



Sr. Trish McConnell, ASC (seated next to statue of St. Maria De Mattias) with her local community: Sr. Becky Balthazor, ASC; Sr. Diane Tenbrink, ASC; and Candidate Morgan Schweitzer.

Sr. Trish McConnell, ASC Makes Perpetual Vows

November 29, the First Sunday of Advent, Sister Trish McConnell, ASC professed her perpetual vows as an Adorer of the Blood of Christ, during the Eucharist, in the Chapel of the New Covenant at the ASC Wichita Center, Wichita, Kansas.

Hers was a unique journey to this memorable day, for it was just 20 years ago last Easter Vigil when Sister Trish, then a divorced woman with two children, joined the Roman Catholic Church in her Kansas City, Missouri parish. Not long after, she moved to Moore, Oklahoma where she first encountered the Adorers in the persons of Sisters

Paulette Schiffelelbein and Ursula Schones at St. Andrew's Parish.

"Sister Ursula had a prayer ministry and prayed with folks after Mass," Sister Trish recalled. "She prayed like she believed God would answer, and I became a believer, too, after experiencing answered prayer." Her thinking at the time was to support a women's religious community as a lay partner. She asked her new friends if the Adorers had such an opportunity. When told about the ASC Associates, "I signed up right away for the formation and absolutely felt at home with the ASC spirituality of adoring/redeeming love, the Cross and the Precious Blood, having grown up with those symbols in my childhood Protestant faith." Yes, Protestant. Her father was a preacher and her mother a teacher in southwestern Missouri.

"Thus, I felt right at home from the beginning. It just seemed like one natural step after another!" she said. "I had been on a religious and spiritual search all my life and when I found the Catholic Church and then the Adorers, it was like coming home.

Indeed she has come home from a journey that took her through high school in Joplin, Missouri, a bachelor's degree in communications from Missouri State University (then SMSU) in Springfield, marriage and children, and a 20-year career as a certified medical transcriptionist. The legs of the journey toward her perpetual vows took her to Belleville and Trenton, Illinois for novitiate and first vows at the National Shrine of Our Lady of the Snows, also in Belleville.

Her children, a son living in Arkansas and a daughter in Oklahoma City, shared in "Sister Mom" Trish's joyous occasion as lector and psalmist, respectively. And, her nine-year-old granddaughter sang "I Surrender All" during the Preparation of Gifts.

Sister serves in ministry as Life Enrichment Coach at Villa Maria, an ASC-sponsored skilled nursing facility in Mulvane, Kansas. Previously, during her initial formation, she served as a music teacher and parish aide at Holy Trinity Catholic Church in St. Louis, Missouri and then as office coordinator in the Wichita Diocesan Office of Religious Education.

"I have found new life and spiritual healing with the Adorers, first as an Associate and now as a vowed member," Sister Trish said. "I feel a kinship with the spirit of St. Maria [the Adorers' foundress]. She has inspired me by demonstrating that vision and simple actions in daily life coupled with faith in Jesus can make a difference in improving the lives of others in need.

"I am grateful, joyful and humbled to be a perpetually professed Adorer of the Blood of Christ, experiencing and sharing with others the faithful love of God in the Spirit of Jesus," she concluded.