



All of Which Woman Is Capable

Sister Maureen Fallon is an “OK” CSJ. Her mantras—“Everything’s OK” and “So far, so very, very good,”—enhance her cool, unflappable and quiet presence. She lives her religious life in such an ordinary way it becomes exceptional in its day-to-day appeal and simplicity, so her many friends say.

Her Irish wit and faith “Make her a very easy person to live with in community,” said Sister Diane Smith, her regional, “but she will act vigorously against any form of injustice.”

Over half a century ago, when sand dunes and grasses dotted San Francisco’s Ocean Beach and Parkside Districts, Sister Maureen and her gang spent their young years running and playing in the wind and sand by the beach, before “little box houses” covered the coastline from Daly City to the Cliff House.

The Fallon family were pioneers in San Francisco’s St. Gabriel Parish. “We had Mass in an empty store and there was no

school. We went to neighboring St. Cecilia’s and were taught by Holy Names Sisters.”

Her dad did volunteer gardening work for the Sisters of the Holy Names and Maureen always tagged along. “The wonderful nuns would take me into their kitchen and give me Oreos and milk, which was great!”

In high school, she followed her sister Jane across Golden Gate Park to Star of the Sea Academy where she met her first CSJs. She fondly remembers Sisters Helen Clare Fenton (little but mighty), Patricia Clare Mullin and Eugene McKee.

In 1955, Sister William Flanagan was on hand to help fill her trunk with “convent things” before she joined the CSJs. True San Franciscans, she and two friends, Betty Daly (S Timothy Anne) and Joy Giovanonni (S Joy) enlivened the train ride to Los Angeles with their youthful exuberance. They also made CSJ history as members of Carondelet Center’s first postulant group.

Her community years were mainly in elementary education. “I taught first grade for fifteen years and loved every minute, then moved to the middle grades. I eventually moved into

Parent education, CCD work and coordinated parish programs. I spent time as an Ombudsman in a nursing home advocating patient rights while visiting and being a good listener to the lonely, and worked at Concord’s Carondelet High School library.” She and her sister, Jane, were caregivers during their Mom’s ending days.

The changes in housing for religious today have touched her. Without a convent nearby, she lives in an apartment building (Chateau) in Concord and forms community with Sister Mary Braun and Patricia Ann Gilligan who also live there. A quiet contentment prevails. “I have a small one bedroom apartment with a delightful porch shadowed by a lovely maple tree that turns orange in autumn. In my free time, I read, listen to music, draw, go to the movies and enjoy nature.”

Still doing all that a *woman is capable of doing*, her current ministry is in Religious Education at Concord’s St Francis Assisi Parish. She also “tried to live our charism by reaching out to our apartment friends with kindness and compassion.” And yes, all is done with Irish eyes that truly smile. ☩

Written by Teresa Ann Coronas, CSJ