

I have always been a fan of Robert Frost. One of my favorite poems is “The Road Not Taken.” It speaks to who I am, where I have been, and where I am going. Please don’t get the wrong impression! I have never done grandiose things like—been a missionary in a foreign land, traveled the world, or even run a marathon. More aptly speaking, my version of the Frost poem would be entitled “The Winding Path.”

I was born into a loving, Catholic home sixty-three years ago. It is hard for me to imagine that I am that old. I still have the spirit of a much younger person. Maybe that’s delusion instead of reality or perhaps it is my ever-optimistic spirit that “we are only as old as we think!” Right!

Anyway, I was the oldest of six born into a French-Canadian family in New Hampshire. Three of my four grand-parents were born in Canada. Growing up, we lived in a tenement in Manchester, New Hampshire. I was educated first by the Sisters of the Holy Cross (les Soeurs de Sainte-Croix) and later by the Sisters of Mercy. I was strongly influenced by the Carmelites for the Aged and Infirm who ran a nursing home in Manchester. Starting in eighth grade I spent almost every Saturday at the Mount Carmel Nursing Home as a Carmelette (that is what we young volunteers were called). I could have been home helping my mother, but instead, I was at Mount Carmel helping the aged.

After high school, I entered Carmel but only stayed through the postulancy. I loved working with the elderly, and I loved the sisters. I realized, though, that God had other plans for me. I switched from aspirations of being a nurse to dedicating myself to education. This is where the winding path begins. I really thought I was meant to be a sister and a nurse—but, I ended up going to college for education and marrying following my junior year.

Now, I am the mother of three wonderful, grown children and the grandmother of five. I have been married for almost forty-one years. I have recently retired as an elementary school principal having spent thirty-three years in the field of education. I thought I would spend my days as a classroom teacher, and I did for fifteen of those thirty-three years. Yes, here is another one of those twists in the path. I love being challenged, so I went into administration. My administrative jobs ranged from being an assistant superintendent to being a district-wide curriculum director. I always wanted to end my career working with the very young—and I did. My last four years were spent as a primary school principal. I loved it!

As to the spiritual side of this journey, it didn't end with my leaving Carmel. That was just the beginning. I have always had a desire to follow Jesus. I just chose to follow him as a lay person in the Church. He showed me that I could use my talents working within my family, within my schools, and within my church. That is what I have been doing. I spend each day trying to live my best and follow Him.

I have been fortunate to be involved with the Assumptionists for the past 36 years as a communicant of St. Anne-St. Patrick Parish in Fiskdale, Massachusetts. St. Anne's is one of the few parishes and shrines in the United States operated by the Assumptionists. I have grown to know these men, respect them, and admire their charism. The best part is that I consider them my friends.

I hope you journey with me as I continue my quest to live out the life the Lord has planned for me. Perhaps we can discover Him along the way together.