

Molly McKinstry: Habits are who we are and we get to choose everyday who that is. What's remarkable about these women is that their habits are changing the world. Hi and welcome to Habits, the Good, the Bad and the Holy. I'm Molly and I'm sitting down every week with the Adorers of the Blood of Christ religious sisters to hear their stories and learn how habits have become more than a symbol for their vocation. They become the means to which they change lives. Hello and welcome back. Today we're here with sister Fran Schumer. Fran, thanks so much for joining us.

Fran Schumer: Well, thank you, MK. I'm happy to be here with you.

Molly McKinstry: Oh, thanks so much. So when I was, uh, getting information on us, some information gathering for this interview, the first thing that came up was that your family owned a dairy queen.

Fran Schumer: Well, technically it was a dairy mart, a daring part, right. Which is similar to a dairy queen. This year apparently had been a long time dream of my father's, uh, back all the way from the late forties, which I was not aware of until, um, I guess we opened it in 1956. Um, it was built on a piece of property that was caddy corner from our house so that we could see it. And at the time my dad also worked for international shoe company, so my mom would run it during the day. And uh, then when daddy came home from work, he would, he would run it in the evenings and then on the weekends they would, uh, work back and forth, off and on. Um, I started working there at the age of 12. Um, that was, I got paid, but it was a set amount and a, I started out in the mornings. It was at that time it was, um, well not always just at that time, but always, you know, people drove up, they got other cars.

Fran Schumer: This is the day before drive throughs. You know, they came up to the window and they gave the order. Well, one of my jobs every morning was to go out and pick up all the trash on the parking lot. I could wash the windows and I could help in the back room, but I could not wait on customers until I was maybe 15. My might've been 16. Um, but, um, anyway, it was basically family run. Um, we sold soft serve ice cream. But one of the things that made us different from dairy queen, cause there was a dairy queen in town, one of the things that made us different was we also sold chocolate soft serve.

Molly McKinstry: Ooh. So you were the better choice.

Fran Schumer: Yes, that's exactly what I thought. Um, people still laugh at me today because no matter what flavor sundaes get, I tend to like it made with chocolate ice cream. Yeah. But, um, and then we expanded and added, um, sandwiches. We had hamburgers, hot dogs, French fries, and barbecue sandwiches, which we used a barbecue sauce that my mother developed. So it was kind of a family secret and very special.

Molly McKinstry: So you were raised by entrepreneurs.

Fran Schumer: Yes. I never thought of it that way. But yes. Um, by the time I was 16, um, my dad had, because of some circumstances at the, at the shoe factory, he had quit his job there, not really knowing if we were going to be able to support the family just on that. But uh, we did. Um, and like I said, during the summers, by the time I was 16, I was allowed to be up front and wait on customers.

Fran Schumer: And I still think back at how my parents trusted me because of the age of 16 during the summer, Monday through Friday in the afternoons I ran it by myself. And when I think back on that, I'm like, they're putting the income for the family in the hands of a 16 year old.

Molly McKinstry: So you understood responsibility really young. That was something that has just always kind of been in your, in your fabric.

Fran Schumer: Right. It has been. And I always say, I always laughed when I went to college and eventually for one of my degrees took a marketing course because I was like my dad with his sixth grade education taught me everything I needed to know about marketing. And his big thing was always the customers. Right. And like by the time the customer gets to the window, you have to be standing there waiting to wait on them. Uh, it was not always easy. I mean, particularly on, my recollection is on Sunday afternoons from 12 noon to six or seven o'clock at night. It was constant, but uh, it, uh, it did teach me a lot and a lot of respect for my parents and um, and it was fun being able to work together and like I say, help support the family. The other thing that I remember because I was able to do this even early on from the very beginning when daddy would close at like 10 30 or 10 o'clock at night, he'd come home bringing the money bag and my dad and my mom and I would sit at the dining room table and count the money for the day. And uh, to this day I love to count money by hand. I don't like these newfangled machines because I like to put my coins and dollar piles five across very, very much.

Molly McKinstry: Did you have siblings?

Fran Schumer: I have a younger brother who is six and a half years younger than I am. He worked there by the time, probably by the time he was 10 or 11, he was doing stuff in the back room. Yes, very much so. Very much so. The other thing that gave me some notoriety perhaps in the community was when I, uh, went to Ruma as an aspirant at the age of 14.

