



All of Which Woman Is Capable

Veronica Jones

Sister Veronica Jones openly admits to something some women wouldn't—"I am in my 80th year!"

I was born in the state of Nebraska in the heart of the Midwest where the tall corn grows and where there is land as far as one could see. Life was simple, family oriented, healthy and carefree. When I was a toddler, my father gave up farming, rented his farm, and moved his family to a small town in Iowa where I lived until my adulthood."

But this octogenarian says, "I experience myself as ageless." Physically, she has the look of a middle-aged woman with flawless skin, sparkling eyes and the demeanor of one who savors life to the fullest. There is nothing coy or false about her acceptance of her physical gifts since "all comes from God," and she added, "plus lots of milk and good ordinary midwestern fare."

Although "retired," she enjoys the same activities she has always enjoyed which have to do with the one-on-one relationships

whether in the classroom, personal formation activities, therapy work with adults and children, visiting young women in prison, or being with the sisters in Holy Family Community.

From her earliest religious life, she has filled many ministry slots as teacher, principal, living a simple life in Portland, OR as a pioneer in an experimental intercommunity setting. In the '80s she facilitated PRH sessions-- Personality and Human Relations-- which explored "the make up of the human person in order to foster deeper self knowledge and to enhance life-giving relationships." She became a Licensed Marriage Family Therapist and worked at Catholic Charities. She relocated to Glendora and lived with the Benedictine Sisters to be nearer to her aging mother. She worked as Psychotherapist at Chaminade Middle School in Chatsworth, CA. Today, she does part-time counseling at two Catholic elementary schools in the Valley and visits Holy Family sisters on alternate Wednesdays.

"I am of a contemplative nature," she says, and easily embraces the world as her cloister.

She is at home wherever that is. With her one and only reception member, Sister Anne Faber, she has made retreat in diverse places including Eastern Point in Gloucester, MA, Gethsemane KY, Sacred Heart Retreat, Sedalia, CO, the Cistercians in Vina, CA.

Relaxation also adds to her agelessness. Veronica has made trips to Las Vegas to try a hand with Lady luck or drive to visit her nephews in Colorado, or to enjoy Shakespeare in Ashland, OR. She celebrated her 80th birthday on a retreat in Sligo, Ireland, (one of three trips to her cousins there), and made the CSJ Le Puy Pilgrimage.

In doing all that a woman is capable of doing, Veronica has added a new Ministry of Camaraderie with women friends who meet to enjoy each others company at the movies, restaurants, or coffee shops. No agendas or qualification—just fun.

Perhaps young forever is synonymous for ageless 80. ☺

Written by Teresa Ann Coronas, CSJ