

THE LORD HAS GIVEN ME BACK EVERYTHING AND MORE

When I was growing up, becoming a Sister was the last thing on my mind. I was never religious or pious. When I went to the UK for my university studies, I found the Catholic Church and liturgy an utter bore. I was attracted to the Christian Youth Movement and began a journey of searching for the “real” Church. So every Sunday I went from one denomination to another: from Anglicans and Methodists, to Baptists and Pentecostals, and more. Eventually I thought I could worship better in the Assemblies of God Church because the testimony of my fellow students during the service impressed me greatly and I saw Christ alive and active in them. I longed to have a lively and intimate relationship with Jesus! However, after a few weeks I was disillusioned by their lack of openness and stopped going to church altogether. In the meantime, I was in a relationship with a Muslim guy and it was not on our agenda to complicate matters with religion. However, thanks to the hand of Providence, I came across a book called *Mere Christianity* by C.S. Lewis. I can honestly say that this book brought me back to God. It answered many of my doubts and questions and convinced me that, yes, God exists!

After finishing my studies in 1989, I made an adventurous 2-month long Contiki vacation, travelling through all of Europe. My vacation included visiting famous churches



(St. Peter’s Basilica in Rome, Notre Dame in Paris, the Sagrada Familia in Barcelona), but not once did I kneel down to pray. When I returned to Singapore and started working as a TV producer, a cousin of mine convinced me to attend a conference on Medjugorje. Initially I made fun of it because I was skeptical of these apparitions and was even anti-Marian at the time. But one Sunday afternoon, I found myself in an auditorium listening to a couple talking about the wonderful things that were happening at Medjugorje.

As the talk progressed, I found myself listening to and absorbing the “good news” not only with my mind but also with my heart.



Soon I felt like the two disciples on the road to Emmaus: My heart burned within me and I began to see light! I became hungry to deepen my Catholic Faith and chose a book that explained the Eucharist and another on the Rosary. I ended up being not only enlightened about Mary’s role in the Church but also convinced of my Catholic Faith and its traditions. I was, in short, “born again” in the Catholic Faith! I made my first confession after 7 years, began attending daily Mass, reading the Bible and fasting. Before long, I started a prayer group at work, and in September 1990 I made a pilgrimage to Medjugorje.

That was my first pilgrimage and it was an amazing spiritual experience. The peace I felt was indescribable. Back in Singapore, I felt inspired to join the New Evangelization Team (NET) School, which not only helped deepen my spiritual life, but gave me a taste of how sweet it was to serve the Lord. I felt a deep inner joy in giving and sharing myself.

I wanted to use my broadcasting skills for evangelization. One option was to join *Lumen 2000*. Then I discovered, to my sur-

Sharing Our Stories

prise, a modern and unique religious order, the Daughters of Saint Paul, a Congregation of sisters who use the media to spread the Good News.

After visits to the convent to observe and experience the Sisters' lifestyle in Malaysia as well as the Philippines (as the Sisters were not yet in Singapore), I made a retreat to discern my calling. During that retreat, a deep sense of peace pervaded me and I eventually submitted to God's call.

I remember sitting in my bedroom with tears streaming down my cheeks after deciding to give this new life a chance, bidding farewell to all that was dear to me. Looking back now, I realize that God never really asked me to give anyone or anything up. In fact, he has returned everything back to me and more! Truly, I have had many grace-filled experiences of the "hundredfold reward" promised to those who follow him. For example, being an only daughter (I have an elder brother), I always wanted a sister and now I have more than 2000 sisters around the world!



Knowing my limitations, I am still amazed that the Lord called me to the Pauline life. It has been an exciting and challenging journey for me. Through the years, God's love and faithfulness have sustained me. I believe he will continue to do so for the rest of my life – a life which I hope will grow in holiness and love.

Wendy Ooi, fsp

Sr Wendy's vocation story in its entirety can be read here