Molly McKinstry: So you had an inkling that young that you wanted to be in religious life.

Fran Schumer: Oh, from the age of five,

Molly McKinstry: Very young. Right. What's your earliest memory of thinking you wanted that to be something that you've dedicated your life to religious life.

Fran Schumer: At the age of five when my mother would wash my hair, I'd insist that she put the towel on my head like a veil and I would walk around the house. Now the really interesting thing about that is that I did not have that much exposure to sisters at the time because of that time in my life. We lived in the boot heel of southeast Missouri, which was very anti Catholic back then in the 50s and um, there were some sisters who came on the weekend on Saturdays for catechism class, but I was too young for that. My Dad had sister who belonged to another community. I had probably seen her twice and my mother had an aunt who belong to and even a different community and I had probably seen her twice.

Molly McKinstry: So those really stuck with you, those images from your youth?

Fran Schumer: Apparently, you know, or I mean, I have, I've never been able to doubt the, this is what I was called to. I might've had doubts as to whether I thought I could do it. Um, but I've never really seriously had doubt.

Molly McKinstry: So you went to Ruma, which the listeners who don't know Ruma used to be the mother house, right. For the central part of the country. Right. And you went as an aspirant, which means you're considering becoming a sister,

Fran Schumer: which means I lived there through my high school years.

Molly McKinstry: You lived, right? It was a boarding school.

Fran Schumer: Basically. The aspirant was a boarding school for girls who thought they wanted it to be sisters. And we had all of high school there. We had a regular high school. We had, there were day students from the area, uh, who also went to school there. But during the time I was there, there were maybe as many as 60 aspirants. Uh, it was not always that many, but, um, yeah. And so

Molly McKinstry: how did your family take that? Someone so young being just so sure of what you wanted to do with your life.

Fran Schumer: And not only that, the only daughter. Oh yeah. Um, I can tell you, I don't really know. I never had any indication anything other than support. When I was in the eighth grade, I had three options for high school. I could go to the public high school in the town I lived in. I could take a bus 20 minutes to a Catholic high school or I could go to Ruma, which was about a half hour up the road from where we lived. And I chose to go to Ruma. Uh, the decision was always mine. I was not always happy at the time when I was dealing with that, that it was my decision. But Mom and dad both always said, it's your decision. We will support whichever way you go. So that's the decision I made during the aspire archer. We'd come home in summers, but during the school year, we would have visiting once a month on a Sunday. And then, um, when I graduated from high school, I moved into the next phase, which at that point was called postulancy and we still had visiting once a month. And then when I entered the novitiate,

Molly McKinstry: so you did college as a postulant.

Fran Schumer: We did first year college as a postulant and then we had one year of that and then the next year was novitiate. And during that year, the only courses we took were theology.

Molly McKinstry: So I want to interject for a second. For our listeners who don't know the process to become a sister, um, it takes multiple years, right? And there are stages, um, so you, you move as a novice, which I affectionately call the baby nuns. Uh, you start as a novice and your time to learn about the community, what, what this life actually looks like every day. Right? And then you move into first vows, vows, which are a temporary vow, right? Um, and then you make those annually until you take your final vows. Right. And that can take a variety of years socially, usually three to five. Right. Um, okay. Sorry, I just want to kind of give a sense for people who aren't really involved with religious life, why this may seem a little convoluted. Okay. So your second year and then, um,

Fran Schumer: so then in the, during the novitiate at that time we did not have any contact with our families other than letters. After the novitiate we made first vows. I still stayed at Ruma that year and we had a second year of college of college classes. And then, um, I moved to Saint Louis at that time we had a house of studies at St Louis University and I think I finished my college degree. There was a thing called, it's called De Mattias hall and it still exists, exists live in Saint Louis. It's a still of residential hall on campus. But anyway, back to, cause the question that this is leading up is what did my family think of my entering the convent. Um, every Sunday through the four years of high school, my year postulancy. Then when my family came to visit me on the day, I made my first vows. Every one of those times, at some point in the visit before they left, my dad would ask me, are you happy? Are you sure you're happy? We want you to know that you are. You're always welcome back home if this is not where you belong. I can tell you on some of those visiting Sundays, it took everything I had to say. No, this is where I belong. The day I made first vows is the last time my father asked me that question. Now later when my dad died, um, he died, passed away in 1973 I had a letter from one of his sisters and she made some comment in there that made me for the first time, wonder, you know, about my parents' views on my going to the convent. So I went to my mom and I said, you know, where you really supportive of me going to the company or you know, what do you all think of this? And she said in the beginning we didn't think you were serious. And by the time we realized you were, it was too late to do anything.

