



# VOCATION SPIRIT NEWS

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YEAR FOR PRIESTS

## *A Social Justice Sister—How Service led to Religious Life*

By Sr. Dianne Perry,  
From [domestic-church.com](http://domestic-church.com)  
I really never thought of becoming a Sister until I was a sophomore in high school. Before that I had a Plan. I was going to go to college, become a nurse, get married and have six kids. It never occurred to me to do anything else, so I was very surprised, shocked and befuddled even, when I started thinking about Sisterhood. At this time my sister who is two years younger, was talking about being a Sister all of the time. There was only one other girl in my class who talked about it so between the two of them I found out many things about Sisters...  
I just didn't think I was the Sister type because I was very talkative and fun loving. I also really enjoyed the boys in school and at dances and parties and in my mind this was a sign that marriage was for me, not the convent. I decided that if I would just forget about it, it would go away. So that is what I did. But God didn't forget about me...  
I had a life changing experience through our youth group at School. The Sisters, who taught us in high

school, did outreach work on Saturdays. They helped some of the migrant workers in the neighborhood learn English and to have their marriages blessed in the Church. In order for the people to come many of them needed baby-sitters for their children. One of the Sisters asked if we could do this. I had time so I agreed to help.  
One Saturday I drove up to a house. I went in and met the mom who knew some English (much more than I knew Spanish.) She showed me the house and introduced me to the children. I was absolutely overwhelmed that this family had no furniture in the living room. The beds upstairs were mattresses on the floor, with the blankets folded neatly at the bottom. I did not see any toys.  
I was deeply moved. It was the first time in my life that I met people who did not have the things that I had. I decided then and there that I needed to do something to change this. I asked my grandma, who was getting new furniture, if I could have her old couch and chairs. She agreed and the family was happy to accept it...  
I went [one] night and told my parents I had something

very urgent to tell them. They were in the kitchen drinking coffee. I blurted out, "What would you say if I told you that I was thinking of being a Sister?"  
There was a long silence while my dad got more coffee and then he said, "Well, what is the next joke?" I was really shocked and rather hurt. I thought my dad who knew our Sisters very well, and was very good to them, thought I was not good enough to do this, to become a Sister. I took this as a sign from God and I decided to let it all go. However, I could not let it go. I fought with the idea daily for months. I tried to stop praying my usual prayers. I went to Mass on Sunday and I would say the Act of Contrition after I got into bed, just in case. I was mad at God for putting something in my head that seemed to everyone else to be a bad idea...  
Even after I had all this information I just could not decide what to do. During Lent, on a Saturday night when I was baby-sitting two very small children, for some unexplainable and mysterious reason I suddenly just decided I needed to decide. I felt a deep sense of God's presence and I wrote a letter to the School Sisters of Notre Dame. I was accepted and I got ready to enter the convent in September.

[READ THE REST OF SISTER DIANNE'S STORY](#)

## WORLD DAY FOR CONSECRATED LIFE, CELEBRATED ON FEBRUARY 7, 2010

In 1997, John Paul II called for consecrated life to be promoted throughout the Universal Church. He declared February 2, the Feast of the Presentation of the Lord, to be observed as World Day for Consecrated Life (WDCL).  
In the United States, when February 2 is not on a Sunday, we celebrate on the Sunday after the Feast.

-Please keep praying for all those in consecrated life-



### VOCATIONAL AND YOUNG ADULT QUICK LINKS:

[thinkpriest.org](http://thinkpriest.org)

[HOW DO I KNOW?](#)

[HOUSE OF PEACE](#)

[Cardinal Stritch Campus Ministry](#)

[Capuchin Volunteers](#)

[Jesuits](#)



**THE CATHOLIC PRIEST TODAY**  
A MAN OF FAITH • A MAN OF TRADITION • A MAN OF GOD

"The Catholic priest is a man shaped by God's self revelation to the world. The priest shares all that he has received."  
Francis Cardinal George, OMI  
Archbishop of Chicago



