

WHY I BECAME AN ASSOCIATE

Mr. Larry Burich

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Companion Sisters: Sisters Margaret Guider and MJ Griffin, OSF

Why I became an Associate, seems like such an easy question, yet when I try to give an easy answer, it doesn't seem to be there.

I suppose, like most Associates, I was first asked by none other than someone who was already an Associate. I was cognizant of the Associate Program from all my years of working at the University of St. Francis, and through the relationships I had developed with several of the Sisters. That is probably the greatest reason I can think of for joining, because of the great relationships I've had over the years with so many of the Sisters, and the respect I have for who they are and what they do.

Over my lifetime, I can't think of a time when there wasn't a Sister who had been there making some sort of an impact on my life. From my early years, starting with my aunt who was a Lemont Franciscan, to the Sisters who taught me, and to the Sisters I am so proud to be a part of as an Associate. There are so many I could mention who have influenced me in one form or fashion, but that list would fill too many pages. From Sr. Rosemary to Sr. Meg, from Sr. Catherine (Ferdie) to Sr. MJ... they have all been an important part of my life at one time or another. But it's really what the Sisters of St. Francis stand for that makes it so great to be associated with them. The compassion they have for others, the need to help those who require assistance, the ability to adapt to the needs of the community, or the ever-changing world, to be a voice for those who aren't able to speak, and to help educate all those whose lives they impact, while continuing to educate themselves and their Associates.

I still am pretty new to the Associates Program and know that as a male I may be considered in the minority, but I realize that we haven't even scratched the surface of what we can do together as a Community. Whenever I get the chance to be with the Sisters and my fellow Associates, I always feel at home and at peace.

I have always said that when a group of people get together to perform a task that group is called a committee; but when a group of people come together to do God's work they are called a Community. And I can't think of a greater Community to be a part of than the Sisters of St. Francis.



Larry and one of his companion Sisters, Sister MJ Griffin, OSF