Molly McKinstry: Oh Wow. So on the surface, yes I knew nothing but support.

Fran Schumer: I don't know what the background conversations work as apparently there were, there were many conversations I was not part of.

Molly McKinstry: So you take your final vows in 1969 you were 24 years old.

Fran Schumer: I was

Molly McKinstry: So I'm a year older right now than you were when you took your final vows. So the idea of, of making a decision to dedicate your entire life to a religious order at 24 seems overwhelming for me. What was it like being young, which I know was the, the common back then. Um, what was it like going through that? You said that you had doubts on some days, so what was, what was it like, you know, going through that process and really deciding that this was right for you?

Fran Schumer: Um, I think sometimes if, if there were doubts. Well the other piece of that that you need to know is, is because of the fact that I spent those four years of high school in the year postulancy in novitiate and first your final vows. We're talking seven years of my life from the age of 14 to 21 when most people at that age are having all kinds of experiences, um, with other people. My pretty much entire world was the convent except during the four years of high school when I would go home in the summer. And then, you know, I was working so it's not like, and I wasn't going to school at home, so I didn't have a circle of friends. I did not really start relating to peers until I was 21 or 22 years old. I discovered that there are people out there called men because during that whole time, other than my family and the maintenance men at the convent, you know, every interaction was female. So relating with peers my age and particularly males my age did not happen until my early twenties when I was at college. Wow. And, and the first time I had a crush on somebody was really quite interesting.

Molly McKinstry: So you just touched on a question I get more often than any other question. Can nuns have crushes on people?

Fran Schumer: Uh, yeah, cause I was a woman before I was anything else? Yes. So I had, I remember having a crush on a guy when I was in college. Um, you know, nothing happened with it, but, but the thing that was interesting about those years, because, you know, I was at Saint Louis U, I made friends with people in class and there was a group that I hung around with, um, we hung out together. I don't know if it's necessarily weekly or not. I don't remember that part anymore. Um, the Jesuit seminarians were, they're going to school and so, you know, we hung around with them. Um, we would do service projects together in this sort of thing. So in a sense, I went through my adolescence in my early twenties, college. My Major was political science. Um, and then, um, actually, you know, nuns can do more than have crushes on people. They can actually think that they fallen in love. That happened after I got out of college and was actually teaching. But I had a very wise friend of mine tell me that, uh, gave me a great piece of advice and I've used this many times. One day I was talking to her because I was really attracted to this one guy that I was teaching with. And uh, I don't know that I was seriously thinking of leaving the community. But anyway, I mean, yeah, I mean the, the feelings were there and I really didn't have a way to process them and to deal with them and figure out how I was going to integrate that into this life choice I had made.

Fran Schumer: And one piece of wisdom she gave me this life is not always greener on the other side of the fence. No matter what life choice you make, they're going to be problems. And that helped me see that what I was looking at as the other side of the fence at that time I was looking at very romantically and I made the decision that, you know, I knew this life, I knew this set of problems and why did I want to trade those in for a set where I had no idea what I was getting into. And so that pretty much is taken care of any over the years. Yeah, I've been attracted to guys from time to time, but you know, just as I'm sure married men are attracted to other women and married women are attracted to other men. That doesn't mean you act on it. I say, you know, there's nothing wrong with window shopping as long as you don't make a purchase.

Fran Schumer: I want to appreciate all of God's creation. .

Molly McKinstry: And so, so your degree was in political science, but I know that you became a paralegal. How did you get was that was way down the road? I don't know.

Fran Schumer: Do we have enough time for this or you can do the cliff notes version. It's hard to do a cliff notes version. Um, I started out as a junior and senior high school social studies teacher. Um, I did that for about six years and decided that I really probably maybe hadn't gotten into teaching for the right reason. What I enjoyed about that experience was being able to interact and be with the kids, not new. It's like after six years, you know, okay.

