

2018

Sr. Estelle: When in Rome

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Massey, Ashley. "Sr. Estelle: When in Rome" (2018). *Ask a Sister: Interview Wisdom from Catholic Women Religious*.
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Ashley Massey

Sister Estelle: When in Rome

Abstract: This is a two page excerpt from an interview conducted with Sister Estelle in December 2017. She worked for twelve years in Europe representing her Union, but now that she is back in the states, she focuses on vocational work and helping people find out where they belong.

Sister Estelle has been blessed with a life full of opportunities one can only dream of. She has been all over the world, all in the name of ministry. When she dedicated her life to Christ and started out as a teacher, as so many sisters do, she probably never imagined what God had in store for her or her passport.

Sister Estelle was given the opportunity of a lifetime for women religious and was asked to serve on the international leadership team in Europe. She and eight other women religious were a leadership team for their specific union. She actually got to travel around the globe to visit the other women of her union and help them with their mission and other administrative things as part of her job. She said she did not always get to choose where she went, but she was able to make her preference known whether that was where she was sent or not. She always followed where God sent her and that led to many adventures. During our interview, she started trying to name off all the countries she has been to, which amounted to at least one from every continent except Antarctica, the only continent without any women religious from her union. She eventually decided to go back to her office to look at the map on her wall so she could more easily remember where she had been.

She served in Europe for twelve years, two six-year terms, and lived with women from around the world. While they did live mostly in Italy, they mostly all spoke French instead of Italian as their shared language. When she came home she was able to go on Sabbatical which, for her, meant spending time with her aging mother and other family members, doing lots of reading and praying, and spending time getting re-accustomed to American culture.

Now that she has been back for a while and has fully re-immersed herself into the culture, her work is very different from her work across the sea, although it is still very different from what she is really hoping to someday be able to do. When prompted, she said she wanted to help the refugee effort in America. She would just want to relocate to the south, perhaps Texas or New Orleans where she might pull back out her French and help refugees from Francophone countries be able to assimilate and find a way to thrive instead of just survive. Perhaps someday that will be where God puts her, but wherever she is called, she will gladly go and she will always end up going on an adventure.

Works Cited

“Sister Estelle.” Interview by author. December 19, 2017.