



Sr. Marie Janesch, MSC

I was born in Allentown, PA, but after I finished 3rd grade my family moved out of the city to a small rural area outside of Coopersburg. It was there that I was taught by the MSC Sisters through Grade 8. I always wanted to be a "Sister" from the time I was little. I never wanted to be anything else.

So, after Grade 8 I entered the aspirancy of the MSC Sisters, St. Michael High School in Reading. Not having had any sisters at home, only brothers, I now had lots of "sisters".

My original intention was to be a teacher, but I was directed to nursing instead - and to this day I am very happy that I was.

My first name for my religious life was Sister Cecilia, but later, when we were given the opportunity to go back to our baptismal name, I chose to do so. Some may know me as Sr. Cecilia and others as Sr. Marie.

A few years after finishing nursing school, I began something which was very enjoyable - teaching Nursing of Children - or Pediatric nursing - to our students at Sacred Heart Hospital School of Nursing in Allentown, PA. It was truly a joy to do this, and at the same time, to take care of sick children.

Other places of ministry included being a member of the General Administration Team of The Missionary Sisters of the Most Sacred Heart at our headquarters in Italy for six years. During my time on the General Administration Team, I became familiar with our Sisters all over the world and their impactful ministries.

After my time in Italy, I was invited and asked to go to Namibia, formerly Southwest Africa. I said I'd go for three years, but I stayed in this beautiful country with beautiful people for 15.5 years. While there, I assisted young African women in preparing for religious life. I eventually became a member of the Provincial Administration in Namibia, thereby helping the Namibian Sisters in whatever way I could to become their own leaders - and they do well to this day.



My assignment to Namibia was one of great joy among the African Sisters. I cherish my time getting to know the Namibian people, their way of living, their joy with the little they had, and the glory of seeing God's creatures in the "wild"!

I returned to the United States in 2008, bringing beautiful memories with me. My memories are of much joy to me. No matter where I was, whether with little children who would say, "Here comes the Blessed Mother" because of my long white habit and veil, or taking care of the children, some seriously ill and some dying, I enjoyed fulfilling my MSC mission of love as a nurse.

Soon after returning to the U.S. I became the Provincial Archivist for a number of years for our congregation, and I also spent 10 years on a part-time basis as chaplain at a retirement community in the Reading area.

And now, at age 91, I am retired and living in community with my fellow Sisters at St. Joseph Villa in Reading, PA.