Fran Schumer: I've taught the same material, particularly because I had taught one year in a grade school in five years in high school that, um, you know, okay, I know it's kind of like, I know I can do this, so you know, what else is there to life kind of thing. So I, um, during that time I had been working on a master's degree and living in the summers at um, Catholic children's home and Illinois, which was a home for emotionally, behaviorally disturbed children. And, um, so the priest who was in charge there had always told me that if I ever wanted to get out of teaching to consider coming to the children's home. So I did. I went there for six years as a social worker and assistant administrator. And again, after six years, it's kind of like, okay, been there, done that and thinking I was a super woman at the time.

Fran Schumer: I guess I had also probably managed to burn myself out and I was offered an opportunity. We had at that time a hospital in Murfreesboro in Taylorville, Illinois and they were going to hire a public relations director for the hospital and they wanted a sister and would I be interested? Um, I went up and interviewed with the administrator and decided to take the job. Um, although I hated to write and a big part of the job was going to be, you know, doing a quarterly magazine and press releases and magazines, glutton for punishment. I am. So I was there for three years. Um, and again, at the end of that time or as I had been there for three years, it was kind of like, you know, I became a sister because I wanted to help people and this was a very much an administrative kind of job.

Fran Schumer: Um, I didn't have like the same daily contact with people and that sort of thing. So I decided I wanted to look at something different. And at that time, the then room a province, uh, was considering appointing somebody as the first full time peace and justice coordinator for the Ruma Providence. And they offered it to me. And so I took it and I was supposed to start that and fall of that year. And um, that, um, August my mother had a heart attack and subsequently passed away. So I was spending a couple of weeks at home, um, getting things can be down and getting the house ready for sale and all of that kind of stuff. And during the course of that, I was approached by the then provincial superior Ruma

Molly McKinstry: and a provincial superior for those who do not speak sister is,

Fran Schumer: she was the sister that was overall in charge of that area of the congregate of the community, which was primarily southern Illinois and Missouri. Um, and kind of areas that part of the country. Um, if I would consider they at that time in addition to the hospital in Taylorville, we had hospital and Murfreesboro, Illinois and we had, um, long term care ministry and we had the hospital, but they were looking to form those hospitals into a small health system because healthcare was becoming so complex at that time. It would, I consider going back to school and uh, being the first executive director of ASC health, um, I had had no intention of going back into school. I was just getting out of a health care environment. Um, I spent about an hour discerning and couldn't come up with any reasons for saying no if this is what the community really wanted me to do.

Molly McKinstry: And again, speaking sister discerning for?

Fran Schumer: It's turning it over to prayer, right. Taking, you know, time to pause and see the impact that that decision will have on your right. So I agreed to do that. Um, I enrolled in the masters in Health Administration program at Saint Louis University. Literally the next day, um, spent two years in that program and as God and his sense of humor has it, by the end of the time the program was over and they were willing, we're ready to get to really form the system. They changed their minds and decided they wanted somebody from outside the community to be the executive director. So here I am sitting with a master's degree. I hadn't particularly wanted, didn't know what I was going to do with it because the job I was supposed to be prepared for is no longer there for me. Well, I had made some connections while I was getting my degree and I was offered a fellowship by a small Catholic health system based in Kankakee, Illinois. So I worked up there for three years, uh, as a corporate public relations director for the system.

Fran Schumer: Then I was elected to the leadership team in Ruma. So for six years I was on the leadership team, uh, working with the provincial superior and two other sisters, uh, on governing that part of the, the community. When I left there prior to leaving there. Um, I had been very active in the International Association of Churches, personnel administrators.

Molly McKinstry: What does that group do?

Fran Schumer: It's a group of people who do human resources for religious communities, parishes, dioceses to national organization and um, one of the religious communities in the Saint Louis area, the school sisters of Notre Dame had asked me to do any evaluation of their HR system, which I did, wrote a recommendation, wrote a job description and I was the only person that was interviewed to become their HR director. So I did that basically for nine years. Part of that, most of that time, six years of that was part time.

Fran Schumer: During that six years I had, um, I also served as for three years as executive director of the conference for Pastoral Planning and council development, which is another national Catholic organization that, uh, does pastoral planning for dioceses and parishes. Then I also served as administrative director for the center for survivors of torture and war trauma in Saint Louis

Molly McKinstry: We are going to get back to that.

