

Sister Sarah Manchester, a Colorado Native, has had a rich life and career prior to becoming a Sister. She grew up in Steamboat Springs with parents who were both educators. After high school, she attended the University of Northern Colorado and earned two Bachelors of Arts in Elementary and Music Education in 1965 and a Master of Arts in Psychological Counseling and Guidance in 1967.

Sarah taught for twenty-five years in Colorado Springs and Manitou Springs, mostly with first graders. She delighted to see how much they could enthusiastically learn in one year.

In the 1960's, Sarah married Cliff Manchester. They celebrated twenty-five years of marriage with their seven children before Cliff's death. In the following five years, Sarah discerned a religious vocation with eight different communities of sisters.

Sarah has always loved to learn. Her Administrative Certificate from the University of Denver assisted her as the Director of Religious Education at Sacred Heart Church in Colorado Springs, in work with the Lakota people on the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota, and in service on the Provincial Council of Sacred Heart Province for ten years before becoming Vicar in 2020, where she served until chapter in 2022.

Sister Sarah Manchester entered the Sisters of St. Francis of Penance and Christian Charity from Manitou Springs to Marycrest in 1998. In the fall of that year, Sister Sarah was called to Holy Rosary Mission to serve as Religious Education Coordinator at Sacred Heart Church in Pine Ridge, South Dakota. In the fall of 1999, she entered the novitiate at Queen of Peace in Denver. During the two-year novitiate she completed three years of study with the Catholic Biblical School in Denver. During this time, she also participated in two month-long hermitage experiences.

Sister Sarah benefited from her studies in Pastoral Ministry from St. Mary's University in Minnesota (1998) in positions as Coordinator of fifty people in fifteen Small Christian Communities at Sacred Heart Church in Colorado Springs; as trainer for Prayer Leaders for the churches of the Grand Island Diocese in Nebraska; as Lay Minister Trainer for Catechesis and Liturgy for the twelve churches on the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota (2002-2010); as Pastoral Minister at Holy Rosary Parish in Alliance, Nebraska (2001); and as Pastoral Minister/Administrator at St. Bridget's Parish in Hemingford, Nebraska (2002-2015).

In 2003, Sister Sarah began study for Spiritual Direction and Retreat Ministry and a Master of Arts Degree in Christian Spirituality from Creighton University. She completed these studies in 2005. She continues to enjoy this ministry with Spiritual Directees in Colorado

and Nebraska. She made her final vows in 2004. She continued her studies with the Catholic Biblical School online and completed their four-year program in 2009.

Sister Sarah served on the Provincial Council from 2007 through 2011 and again from 2015 through 2021. By 2016, she moved to the Denver area to better serve the Province. She volunteered as Lay Visitor Coordinator for St. Bernadette's Parish and visited residents in nursing homes each week (until COVID struck). The Archdiocesan Women's Guild asked Sister Sarah to be their Spiritual Guide, which she finds to be a very meaningful ministry (also disrupted by the pandemic).

A few of Sister Sarah's favorite things include learning, reading, gardening, meeting with people one-on-one or in small groups (spiritual directees, sisters, family members), solitude for praying and reflecting, time with her kitten Gabriella, and just appreciating God's creation.

Spiritual Statements:

- Vocation – to be a bridge spanning perceived differences, for we are all called to be “one.”
- In Service – in ministry called to decrease as others are enabled and encouraged to assume the leadership and ministry.
- Love to learn and am most grateful for all that has been, “thanks,” for all that will be, “yes,” and for each moment of the precious present, “Amen!”

