

Sister Sheila Schnell Jubilee Reflection

I was 19 years old, in my first year at Presentation College, when I experienced an overwhelming sense of God's love for me and call to live a deeper spiritual life. I found myself desiring to respond by committing to a vowed life with the Presentation Sisters. Since that time, my life as a religious sister has been blessed abundantly through the many opportunities offered by the community to study Scripture and theology, devote time to prayer and contemplation, and to share community life with faith-filled women who share the same call, desires and values.

There was a point in my religious life journey that I began to realize God's "option for the poor." If the poor dwelt so deeply in God's heart, how could they not be in mine as well? I felt an urging to change course in ministry, and begin to learn how to walk with God's poor and welcome the stranger in our midst. With total trust in God and the support of the Sisters, I helped initiate an outreach ministry to our Latino sisters and brothers, called Caminando Juntos (walking together). **Over the last 20 years we've walked with many thousands of newly arrived Latinos in the Sioux Falls area. Sharing in this ministry with my Sisters has been the joy of my life. Sharing love and welcoming to God's beloved Latinos has enriched my life beyond measure.**

As I now begin my retirement years, I feel my life has come "full circle." I am blessed to have more time for reading, reflection and contemplative prayer ... keeping God's poor and suffering always in my heart. The journey I began at age 19 has revealed the meaning of my life, which has been full, rich and deeply blessed.