Fran Schumer: Okay. Okay. Um, I've, there's always been a piece of me that's been very interested in the law. And at one point I probably would have been interested in getting a law degree, but never did that. Um, by this time in my life were in the, uh, early two thousands, um, I, uh, was looking for something else to do, didn't know what, um, how I wanted to move, where I wanted to move. Um, and by a chance meeting with my great nephews girlfriend who was getting a degree in paralegal studies, I thought, hmm.

Fran Schumer: So I did some research. I asked the community and um, they gave me, uh, permission to go to Webster University and get a certificate in paralegal studies. After I did that, I worked for three years with two, uh, attorneys in St Louis who were in private practice doing personal injury and worker's comp law and also became a volunteer at Catholic Legal Assistance Ministry, which is a service of Catholic charities in this archdiocese of St Louis providing legal services, especially, um, family law services to the poor. And so I did that. And then, and then from there I went, I went on the leadership team of the uh, adores the US regional leadership team and for the end of that time who says life doesn't go in circles. I was asked by the team, become the executive director based see home, which today is composed of three longterm care ministries and I still continue to oversee those ministries. And four years ago I moved to Wichita and was asked to be on the leadership team for the center here in Wichita.

Molly McKinstry: So you're kind of a Jane of all trades? Yes. Hmm. What do you think, you know, you've done a lot of different things, a lot of different degrees, a lot of different fields of study, both an education wise and then also work wise. What do you think, why do you think that is? Why do you think that's the route that life took you on?

Fran Schumer: Well for a lot of it because when they look at things, it's been interesting because for the most part it's either been three, six or nine year stints in anything I've done, which I just find that interesting when I go back and really reflect. I can see how each one of those has built on the previous one.

Molly McKinstry: So they were all preparing you for your next steps in life, right? Yeah. Uh, so I want to touch on one of the things you said, um, when you were talking about going back and getting your Paralegal, uh, studies degree. So this is another question that I get asked a lot. Um, you said that you asked the community for permission, which, uh, I think bristles a lot of people the wrong way and this idea of asking permission to do some thing. Can you expand a little bit and explain a little bit what that actually looks like and how it's a conversation not about control, but about, um, commitment and respect and collaboration.

Fran Schumer: When I made my vows, I made three vows. Yes. We've talked a little bit about the, of Celibacy. I made a vow of poverty. And then I also made a vow of obedience. Yes. And some people often obedience as the old, um, you know, blind obedience. If they tell you to plant the cabbages upside down, you plant them upside down and don't ask questions. That is not what obedience is about. Obedience really comes from a Latin word that means to hear. So obedience is about listening. It's about listening to God. It's about listening to myself in the sense of what gifts do I have, what you know, I mean, it would be irresponsible for me to say I'm going to go out in an earn a living as a pianist. I'm not a musician. That just does not make sense. Uh, now if you want something organized once something carried out, yes, I can do that. Um, but I listened to God, I listened to my, to what my gifts are, but I made these vows within a community. And so the other thing I have to look at is how is what I think I want to do? How does that fit into the mission of the community?

Fran Schumer: and you know what? So that's why I then enter into dialogue with leadership in terms of saying, okay, this is where I think I'm being called. This is how I think it fits into the mission of the community. But how do you see that fitting? You know, and that's, you know, sometimes that's been, I've never had, I've never been made a request to the community to do something or I've been denied in the midst of that conversation. The other side of that is, and that comes out in that, that long dissertation I just gave you that sometimes the other side of that is as the community comes and asks me, you know, the community came and said, and this was part of my discernment over that thing of, of going back into healthcare administration is at this point in time, the way we see things developing with these hospitals that we have is that would be the best use of your gifts for the benefit of the community and the mission.

Fran Schumer: Three years ago, um, after I'd moved here to Wichita and we were, there was a group of us discerning with leadership about who should be on the leadership team for this house. Out of that discernment came the invitation from leadership that Fran, we think you and your gifts along with those of another sister would be the best way to provide leadership for the community living here at the Wichita Center. So it's, you know, by, by making vows as part of a

religious community. It's not that I've abdicated my ability to make decisions, but those decisions are always made in the light of what's the common good for the mission of the commission.

Molly McKinstry: Yeah. I really liked the way you put that because I think people sometimes hear that word vow, our obedience and they think of the negative connotations when really, you know, we take vows in a lot of different ways in our lives. When you get married, you, you make vows to honor your partner, to create a life that benefits both of you. And I think that requires a level of obedience as well as listening to what do you do, you all need in this season of your life. Um, so I love that you got a chance to kind of touch on an area that people really bristle with when they don't spend a lot of time with religious communities. And as someone who spends obviously all my work hours, I mean no one would ever assume meek was written on any of your hands or that blind obedience is part of the adorers.

Molly McKinstry: So I love that you got a chance to talk about that. The other, uh, thing that I said to put a pin in, and this is a huge part of our history as a doors. You were on the leadership team in the 90s yes. Yes. I'm a early nineties, early nineties, and it was 1992, um, when five of our sisters were killed in Liberia during the civil war. Yes. And you held a really unique position during that time. You were the PR director for that new cycle, for lack of a better term for that. Can you talk about what it was like to be mourning and grieving the loss of your sisters and also being called to use the gifts that you had gained to tell their story and honor their memories? Uh, you know, really tumultuous time.

Fran Schumer: Yes, it was, it was a very interesting experience. It was the morning of early, very early on, the morning of October 31st of 1992 when we got the call that verified that the sisters had, had indeed all been killed in Liberia and the three of us that were on the leadership team at the time, we met and talked about, you know, how, where are we going to handle this? What were we going to do? And we decided from those early hours that yes, this was a tragic, these were five very vibrant vital women in our community. Um, their desks were horrendous. It's going to be a great loss to us, but how can we make the most out of this? And in a sense when I look back on that whole experience, it's without thinking about it and saying it in so many words, what came out was is how do we make this the living out of our precious blood spirituality. Um, what resurrection can we bring out of this Good Friday? And to us it was being able to tell the story of who they were, why they were there, And why they did what they did. And so that was the emphasis from the very beginning.

Fran Schumer: One of the things that I still remember very, very strongly as particularly in those early days, reporters would ask me, well, uh, you know, don't you want the men punish that? Did this, you know, don't you want revenge? And I found myself again without consciously saying, thinking it through saying, well, you know, we believe in justice and you know, yes, we would like to see them brought to justice, but, but revenge is not going to ring the sisters back. It's not going to change the situation. And it, it probably is one of the strongest points in my life

where I realized that what being an ASC met was really so embedded within me that it came out without my thinking. You know, cause sometimes you would, you know, you'd reflect on, well, you know, am I really living, you know, precious blood, spirituality or what does that mean? Or whatever. And in those moments, what I found was, is that yes, precious blood spirituality was a part of who we were and that was what we wanted to present to the world. Yeah.

Molly McKinstry: And this is a story that continues to be a part of the bedrock of who we are as ASC is, but continues to be a story that people, uh, in new generations, new, uh, groups of people are learning about, um, a book right now. The cost of compassion, uh, which is the story of our sisters in Liberia is up for an award. His name escapes me right now. Um, so what do you think that, uh, it's, it's been decades now, is it 25 years, 25 years? Um, what do you think 25 years later that looks like as the woman who really was in charge of crafting that story in, in the first place? You know, you were the one that they came to first. So what is it like 25 years later, I'm seeing that story continue to breathe life and, uh, and, and teach the ASC mission.

Fran Schumer: I guess I find it humbling. Um, I guess I'm proud of, you know, of who they were and what they did. You know, and I got to tell you, you know, I knew all five of these women, some better than others. Um, and very early on when they started talking there was talk about, oh, you know, should they be canonized? Are we going to work to have them canonized? And they were being called, you know, saints or Martyrs of charity. And I'm like, hold the phone. I had unfinished business with at least one of those people. And I'm like, you know, I've lived in rub shoulders with them.

Fran Schumer: So it took me a while to work through some of my own personal reactions. Um, but I think now looking back on it 25 years later, I guess I'm amazed, I guess I shouldn't be though, you know, because they were strong women. They were, um, they had impacted many lives before they went to Liberia and they certainly impacted me in lives in Liberia. And I guess I, it's interesting to look at, to look at it in terms of this is another way of spreading our mission of sharing who we are, of sharing of what God's love is about. And I'm, like I said, I'm very humbled and very proud to be, to, to ride on their shirt tails, so to speak. Now,

Molly McKinstry: so you said currently you are the executive director of ASC Health, right? Um, how long have you been doing that?

Fran Schumer: Since April 1st of 19. Of 2012 because it's so, it's seven years.

Molly McKinstry: So you've, I'm assuming with your, your, uh, history, it's going to be nine years. That's what we're moving forward and it looks like, I mean, we're past the six, so, so what do you, are you feeling called are pulled to something else? Are you waiting to see what presents itself to you in your next, uh, next trade?

Fran Schumer: Well, I think at this time in my life, I'm more aware, very much aware of the fact that my life is on the downward slope. And I don't mean to say that, you know, morbidly or you know, with, um, I mean I've, I've enjoyed my life. I've lived a full life, but my body does let me know that I am not 40 anymore and I'm actually not 50 anymore. Um, you know, I do. I don't know actually now that I think about it that I really thought much about what comes next because at this point I don't see, I'm beginning to see, I guess some light maybe at the end of the tunnel. Um, I guess I'd like to continue to, to see the next stage in my life as being a chance too, to find ways in groups that can benefit from my gifts and my life experience.

Fran Schumer: Whether that's, I'm one of these weird people that really don't mind serving on boards. And I see that as I have less and less physical energy to maybe do a lot of intense kinds of things as being a way to influence organizations. Um, one of the things I had I came to grips with back in that, that point in my life when I was asked to, to go back to school into health administration, and I wrestled for a couple of years with that whole thing about, you know, this is not why I did not come to the community to run things or organize things. I came to the community to spread God's love and to be his love and compassion to people in need. But it came to realize that, you know, when you really look at Jesus' life, he ministered in three ways. Yes, he reached out and touched people.

Fran Schumer: He healed people. He provided food. He wrote, he brought people back from the dead. He also worked hard to change the religious system of his day, that oppressed people. And then there's that other whole first 30 years of his life that we just totally overlook that. I can't believe he wasn't out. He was touching the world then too. I call that his ministry of presence, but looking at it his life that way helped me see that. Okay. You know? Yes. When I worked at the children's home and worked with the, the, the kids who needed love and caring or whatever. Yes, I was touching, I was bringing Jesus's love, but I'm doing that same thing when I'm on the board of an organization are when I'm on the leadership team of the community, trying to make sure that we're carrying out those principles in an organizational kind of way, that we're treating people the way Jesus would treat them in those sorts of things. And so that's what most of my life ministry, when you look back on it, his bed, and I just figured that whatever the next phase going to be, it's going to be somehow continuing along that line of being able to help make policy, influence organizations, whatever that might be. Yeah.

Molly McKinstry: Ah, so the one static question we always ask in this podcast is about habits, which is of course the namesake podcast. What would you say your best habit is?

Fran Schumer: I hope my best habit is being able to listen and being present to people.

Molly McKinstry: Yeah.

Molly McKinstry: So that they know that they're cared for and that they're loved and the whatever the burdens are. They may be caring, but they don't have to carry those along.

Molly McKinstry: Okay.

Molly McKinstry: And what do you think your worst habit?

Fran Schumer: becoming addicted to games on my phone.

Molly McKinstry: What's your favorite? What's your favorite phone game?

Fran Schumer: Well, it has been word cross, but I'm kind of getting, they're either getting harder or I'm not doing as well. And so I'm at level 3000 something or the other and I'm about ready to, to move, to move on to something else. But you know, there's always toy blast and there's always crossword puzzles and there's always my five versions of solitaire. Then I play. So there'll be something out there.

Molly McKinstry: Well there you go. Thanks so much for joining us. I had a blast catching up with you and I bet we'll bring you back. You have too many stories to catch and just went. So thanks so much for sharing with us today.

Fran Schumer: Well, you're welcome. I've thoroughly enjoyed it and as you can tell, I love telling my story because I, to me, it's one of the best ways I can praise God for what he's done in my life.

Molly McKinstry: Well, we're certainly looking forward to seeing what, what's next for you. You've only got two years left in this cycle, so thank you so much and thank you. You too.

New Speaker: Thanks for joining us for show notes and behind the scenes check out our website at adorers.org Habits is brought to you by the Adorers of the Blood of Christ US region coproduced by Cheryl Wittenauer, Laurie Benge and Molly McKinstry. Edited by Molly McKinstry. Thanks. We'll see you all next week.