

GOD'S



May 2017

TIME



Becoming Benedictine

Sister Lisa Marie Schutz

Date of Entrance:

March 14, 2015

What are your interests?

I enjoyed volunteering at St. Vincent de Paul in the parish, but my personal interests are watching movies, reading, and running at the track.

What is your ministry?

I work in our Community Health Office as a certified nursing assistant.

How did you know you wanted to be a sister?

I was active in my parish with St. Vincent de Paul. I was a eucharistic minister and helped with the parish festival. My prayer life was strengthened through activities in the parish.

What attracted you to this community?

The community prayer life keeps me balanced and the sisters care for each other. The sisters work well together to accomplish their mission of living out monastic life.

How do you know that you fit into this community?

The prayer life keeps me balanced and I enjoy helping the sisters.

How did your family react?

My mother and sister were supportive in my decision. My friends were supportive and asked a lot of questions so they would understand what I was doing.

How do you pray? What is your favorite prayer form?

I do lectio daily, but I also like to journal and reflect on my thoughts. I also like to do centering prayer. Community prayer with the sisters keeps me focused and my life balanced.

Reflecting on Service to Sisterhood by Emily Earhart

Who would have thought that the **best summer of my life** would begin in a small town in southern Indiana? I surely did not think this when I agreed to be a part of the Service to Sisterhood program at Monastery Immaculate Conception in Ferdinand, Indiana.

I was lucky to grow up and be a part of a youth group that was run by one of the Benedictine Sisters from Ferdinand. So when the opportunity arose for this new experience to serve the community and also pray more about my vocation, I was eager to begin the journey.

It was eye opening, to experience a way of life for two months that is almost a one-eighty from the rest of the world. Joining in prayer together three times a day, sharing meals, and working side by side with the sisters gave me a sense of peace that is easily lost in the craziness of college. But trust me; we were in no way bored with the routine! I have painted more walls, floors, and rails than I could imagine. I learned how to fold a fitted sheet and make hospital corners on a bed. I had the opportunity to help mow and weed-eat the monastery cemetery and pray for all of the sisters buried there. We volunteered in soup kitchens in two different cities and were just present with the people in those communities.



The four women with whom I worked during the Service to Sisterhood. We had just finished working with a volunteer group who came to the Monastery in Ferdinand.



I could have never seen a potato again in my life after cutting four large pots.

Even when we were not working, we were learning about social issues in the world. We were able to visit Family Scholar House in Louisville and see how the program is impacting families who are plagued with low socio-economic status. We also learned the Benedictine way of life, which involves a lot of hospitality, and I can see how each sister lives out this beautiful way of life whether they are on mission or at home in the monastery. One of the other topics of discussion was learning about, how to pray, and understanding Liturgy of the Hours. I have a new found love for praying the psalms and it has helped me to grow in my personal prayer life.

I matured a lot last summer and I am so very thankful for the opportunity to connect with the sisters and with other women my age on the vocation journey. I made friendships with the four other girls I lived with that will last a lifetime due to our connection with the sisters. I enjoy our group text that blows up my phone at least once a month with the memories that we made and shared last summer.

With the experiences I had last summer it has made me more mindful of people I come into contact with on a daily basis. I am aware that not everyone is as lucky as I am to have a strong support system, education, or even a place to sleep at night. I am studying Criminal Justice and within this field it is easy to stereotype people and place them in different "statistics." This summer allowed me to see humanity in the world in a way that I had never experienced it before and helped me to change my outlook on those who are different from me.

At the end of the summer we had the amazing experience of visiting the dependent priory, Paz de la Cruz in Morropon, Peru where we met sisters of St. Benedict who are ministering to the people of Peru. I have never before been more humbled than by this trip. Visiting with the sisters and learning their culture and (part of) their language expanded my horizons more than I could have ever imagined. On this

adventure, we visited a nursing home for the elderly in the community that was started by the sisters. To see the lack of resources that they have, but also seeing everything they are able to do with the little they have, impacted me in ways that I cannot begin to put in words. The people of the Morropon community were so happy and full of life without having anything. They would share the shirt off of their back to help a stranger. To me, they are living the Benedictine way of life, of simplicity and hospitality, without even realizing it.

I am continuing to pray about my vocation and I regularly visit the Sisters of St. Benedict in Ferdinand, Indiana. I plan to go back this summer to volunteer again and continue growing and learning about myself, the sisters, and the Benedictine way of life. From this experience, part of *mi corazón* (my heart) will always be with the Sisters of St. Benedict no matter where God is calling me.



A little girl in Peru talking to me about her rosary. "Es blanco." "Si, es white."

Hey, Sister T!

Hey, Sister T: I think God is calling me to be a sister. Is there a difference among communities? How do I know where to start looking?



Hey, My Friend,

If you are just beginning to look at communities, I suggest making a list of what your heart desires. What is it that makes you want to be a religious?

Is it the prayer life? If so, look at how you like to pray, what pulls you closer to God.

Is it the ministry? What is it that you see yourself doing? How do you want to use your gifts to serve God?

Is it the community? Ask yourself if you want to live with 100 people, or 30 people, two people or by yourself? And where? Do you want to live in the same area? Foreign missions? Move around every couple of years?

All of these are important questions, because each community is different. Some are apostolic and go to an area to work and their prayer comes from that. They might live by themselves or with a community. They might move around regularly and live with several different people throughout their lifetime.

Some are monastic and live and pray together. Their work flows from their life together. They are going to be in an area and do the work that is needed there. They will normally live in that area and with the same people, their whole life of community.

Some other Suggestions:

- **Go online and search.** There are several websites that can guide

you. NRVc.net and USCCB.org are a couple.

- **Call** your diocesan vocation director, or call the vocation directors of the communities you have found. They can guide you in a direction. Know that each community has certain criteria regarding entrance: age, debt, citizenship, etc.
- **Visit, Visit, Visit.** You really will not know the flavor of a community until you visit. Just because you visit, it doesn't mean you are entering. When you travel someplace, instead of looking at a hotel, see if there is a community nearby. Go on vacation and just visit monasteries (people do that all the time in Europe).
- **Pray.** Then pray some more. Ask God, "What do you want of my life?" Really, He just wants you to live "Happily Ever After," so let him guide you to your vocation.

Peace out,

Sister T



Upcoming Events

June 17-23, 2017 [Come and See Week](#)

Contact Information

Director of Vocation Ministries

Sister Teresa "T" Gunter
tgunter@thedome.org

Mailing address:
802 E 10th Street
Ferdinand, IN 47532

Web address:
www.thedome.org

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.

SISTERS
OF ST. BENEDICT
FERDINAND, INDIANA

Seek. Pray. Share.

Sisters of St. Benedict | vocation@thedome.org | 812-367-1411 | www.thedome.org

See what's happening on our social sites:

