



A Surprising Journey of Love

“God chose the lowly and despised of the world, those who count for nothing, to reduce to nothing those who are something, so that no human being might boast before God. It is due to Him that you are in Christ Jesus...” (1 Corinthians 1:28-30) It all came about so very surprisingly. *Me? Oh no, Jesus, surely not I. You must have mistaken me for someone else.* As a naïve two-week-old freshman in college, my call to religious life, initially, was anything but well received. It is significant to note that my fear and trepidation was not due to the nature of the call, but rather due to my deep misconceptions of it.

On July 28, 1995, Gordon and Margaret Laville received their first child. I am told I was rather short-tempered and difficult to appease. Most of my early childhood took place in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. For a brief period, we lived in El Dorado, Arkansas, where I received, for the first time, the sacraments of Reconciliation and Holy Communion. By 2005, we (I was now the oldest of four children) landed in the Leawood/Overland Park area where I attended Nativity Parish School for fifth through eighth grade.

The development of my character springs from two rich sources: my father and ballet. Unbeknownst to my father, nor to my dance instructors, Christ used them both to prepare me for religious life. My father taught me how to love and how to obey, for it is in loving that we obey and in obeying that we love. I remember as a little girl trying to convince him to do something for me. “Dad, if you do, I’ll be your *best friend*.” Without flinching, he gently replied, “I don’t want to be your friend. I want to be your father.” My dance instructors taught me how to spend all of myself for something I love. “No pain, no gain” was applied in the studio daily.

However, by the end of my high school career at Blue Valley North, life at Kansas City Ballet School left me empty—I was thirsting for something more. As I began to let go of dance, I became heavily involved in The Learning Club in KCK. My fruitful tutoring experiences with these children led me to pursue Elementary Education at Fort Hays State University in 2013. Providentially, God used the Catholic campus center there to make my prayer life expand and flourish beyond measure. It was there, in the amber waves of grain, that Christ asked me to follow Him by a narrower path and with undivided love.

As I mentioned before, I was initially very frightened of this call. I desired marriage and family life tremendously. *Does God care about my desires? Doesn’t He know that I’m not good enough to be a Sister?* With every sign He gave me, my fear and denial grew.

Ever so patiently, with overflowing graces, Jesus showed me the reason for His call: His abounding, infinite love for a little girl in Kansas. How could I say no to Love itself? Finding myself in Wichita during an internship with a pro-life organization, Justice for All, I encountered the Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary from a distance at a weekday Mass. I felt drawn toward their community, which led to visiting the convent and applying for entrance. I entered the community on August 14, 2015 and made my first profession of vows on April 28, 2018. After five years in the convent, you may wonder, *is she still happy?* The degree of my joy grows daily, for there is no place I’d rather be than living in Heaven on earth.

