



Vows of poverty, chastity, obedience begin a way of life longed-for by Sister Elizabeth Rose

Somehow God unfolded for Sister Elizabeth Rose Ann Hoering His plan and made it clear that the Monastery of the Immaculate Heart of Mary in Westfield was the place for her.

“I experienced a great interior freedom” at the monastery, she said. “Slowly, God was able to show me that this way of life was actually what I had desired all along.”

Sister Elizabeth Rose, 26, made her profession of triennial vows as a Benedictine nun during a Mass celebrated in Latin by Bishop Salvatore R. Matano, Bishop of Burlington, at the monastery on March 25, the Solemnity of the Annunciation.

Reflecting on the Virgin Mary and the angel’s annunciation to her that she would bear the Son of God, Bishop Matano said she “acted with complete faith,” and her faith never wavered.

He spoke also of the Blessed Mother’s humility and simplicity. “Mary is present to guide us in our journey of life,” to guide us to her Son, he said.

The bishop told Sister Elizabeth Rose that Mary is her pattern for religious life as she intensifies her commitment to Christ as his bride and pledges to Christ her entire being without reserve, vowing poverty, chastity, and obedience.

During the monastic profession, Sister Elizabeth Rose was questioned in Latin by the prioress if she vowed stability, conversion of her life in poverty and chastity and obedience according to the Rule of St. Benedict. “Promitto” (“I vow this”), the young nun replied.

She made the vows for three years.

Sister Elizabeth Rose received the chart of her monastic vows, which she had written in her own hand, read it and signed it before showing it to the bishop. After presenting the chart to the prioress, she placed her hands between the hands of the prioress who welcomed her with the kiss of peace.

Bishop Matano gave Sister Elizabeth Rose the long scapular to signify her monastic profession, saying, in Latin, “May the Lord clothe you as a new creation, formed according to God in righteousness and the holiness of truth and fidelity.”

Sister Elizabeth Rose, the daughter of John and Tamerson



(Photos by Cori Fugere Uhan)

Sister Elizabeth Rose Ann Hoering reads her monastic profession of triennial vows during a Mass March 25, the Solemnity of the Annunciation, at the Monastery of the Immaculate Heart of Mary in Westfield. She stands behind the enclosure.



Newly professed Sister Elizabeth Rose Ann Hoering signs her monastic vows. She received the three sacraments of initiation to become a Catholic during her senior year in college. She attended Bowdoin College in Brunswick, Maine, earning a bachelor’s degree in geology in 2006.

Hoering of Brunswick, Maine, is a native of Freeport, Maine; she has two sisters. She graduated from Freeport High School in 2002 and Bowdoin College in Brunswick, Maine, with a bachelor's degree in geology in 2006.

After college, she worked as a lab technician at Bigelow Laboratories for Ocean Sciences in Boothbay Harbor, Maine.

It was during her sophomore year in college that she had a life-transforming experience: she participated in a spring-break service trip to Lima, Peru, where her group built a park in one of the poorer areas of the city. Though the trip was not religiously oriented, she worked closely with the members of the Christian Life Movement, a society of apostolic life with branches of both consecrated men and women, founded by Brother Luis Fernando Figari in Lima. There are also families involved in the movement.

"This was my first real contact with consecrated life as well as my introduction to the Catholic Church," she said, noting that, during that time in Peru and an additional three months she spent there, she was deeply touched by "the concrete reality of poverty and suffering" along with the joy of working to help others. She was challenged and puzzled by the fact that the members of the movement had consecrated their entire lives to God, and she was deeply moved by "their seemingly infinite need for 'something,'" and concluded that if she has such a need there "had to exist that 'something'—really a Someone—who can fill it." Thus she was led to the Catholic Church and received the three sacraments of initiation—Baptism, Eucharist and Confirmation—during her senior year in college.

Her discernment of religious life was the natural outcome of her decision to become Catholic, she explained. "I said, 'OK, here I am, God—what do you want me to do?' By the grace of God, for me, it was not a question of if I was called or not, but simply, where."

She found help from the "Fraternas" (the consecrated women's branch of the Peruvian movement, which has houses in the United States). One acted as a mentor and was her sponsor in the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults program. She also received help from parish priests at St. John the Baptist and St. Charles Borromeo parishes in Brunswick, and her college chaplain, now Capuchin Father Richard Crawley, currently serving as a parochial vicar of St. Peter Parish in Rutland.

She entered the Westfield monastery on Feb. 23, 2008.

"The best advice I received, and which I would share with others, is to simply ask and trust that God has called me and so He would show me the way," said Sister Elizabeth Rose, who also considered entering the Missionaries of Charity to work with the poor. "It was also very important for me to live in the present moment, doing step-by-step whatever He asked."

She said her hope "is to let God make of my life whatever is most pleasing to Him, because I know in that way it will be greater than anything I could imagine."

For more information about vocations to religious life, contact Father Daniel White, vocations director for the Diocese of Burlington, at vocations@vermontcatholic.org.

*Article written by Cori Fugere Urban,
Vermont Catholic staff writer*



Sister Elizabeth Rose Ann Hoering shows her monastic vows to Bishop Salvatore R. Matano, Bishop of Burlington, who presided at her monastic profession of triennial vows March 25 at the Monastery of the Immaculate Heart of Mary in Westfield.