### Meet a Seminarian: Justin Lopina: Peace Corps Leads to Seminary

**Justin Lopina:** Blessed Teresa of Calcutta, North Lake ~ Pre Theology



My two-year Peace Corps service in Burkina Faso, West Africa, was the last push I needed to continue with my vocational calling. About half way through my service I began making calls/emails to Saint Francis to begin the priestly formation application process. In terms of my spiritual life as of 2006 (the beginning of my service), I needed time more than anything else: a vast block of time to think, pray, and



http://www.worldatlas.com/

contemplate on my own terms. Between friends, family, work, and the limitless distractions available to me in America, I was always in need of more time for God and I. Two years in the middle of the desert will clear that problem up for just about anyone. Add those hours of prayer to worthwhile labor, the witnessing of simpler & poorer lives, and the self-confidence of making it two years away from

home and Peace Corps can prepare someone for almost anything in their future!

[Read More About My Peace Corp Service in South Africa.](#)

[CLICK HERE TO FIND OUT MORE INFORMATION ABOUT BURKINA FASO, WHERE JUSTIN SERVED](#)

### MARK YOUR CALENDARS!!!

World Youth Day - Milwaukee 2 Madrid



The Archdiocese of Milwaukee is planning a Young Adult (ages 18 to 39) pilgrimage to World Youth Day 2011 in Madrid, Spain; August 10-22, 2011.

### A Vocation to be a priest?

*"I am convinced that the important ideals of a person are forged around the age of 15. Their ideals are full of dreams and imagination, which afterwards will have to mature, but these ideals are an amazing driving force for all of life."*

*"God calls who he wishes and when he wishes. Sometimes people question whether a 12 year-old child or an 18 year-old young person can see his vocation clearly. There are children who from a young age say they want to be a doctor or teacher and end up becoming one," he said. "Others decide what they want to be when they are older but later they take a different path. The same thing happens with religious vocations. Some of the children who show signs of a vocation end up in the priesthood, others don't. We need to accompany them in the process of personal maturation and help them to discern the will of God."*

*Bishop Fernandez of the Diocese of Tarazona, Spain*

### On Loving Lent: By Jane L. Wiesman

*The Lenten season officially begins next Wednesday, February 17th. As we prepare for Ash Wednesday, I thought I would share, over the course of several weeks, a Lenten reflection written in the 1980s by Jane L. Wiesman, a New England based writer. This article was originally published in America Magazine. [CLICK HERE](#) for link.*



http://www.sofpedia.com

When the first real snow of our deep-freeze winter began to fall, I ordered everyone out for a walk. The boys were quickly booted and mittened, and my husband, who humors me because he is convinced I am mad, reluctantly joined us. The snow sparkled under the streetlights, the baby on the sled laughed at Horsey Mommy, and his older brother threw snowballs at anything vertical. "It is beautiful, isn't it?" I remarked, "I just love winter." The man of my dreams, who grew up in Buffalo, went to school in not-exactly-tropical Boston and, when we married, took me off to live in Alaska, countered with the fact that it was cold and wet. He then muttered new doubts as to my sanity and my slide toward masochism. Over cups of hot chocolate I renewed my praise of winter and made my Grand Confession: The only time of year I love more than winter is Lent. levent-year-old John came out with some quite creative sounds of disgust, as his father openly questioned the advisability of my remaining much longer without a keeper.

But it is true. I love Lent. I have always loved Lent, although for reasons often only remotely connected with the real purpose of Lent. Take the diet of my childhood Lents, for example: Who can complain about abstinence when it means potato pancakes, macaroni and cheese with huge chunks of melting Cheddar (not that boxed stuff my own kids adore) and, wonder of wonders, my Czech grandmother's pirohy swimming in onions and butter. The "giving up" of Lent also offered great boosts to a child's self-esteem. I felt so noble about giving up penny fireballs that to this day I cannot eat them in Lent. And in those pre-ecumenical days, doing without candy or movies for 40 whole days made it quite obvious to us that we must be just a little bit better than everyone else, a point we were always quick to make known.

Look for part two of this reflection in next week's edition of Vocation Spirit News. Peace and blessings!  
Your friend Bob Spoerl.