I can present God with a blank check, I also need to be able to set some kind of overall goal and purpose in life.

These two actions/situations are not necessarily contradictory. I need to remain open and willing to go with whatever God unfolds before me, but I also need to know what my basic purpose in life is. Jesus has told us in the Gospels that our ultimate purpose in life is to love one another: So, as I discern throughout my life, I

need to ask myself: What choices can I make to help me be the most loving person I can be?

As we discern choices in life, we need to look at all the information and weigh our choices carefully. Who am I? Who have I been? We need to learn to read our own lives for the clues that can help us discern what God desires for us. One way to reflect on our lives that can help us prepare to discern is to make a time line of our life story. Take some paper and markers and reflect on your life journeyed, from birth to the present.

Reflect on these questions and include this information on your timeline.

Who have been the significant people in my life and what impact have they made on me?

What has been the experience of my education?

What do I do in my leisure time?

What's my work history? What have I learned through my various jobs or positions?

Who taught me to pray? Who is God for me now? How do I nurture my relationship with God?

How have I made other decisions in my life?

Is there a pattern to how I make good decisions?

As you reflect on your life, pay attention to the gifts God has given you. Consider how you are called to put those into use today and in the future!

From the NRVC Coming Vocational Events



## Helpful websites

[www.pray-as-you-go.org](http://www.pray-as-you-go.org)

This web site is maintained by the Jesuits in Britain. On it you will find a daily 10-12 minute meditation on one of the Mass readings for the day and much more. These podcasts are a wonderful way to start your day.

[www.usccb.org/nab/today.shtml](http://www.usccb.org/nab/today.shtml)

This is a site of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops and features the daily Mass readings. The readings are also available in podcast form to load on your MP3 player.



[www.thedome.org/vocations](http://www.thedome.org/vocations)

This is the vocation section of our own web site. On it you will find helpful information such as answers to common questions, profiles of our newer sisters, maps of where our sisters came from and where they minister. Suggested reading material, videos, and much more.

A publication of the National Religious Vocation Conference



[www.vocation-network.org](http://www.vocation-network.org)

This web site has many exciting features to help you discern your life's calling, including a match service - with religious communities, that is!

[www.religiouslife.com/glossary.html](http://www.religiouslife.com/glossary.html)

Vocation terms - vocation, novice, charism - what do they all mean? This extensive glossary defines common terms used with Church ministry and, in particular, those associated with the vocations to the priestly and consecrated life. The terms were selected, edited, and adapted from the Modern Catholic Directory, by Father John A. Hardon, SJ, founder of the Institute of Religious Life. This glossary is intended to assist in developing a greater understanding and appreciation of these specific and sublime vocations.



## Include us in your summer travel plans

Are you making plans for this coming summer? Consider a visit to the monastery as you do so! We have scheduled a "Monastic Experience" for August 5-7. This weekend offers you the opportunity to live at the monastery, join the sisters at prayer and table, and to discern how God is working in your life. You will learn more about the Benedictine way of life and how our sisters have come to appreciate this lifestyle.

You can sign-up to attend at [thedome.org/vocations](http://thedome.org/vocations) or by contacting us by email at [vocation@thedome.org](mailto:vocation@thedome.org) or by phone at 800-738-9999.

If this particular weekend does not work for you, we can arrange for a time for a visit or an overnight stay for a time that is good for you. Just contact us and include us in your plans.

P.S. Your visits with us are free!

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## God Has a Plan for You

Come and join women as they learn how to discern. During the Wednesdays of June a few sisters will be gathering for prayer, dinner, and support. We will be gathering with women to talk about how to discern how God is working in your life.

This discernment process is not only for women who may be discerning a vocation, but also those who may be discerning marriage, a new job, or graduation. If you are available to drop in we will be having these sessions in Evansville, Ferdinand (at the monastery), and in Louisville. Our next session will be held on June 15th at 5:00 in a Louisville restaurant to be determined. Stay tuned to learn about upcoming sessions in Ferdinand and in Evansville.

Simply email Sr. Traci at [tstutz@thedome.org](mailto:tstutz@thedome.org) or phone 812-367-1411 X2901 and make an RSVP. Use that same information if you have questions. We would love for you to join us.

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## Upcoming Events

June 25-July 1, 2016 [Come and See Week](#)

August 5-7, 2016 [A Monastic Experience](#)

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## Contact Information

### Directors of Vocation Ministries

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## Mission Statement

We, the Sisters of St. Benedict of Ferdinand, Indiana, are monastic women seeking God through the Benedictine tradition of community life, prayer, hospitality, and service to others. By our life and work, we commit ourselves to be a presence of peace as we join our sisters and brothers in the common search for God.

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SISTERS  
OF ST. BENEDICT  
FERDINAND, INDIANA

*Seek. Pray. Share.*

Sisters of St. Benedict | [vocation@thedome.org](mailto:vocation@thedome.org) | 812-367-1411 | [www.thedome.org](http://www.thedome.org)

See what's happening on our social sites:

