# All Things Marian – February 22, 2024 – Sr. Jean Frisk, My Life with Mary

[00:00:00] You are listening to Radio Maria, a Catholic voice in your home. We now present our new program, All Things Marian, brought to you by the International Marian Research Institute of the University of Dayton.

[00:00:32] **Michele Foley:** Welcome friends. We're so happy to have you join us today. Today we announce an exciting change to our program, a wonderful sponsor with a name change, and I will explain our focus. Our new name is All Things Marian. Our new sponsor is the International Marian Research Institute of the University of Dayton in Dayton, Ohio.

[00:01:03] **Michele Foley:** Its participants are the alumni, alumnae, and friends. Our focus is All Things Marian. Theology, spirituality, devotion, history, psychology, and culture regarding the mother of Jesus, our spiritual mother and the mother of our church. So we thank the University of Dayton's International Marian Research Institute and its Director and our director, Father Roten, and the director of the International Marian Research Institute, Dr.

[00:01:41] **Michele Foley:** Neomi DeAnda, for this wonderful collaboration. Our presenter today is Sister Jean Frisk. Sister is a consecrated religious of the Sisters of Schoenstatt of Mary. Our series will continue as we have explained that we have had three speakers in the past three weeks. The first speaker was Michele Deavitt, who is the president of the Friends of the Crèche.

[00:02:15] **Michele Foley:** Friends of the Crèche is an international organization. Our second speaker, rather, was Dr. Maria Garcia Gallegos and Dr. Maria is on the staff and is in charge of Hispanic evangelization here in the Dayton, Ohio area. Our third presenter was a wonderful lady, Carol McClennan, and she is a preserver of the Polish and Ukrainian heritage and worked with a wonderful lady who has since passed away, not too far back, a couple of years.

[00:03:00] **Michele Foley:** Uh, Mrs. Danuta Romanowska, who was from Poland and was a survivor of the camps in the Second World War. Mrs. McLennan gave a wonderful, wonderful presentation. So, we are talking about Mary in my, in our lives. And as I said, today's presenter is Sister Jean Frisk. Sister Jean has earned her sacred theological licentiate from the International Marian Research Institute, and she was a teacher for many years.

[00:03:36] **Michele Foley:** She is a catechist and has been on several, uh, boards, which contributed to, uh, teaching, uh, programs for, uh, about Our Lady for schools teaching catechism of the Catholic Church. Excuse me. Sister has also co authored at least two books that I'm aware of. One we love so much is Mary's Flowers. And she wrote the um, uh, spiritual reflections in that book.

[00:04:12] **Michele Foley:** And a brother, Joe Barrish, who is a Marianist, did all of the wood cuttings which were used in the book for the flowers. And we are going to have Sister Jean with us.

[00:04:28] **Sr. Jean Frisk:** Hello, Sister. Hello, Michelle. Go ahead and continue with Brother Berrish's work. Well, and

[00:04:36] **Michele Foley:** then, uh, the other co author of that book and the Healing Plants of the Bible as well was, um, now, my, my brain

[00:04:47] **Sr. Jean Frisk:** went Who was it?

[00:04:49] **Sr. Jean Frisk:** Vincenzina Krymow. That's right. That's

[00:04:53] right.

[00:04:54] **Michele Foley:** Many of you probably have that book and I hope you have an opportunity to see those beautiful pictures, the explanation of the flowers and to read Sister's Reflections. Sister has also been a wonderful contributor to Marian Scholastic Studies. So welcome sister and thank you for coming on to the program for our new sponsor, the International Marian Research Institute of the University of Dayton.

[00:05:28] **Michele Foley:** So share with us today. Your journey with

[00:05:32] **Sr. Jean Frisk:** Mary. Thank you very much. And I was just enjoying this. I had a little bit difficulty Hooking up with you, but I made it now So this is wonderful. Actually that book with Vincenzina was a very special Endeavor. She was an elderly person who wanted to have a hobby as well.

[00:05:52] **Sr. Jean Frisk:** And her decision was to study Mary But she wanted to do it under a specific point of view, and her point of view was the symbolisms of Mary. How is Mary used in symbols? And she was reading something in the Marian Library, and it dawned on her that flowers are often called after Mary. You know, the Lily of the Valley is after, something like that is called after Mary, and many, many others.

[00:06:18] **Sr. Jean Frisk:** So she started doing this wonderful research and found all kinds of legends and beautiful stories that go all the way from back to the Middle Ages. And that was how she started. Then she said to me, now I would like you to write a little meditation about the flower that we'll put at the footnote. And of course we enjoyed that.

[00:06:39] **Sr. Jean Frisk:** And I can mention to you also that. This book, uh, did receive the first prize for the, uh, Catholic Publishing of the year, for that time, for Catholic Publishing, and gave an award to Vincenzina, also Brother Berrish, of course, but she was the main writer, uh, for that book, so it was very famous. We did a second book, but that didn't go over quite as well, and I think part of it is also the person who did the graphic work, putting that book together.

[00:07:09] **Sr. Jean Frisk:** The book was just beautiful, really a beautiful picture of our lady, uh, besides on the cover with a garden and that garden then of course became the sort of say the tricker of this whole point of view. So it, she sold out, I think they sold out that book twice. No, I'm sorry, four times. They had to reprint.

[00:07:33] **Sr. Jean Frisk:** That's right. Four times. And it was really quite nice. The other one was similar. But not as pretty. That book didn't seem, it was all of the healing plants of the Bible. And that one got very deep studies also. But the coloring and the, the artist who had done the first one was no longer at the publisher.

[00:07:54] **Sr. Jean Frisk:** So they, the second publisher, Uh, personnel there didn't do quite as nice and beautiful a job. But, anyway, the two books both were award winning books, and we were very proud and happy about that because it honored Our Blessed Mother. And you discovered, she discovered devotions to Mary all over the world, if you will, but very especially in England.

[00:08:19] **Sr. Jean Frisk:** They had such beautiful legends about the Blessed Mother. In fact, the You know, as we all know, the, uh, Henry VIII, with wanting to have a child, uh, married, what, how many wives? And, uh, then the Catholics were kind of, um, persecuted, not only kind of, but the Catholics had secret ways surviving and one of them was like a well in the forest and the well in the forest would remind them of the Blessed Mother and different things like that.

[00:08:54] **Sr. Jean Frisk:** It's just really beautiful. Michelle you and I have known each other for quite some time. Yes, we have And we know that we both have the same interest in many, many things, you and your husband. Uh, it's always, of course, we enjoy the fact that you're both named Michael. And that I'm sure you've heard many times in your married life, that you found each other.

[00:09:20] **Sr. Jean Frisk:** Michele and Michael, but, but you, you

[00:09:23] **Michele Foley:** have had a wonderful journey with our lady. Tell us how you, how you came to find out first your, um, find out about the show and stepsisters and how you decided

[00:09:36] **Sr. Jean Frisk:** to join. Well, let me tell. All right, I will. And let me start as a child. First of all, as a child, mom was, had no mother, her mother died when she was 10 years old.

[00:09:49] **Sr. Jean Frisk:** And so she did not have a proper Catholic upbringing. But then she sort of, and then she married a Lutheran man, which didn't help to foster the Catholic faith background that she had, which was French Canadian in the upper Michigan. So anyway, we moved out to a little farm after the war, when my dad came back after serving overseas four years, he came back and he wanted to be safe.

[00:10:14] **Sr. Jean Frisk:** His family had to be safe. So we had to move out of the way from where we were. We were. Uh, by the river, St. Mary's, across from Canada, and he didn't want to be that close to any border. So we had to move, and we found a little farm out in the country, a beautiful little farm, and it had lots of flowers, and it was just lovely.

[00:10:35] **Sr. Jean Frisk:** The person who had owned it before had actually been from Holland, and had a love and appreciation. So you can imagine that this was one of the few farms that had flowers all around. Well, anyway, one day we were out, Mom and I, working on the garden, and the, the flower garden, and along comes a little old rickety car, and out comes a priest, you know, a man with a collar and a black, and my mom, my mom kind of froze, you know, a little bit, but anyway, we went to the gate, and we greeted him, and he said, you know, ma'am, according to my records, you're a Catholic, you're a baptized Catholic, and she said, yes, I think I know.

[00:11:16] **Sr. Jean Frisk:** Of course, I was standing there hearing all of it, and she said, Well, yes, um, and then he said, you know, I think it's time for you to come back to the church, and I see you have a little girl here, and she's just the right age for the First Communion, so we, we just want to make sure, because the nuns are coming up from Lower Michigan, and they're going to teach the children, so I'm going to register you in for that summer school.

[00:11:42] **Sr. Jean Frisk:** Of course, Mom is sitting there, standing there, quite amazed, but she, she agreed. And then, of course, that was again, we would go to this, to the school that was a public school, but it was used by the nuns in the summertime for half days, and we learned about Jesus, and oh my goodness, that was all new for me.

[00:12:04] **Sr. Jean Frisk:** That was all special, and very special, and, you know, we didn't want, we wanted to keep up with it, but then we had to find a way to do that, too, in our own childlike way. One of the ways was very simple. Uh, but first, let me mention our Baptism. Of course, I, we went to the, the, other neighbor parishes, two parishes joined together and you had to go to the other place to be baptized.

[00:12:28] **Sr. Jean Frisk:** So my sister and I, my little four year old sister and I went along, mom and dad took us and we were, had our own baptism celebration, which was kind of nice and kind of different and my little sister, the priest said to my little sister, four year old, do you want to be baptized? And she said, no. And of course, my parents were, uh, you know, Ooh, yes, she, she does.

[00:12:53] **Sr. Jean Frisk:** Okay. Then I held her hand so she could be baptized too. So that was our baptism experience. And then when we were with the nuns, then we learned a few songs and one of the songs was different for us was a song about the Blessed Mother, a special Mary song. And so we just kind of sang along, learned it, didn't mean a whole much.

[00:13:17] **Sr. Jean Frisk:** So then, to move forward a little bit, we had our First Communion and so on, and we got a scapular at First Communion. We didn't know what that meant. And that, of course, I think they don't do it quite as often, but at that time, when a child was finished with first, the First Communion experience, then the person would be behind her and, or him, and place the scapular over the head, and the little scapular was a promise, if you wore the gown of Mary, the dress or cope of Mary, you would be saved, and this, uh, was for us, we didn't really understand it, but we wore it, and put it on but usually only on Sunday.

[00:14:01] **Sr. Jean Frisk:** We didn't really want to wear it every day. But then my mom went with a friend down to Milwaukee. They went on a little trip. And what did mother bring home? A beautiful statue of Our Lady. And we were surprised. So there on our mantel stood the little statue of Our Lady. And she became the center point for our little family.

[00:14:25] **Sr. Jean Frisk:** In a very real way, we would look and we would decorate it sometimes, put flowers there, without a whole lot of deep theological understanding. But this was a way that somehow it simply grew in a natural way, in a simple way, to love the Blessed Mother. So that was very nice, and then the sisters taught us more, and then we had Little Book of Saints, and we learned some different things like the Apparitions.

[00:14:54] **Sr. Jean Frisk:** Of course, that time, the Fatima apparition was very important and very strong. We learned all about that, and that, of course, inspired us so much that my little sister and I, we would go out in the woods, and we would wait until the Blessed Mother would come. She never did. So we, we imagined that she could come and be with us and we wouldn't tell our parents, like in Fatima, they didn't really tell their parents either, and so on, but we had this beautiful little thing between us, so it was just kind of a natural growing up and loving the Blessed Mother.

[00:15:33] **Sr. Jean Frisk:** And somewhere along the way, one of those nuns said, uh, very simple, she said, how many would like to be a priest someday? And of course, nobody raised their hand. Then she said, how many would like to be a sister like me someday? I raised my hand, of course. I don't know if other kids did, but I did, and then it stuck with me.

[00:15:53] **Sr. Jean Frisk:** And I thought, Hey, maybe I do. Maybe I want to be like her. Okay. So we had our plays and we had our different things. And you know how children are, sometimes we would play with the little candies that were like communion and we would play mass, but there was no priest around because we didn't have any boys.

[00:16:10] **Sr. Jean Frisk:** So we just figured out that we would do it. We were real feminists at that time. Can you imagine little kids? So, as it went on then, uh, there was an opportunity, strangely enough, that my father could work at a different place where we could go to a Catholic school for about a year and a half, two and a half years.

[00:16:35] **Sr. Jean Frisk:** No, wait, two. Yeah. A year and a half, we could go to a Catholic school, he would drive to work in the morning, drop us off, and then, these were Dominican Sisters, and the Dominicans also have a deep love for the Blessed Mother, and there in the room where I was going to be in 6th grade was the same statue that we had at home.

[00:16:56] **Sr. Jean Frisk:** And that really hit me and, and stuck with me and every time I had difficulty or I thought I was so lonesome for my kids back in Brimley, I mean not my kids but my classmates, then I would look at that statue and it became very real for me to ask the Blessed Mother for help. So then, I'm looking through a book, naturally, then you start reading these books, you know, as kids, and there were stories, the nuns had some books about young girls becoming sisters, of course, and I read those, and thought they were fantastic, and all the stuff Sisters had to go through.

[00:17:31] **Sr. Jean Frisk:** And then, I, there was a book with about a hundred different, pages with sisters of different communities. Now, this may sound really stupid, but, and it was. But I went through there, and at their veils, you know, the big veils, and they, and we came to one where there was a very simple veil, and the hair was showing.

[00:17:51] **Sr. Jean Frisk:** And I said, Oh, she's beautiful. Oh, I like that one. I'm going to be one of those. Okay, well, fine. My time grew up. We had to leave that school. Never saw that book again. And then my father was transferred down to Milwaukee. Milwaukee, the great city, where mom had purchased that statue. We, we moved into a parish that was brand new.

[00:18:18] **Sr. Jean Frisk:** We're really kind of lost. You know, we were farm kids and one of the things that we really missed were trees. There were no trees on our road, on our street. It was a new development, a new place, and everything was awful. It was so dead. So we just really missed our Upper Michigan for that first time there.

[00:18:41] **Sr. Jean Frisk:** Then as time got, went on a little bit, I started to really think, and I met a girl who was going to a Catholic school. And she said, Why don't you come to school with, with me, then to the Catholic school? So we went and talked about it to, you know, the pastor and so on. We didn't realize how much it would cost.

[00:19:01] **Sr. Jean Frisk:** And at that time, Dad was not making enough money to send us to the Catholic school. Okay, so that settled that. And then when Mom and I had talked to the pot to the priest, uh, you know, we were just talking about, well, maybe someday she'll be a Sister, blah, blah, and the priest looked at me kind of and grinned, but that was about it, and then I was at home, and the telephone rang, and the priest, the parish priest said, did you go over and meet those Sisters in our parish yet, and I said no, and and he said, you come over here right now.

[00:19:41] **Sr. Jean Frisk:** Oops, okay, that sounded pretty serious. So I went, took my bike and went over to the pastor, and he said, now, you're going to go and meet those sisters. I'm serious. He took me from the church steps, across the playground, and he was kind of holding on to me. Kind of like almost my hair He rang the doorbell when the sister answered the door my first impression was her apron is wet

[00:20:13] **Sr. Jean Frisk:** And the priest said now tell us something about your community and he shut the door. Here I was standing in the hallway. The sister was standing in the hallway, and she started talking and I realized she had a different accent. Come to find out she was a German Sister, had come in over from Germany to help found the Sisters here.

[00:20:37] **Sr. Jean Frisk:** Well, we were talking away and I asked her a few dumb questions, you know, like Do you listen to the radio? And stuff like that. At that time, you know, it was pretty strict, and you really had to give up stuff, you know. Right, right. So, and then, uh, at that point, the telephone rang, of all things. So, the sister went to the phone, and then she came back, and she said, Our Sister Provincial would like to speak with you.

[00:21:08] **Sr. Jean Frisk:** I had a pear on my plate. She had brought me a pear to eat, and I practically dropped it. I was supposed to go and talk to the big boss, you know, I mean, on the phone. Oh, Lord. And so I did, and this dear, sweet voice said, please come with your family, and you can meet us. And you just have to come to Madison, and we're going to have the first incorporation of our first American Sisters.

[00:21:38] **Sr. Jean Frisk:** And I said, um, We don't have a car right now, sister. We can't go. And she said, well, you go back to the pastor and tell him he has to bring you. So, I did. I went back to the pastor and said, she said, you have to care, you have to bring us. So, uh, my girlfriend who was actually cooking for the priest heard the whole thing and she said, I want to come along.

[00:22:05] **Sr. Jean Frisk:** So she, so she, we came along. She came along, and the priest actually did drive us there, and we saw the ceremony, and, you know, it really didn't sink in too much, but it was all very nice, and people were nice, and, uh, so, and on the way home, some German girls joined us in the car. They wanted to get back to Milwaukee, because they knew that Father Kentenich, the founder, was in Milwaukee.

[00:22:31] **Sr. Jean Frisk:** Well, we had no clue who that was, but then they talked about this, girls club that they had, and talked about how wonderful it was that we would talk about Marian things and what it is to live a Marian life, etc. And we looked at each other, Roberta and I, and we thought, well, we could try. And Sister Chris Marsh was the name of the German sister, and she said, yeah, you could try.

[00:22:55] **Sr. Jean Frisk:** And then we decided that she could lead us. She wasn't too happy about that because she didn't know English that well. But then we said, well, if we, how, how shall we do this? Well, we would meet once a week for an hour and we can talk about things. So here we are, we're all wrapped into this. And so we started that, we started what we call a group.

[00:23:20] **Sr. Jean Frisk:** Then years later, I must say quite a few years later, about 20 years later, I was back at that school. I happened to be principal then by then, not just a little kid anymore, but actually the principal of the school. And the pastor was giving a talk about the history of the development of that brand new parish.

[00:23:41] **Sr. Jean Frisk:** And he said, and for the first 20 years, I never took a day of vacation, except one day when I took a girl who wanted to be a nun to the convent. Oh my goodness. Isn't that something? That was, of course, that was the story. Well, anyway, then going to be talking about, actually, how did it develop then? Well, then those, those group meetings with Sister really was a development on Mary and devotion.

[00:24:10] **Sr. Jean Frisk:** Who is Mary? How do we look at Mary? What's her real story? Uh, not so much the apparitions, but her person. What we would read a little part from the Bible and we would talk about that. Well, how, how did Mary master life? How do we today master life? And this was very important. And for us, as we didn't, uh, usually answer her, she was, uh, she was very shy to be doing this in English, to be honest with you.

[00:24:38] **Sr. Jean Frisk:** And she would read, like, one sentence. She would read, like, in a steady voice, and then she would look up and say, Do you understand? And we would look at each other and say, Yes, Sister. But we didn't really understand, but we said, yes, Sister, nodded our heads and she would continue. But then afterwards, when we were out of there, we would talk and talk and talk and talk and talk about what she had said.

[00:25:03] **Sr. Jean Frisk:** And we found there were many beautiful ideas. How could you be a Marian person? How could you be a woman and still serve the church without all the fuss? In other words, a lay person. in the world. How could you really imitate what Jesus wanted us to do and the love he had for his wife, his wife, no, for Jesus, for Mary and for the people and so on.

[00:25:27] **Sr. Jean Frisk:** So that's in short how I got to know Mary and how I was taken and, uh, I have to say taken by the hair, if you will, or the people. Back of the neck and actually it's kind of thrown into it and what is also amazing is I told you when I was a girl I had looked through that book on nuns and saw that picture of the beautiful nun with the hair showing and would you believe that that was a picture of the sister superior who invited me to that day?

[00:26:01] **Sr. Jean Frisk:** When I looked at it and I saw that, I said, oh my gosh, oh my gosh, oh my gosh, this was the way God was leading in his own way. And it's really true. Then in the process there, uh, I could say, there's so much more to tell, but maybe you have some questions. How do you want me to continue?

[00:26:22] **Michele Foley:** Oh, you're doing just fine.

[00:26:24] **Michele Foley:** This is a, a part of you I didn't know, and thank you for sharing it with so many people. Uh, we, we have those things in our lives, and I know you know this, where we, they happen, and then something else happens, and there's this chain, and when we look back, tt all makes perfect sense. And at the same, at the time you think, well, why did this happen to me now?

[00:26:53] **Michele Foley:** And, oh, how did I get to where I am? But you, you had a little plan in your, in your mind and that seed, that beautiful rose seed that I think of or sometimes I think of the, um, uh, lilies of the valley when I, when I think of you and, uh, you know, it just, those things, those things happen for a definite reason and you, you accepted that and you, your innocence led you to Our Lady

[00:27:25] **Michele Foley:** in a beautiful, beautiful way. So thank you so much for sharing that. That is, I think people need to realize, don't you, that these things do happen for a real reason. That we're called and even as tiny little things. What will will will help that call?

[00:27:45] **Sr. Jean Frisk:** What do you think? We have a we have a saying in our movement, but it is a Catholic saying we believe in divine providence. We believe that God has a plan that God sees us that he loves us that he is with us We can't understand it that he could be with everyone in the whole world if they open their hearts and minds that he is there our Lord And the Father and the Spirit in ways we cannot imagine, but they are real.

[00:28:17] **Sr. Jean Frisk:** And this is really beautiful. Then I had more wonderful fortune, if you will. A sister did lead us, and then she actually, on a weekend, there were three of us by then, out to Madison and we had a great weekend, just a fun time talking about different things and symbols and walking together and being at the little shrine.

[00:28:42] **Sr. Jean Frisk:** It was just sort of a laid back affair. And she told us at the very end of our, one of our talks, she said, you know, there's a very special holy man in Milwaukee that you could meet if you want to. Uh, he's actually the one who started us. He's our founder. Uh, we had to think about what does it mean to be a founder.

[00:29:05] **Sr. Jean Frisk:** But then, She said, yes, he's here, and he certainly is someone you would like to meet. Okay, so we went to bed, and we talked, and we talked, and we talked. Do we really want to go and see this priest? And apparently she brought a picture, and here's this priest with a long beard. Hmm. German priest with a long beard.

[00:29:27] **Sr. Jean Frisk:** Do we really want to go there? And then finally, she must have heard us, because about one o'clock in the morning she got up and said, Girls, would you please go to sleep?

[00:29:39] **Sr. Jean Frisk:** So, we decided we would go. And we would, though, we had drawn a little picture, like a symbol, of how we imagined our, to have a banner, to have a symbol of what we liked. And we had made a, little fire bowl with a flame and a pattern and it was kind of going up toward a symbol of God, the Father, the Father, eye.

[00:30:06] **Sr. Jean Frisk:** It was kind of a crayon color thing, but small, but it was meaningful to us and we wanted to, you know, make that kind of like our symbol. So we went there and we knocked on the door and we heard Ave. We looked at each other because we had no idea what that meant. And we knocked again, and this time, this person opened the door.

[00:30:32] **Sr. Jean Frisk:** Now, what's your first impression when you see him? First of all, he was short. He was not much taller than I am, and I'm 5'2. So, here he was, and he had this long beard, but he had these beautiful blue eyes. And so we kind of walked into the room, and we weren't saying much. We were just sort of there. And so he kind of took the lead, and he had a typical way, which I call a German way.

[00:30:59] **Sr. Jean Frisk:** They greet with a handshake. The handshake is very important to the German culture. And so he would go to each one and say the name, and look at us, and so we would just say our name, that's about it. Then we wanted to show him our design, our drawing there, and he saw that it was, uh, you know, very nice and so on, but on the way to town, we had, we had made our father's symbol a blue eye, because we all had blue eyes.

[00:31:33] **Sr. Jean Frisk:** So we said, ours has to be blue. Okay, so we're, we didn't, we said, but we won't tell anybody that. Well, sure enough, we're looking at Father Kentenich, and he's got these blue eyes, and we could, we just kept staring at him, you know. And finally, I think he realized what it was and he laughed and laughed and said, yes, the Blessed Mother and the Heavenly Father had given him blue eyes, but the eyes don't mean it.

[00:32:01] **Sr. Jean Frisk:** It's how the eyes shine that's important.

[00:32:05] **Michele Foley:** They are the window to the soul. Well, we need to take a break and we will be right back. So please join us again for all things Marian. Today, our first time in our new home, so to speak with our new sponsor and our new name with our dear sister, Jean Frisk. Thank you, Radio Maria, a Catholic voice in your home.

[00:32:39] **Singer:** Sing of Mary pure and lowly virgin Mother undefiled, sing of God's own Son, Most Holy, Who became her little child. Fairest child of fairest Mother, God the Lord who came to earth. Word made flesh, our very brother, takes our nature by his birth.

[00:33:33] **Singer:** Sing of Jesus Son of Mary in the home at Nazareth.

[00:33:49] **Singer:** Toil and labor cannot weary love enduring unto death. Constant was the love he gave her, though he went forth from her side, forth to preach and heal and suffer, till on Calvary he died.

[00:35:04] **Singer:** Glory be to God the Father.

[00:35:10] **Singer:** Glory be to God the Son.

[00:35:15] **Singer:** Glory be to God the Spirit. Glory to the three in one. From the heart of Blessed Mary from all saints, the song ascends, and the Church the strain re-echoes unto earth’s remotest ends.

[00:36:01] **Michele Foley:** Welcome, friends. Sometimes sister will say when she's on, whether you're in your cars or whether you're in your home, or maybe you're taking a short break from whatever work you're doing, we love having you listen to us, and we hope that these programs that we bring to you give you a new sight into how Our Lady and Our Lord work in your lives as they have in ours.

[00:36:27] **Michele Foley:** That's our reason for sharing. So thank you so much, Sister, for being with us. Sister Jean Frisk is a religious sister of Schoenstatt of Mary. So please continue. So you, uh, did you go, go for training there at, in, uh, uh, Wisconsin at the, at the mother house? Is that how that worked?

[00:36:50] **Sr. Jean Frisk:** Well, sort of, but there was, uh, about three years still to go between.

[00:36:54] **Sr. Jean Frisk:** And during those three years, then we learned an awful lot of what we call everyday sanctity. We learned an awful lot about looking at the Bible as our foundation and basis. Looking at it and reading it with with faith with deep faith and saying why did God do this? Why did God allow Mary to or ask Mary?

[00:37:15] **Sr. Jean Frisk:** Oh, she was Handmaid of the Lord. How did she serve him and we would look at that and say how can I as a woman today? It imitates those beautiful virtues that the Bible tells us. And then, this simply forms you as time goes on, when you really think about it, and think of how Mary loved, how she worked for Jesus, how she served Jesus, and, and then you start to study the Bible a little more, and find out good things that really help you with life.

[00:37:48] **Sr. Jean Frisk:** And this is, I think, one of the things that we would say led us along the way. Yes, I made the decision then after high school to enter the Sisters after high school. But there was another little element that was absolutely wonderful for my life. I mentioned before that this Father Kentenich was in Milwaukee.

[00:38:09] **Sr. Jean Frisk:** He had his office there. And he was actually the founder of an international Marian movement. I had no clue. I had no clue who this elderly man with the beautiful white beard and the beautiful blue eyes were, was, and I didn't have, but as time went on I certainly did get to know who he was. He was a great founder who started with boys in the seminary, started with little boys.

[00:38:35] **Sr. Jean Frisk:** The same thing, he himself had this child, deep attachment to the Blessed Mother. He was a little half orphan boy, if you will, and when his mother couldn't take care of him anymore, she brought him to an orphanage. And there, in the orphanage, at the chapel, she brought him to the chapel, and entrusted him, as a little eight year old boy, to Our Lady.

[00:39:03] **Sr. Jean Frisk:** And she put her best possession, which was a beautiful cross necklace, around the statue of Mary, and said, From now on, this is your mother, and she will take care of you. And this little boy really did believe that, And he loved Mary and he grew to love Mary and share Mary with his entire life. Now Mary in that sense becomes very real if you are not thinking in the abstract terms but really realizing the divine is now, the supernatural reality is now.

