

VITAE – DOROTHY FORMAN

What follows is Sr. Dorothy Forman’s life story in her own words.



I was born December 4, 1948, in the worst blizzard of the season; and in an emergency I was baptized “Mary.” Contrary to expectations, I lived and received my baptismal name –Dorothy, Gift of God—on January 16, 1949, in Sweetest Heart of Mary Church, Detroit, MI.

I was the eldest child and blessed with three younger brothers: Albert, Cecil, and John.

When I was between the ages of 14 and 34, I cared for my family, and I supervised the household. Mom had brain tumor surgery on August 16, 1963. This 20 year experience was an “exodus” event that shaped my faith and being.

On August 18, 1983, I moved to the Formation House of the Sylvania Franciscans. Cecil had died of pneumonia at age 18. Al and John had lives of their own. Dad was retired. Mom feared the future without me, but she valued my happiness.

I entered the novitiate on August 10, 1984, professed temporary vows on August 26, 1986, and made final vows on August 26, 1989. At my final profession, 20 Tibetan Buddhist monks from Sri Lanka were in attendance. They wore peach, saffron kilts, chest sashes, and sandals. God has a warped sense of humor.

My ministries included providing pastoral care and social activities for the infirm and dying Sisters at the Motherhouse; being pastoral associate and DRE at Mt. Carmel in Temperance, MI, and at Our Lady of Lourdes in Toledo, OH; serving as first development director for the community; and being telephone receptionist at Padua High School, where I fielded seven bomb threats in one year.

On February 6, 1998, my feastday, I was accepted into the transfer process of the Tiffin Franciscan Sisters. On August 16, 1999, I began work as the Director of Holistic living on the Motherhouse Administrative Team.

On February 16, 2003, I was fully received into the Tiffin Franciscan Community.

I received a BA degree in 1989 from Lourdes College in Religious Studies. I completed course work at Detroit Business Institute with a major in accounting in the 1970's.

I have been a professional freelance writer whose manuscripts, especially poetry, have appeared in various publications. I am grateful for the opportunities I've had to promote social justice in our world.

My life has had chronic and often acute pain from the diseases that have been my companion and teacher. I have learned that who I am is more important than what I do. I've felt my need for God and others intensely. I've learned to be a gracious receiver as well as a generous giver. I've learned to accept my limitations and those of others. I delight in simple beauty, and I dance before God with a grateful heart.

I have prayed to become the gift of God's compassion, to heal and transform hearts, to be a source of comfort and courage. I pray for the grace to be FAITHFUL.

I am the Word-made-flesh in my time and place. I believe in God's promise when God said: "My word shall not return empty and void; it will not return until it has accomplished the mission for which I have sent it." **Sr. Dorothy completed her mission on Friday March 22, 2019.**

She has promised: "I will remember you in love always. I return home to God."