[00:39:41] **Sr. Jean Frisk:** God hears us. God is with us. God is within us. And we have to understand that the supernatural world is as real as this natural world. Now, you asked what I did next. Then, actually, I did enter with, uh, some other girls. There were five of us to start with. And then at the end, when we finally received the dress, as we call it, uh, we were seven.

[00:40:07] **Sr. Jean Frisk:** So seven of us went through a training, but we had the wonderful privilege of living in a little house. by a cemetery in Milwaukee, where, right across the street, practically, where Father Kentenich lived. So we got to go to his daily Mass. We got to pop into his office just whenever, whatever, and for whatever reason.

[00:40:29] **Sr. Jean Frisk:** And he was always patient and kind and good and listened to us and sometimes would give us a little advice and very often little jokes. But you came to realize this man is really God's child. God's gift, uh, I can just tell you so many little stories, which is amazing how he took care of each one of us spiritually, each one of us, and let's, uh, I'll tell you one little story that I think is really so impressive.

[00:41:01] **Sr. Jean Frisk:** Uh, we had been having what we call the group meetings once a week, you know, we'd talk together about religious things and about how we are and what, you know, what we wanted to think about and how we could pray or what. And at one point, the German girls that were with us, you know, we want to be strong ladies.

[00:41:19] **Sr. Jean Frisk:** We need to be strong in this world today. And I thought, oh, heck with that. But anyway, I did get a bad toothache. And I thought, well, I gotta be strong, so don't try to show your toothache. Don't complain about it to the others. Okay, so I had this bad toothache. And one night we were walking, sometimes we would go out for a walk in the evening, and sometimes we would see Father Kentenich, he was praying his rosary.

[00:41:43] **Sr. Jean Frisk:** So he would be praying his rosary, and if he saw us and turned away, then we didn't bother him. But if he saw us and came forward, then we would happily go over and just say hello. And it was always the same. We make a big circle, kind of, like, not complete, half circle. And as he went along in this typical German way, he would shake hands.

[00:42:04] **Sr. Jean Frisk:** Ok, he comes to me, and he looks at me. And he says, the child has pain. And I just stared at him, just looked at him, kind of my mouth open. I didn't say a word. Yeah, the child has pain. And then he reached into his pocket, because he knew I didn't have any money. That came up before. And he reached into his pocket and he had some change.

[00:42:29] **Sr. Jean Frisk:** And he took my hand very quietly and pressed that change into my hand. And he said, go to the uni clinic. I had no clue what the uni clinic was. So when I got back to the house, I asked our sister Barbara there, what could the uni clinic be? And she said, well, Father Kent and he got his teeth fixed in Marquette University.

[00:42:51] **Sr. Jean Frisk:** They have a school of dentistry and it cost next to nothing. So I went down there and got my teeth fixed. And it was, it was really something, and I could actually, with that little bit of money, I still had a quarter left over. So, so I went back, and I was, got off the bus, and it was just right by Father's place.

[00:43:12] **Sr. Jean Frisk:** Anyway, so I said, well, this is Father's money, I gotta go in to him. And he, I went into his office, and I thanked him, and I handed him my quarter. And he said, oh, no, no, no, you, you keep the money, you keep the quarter. And then I, you know, I just was looking at him, and he said, now show Father. I thought what?

[00:43:33] **Sr. Jean Frisk:** Show father, show father the tooth now. I was like, okay. So I had to show him my tooth and show him that it was all better. And then it dawned on me later on, this man isn't only a spiritual man. He is a father, really a father. And that's the way it was in our whole Schoenstatt upbringing. Our Schoenstatt fathers also try not just to be abstract, but to be fathers.

[00:43:59] **Sr. Jean Frisk:** And that whole part of our whole spirituality is to be mothers, to be fathers, to care, to provide, to see, to be sensitive to the needs of others, and to serve any way possible. So this was one of just many experiences I had of Fr. Kentenich. And there's other ones that were also just as beautiful. And I'll just quickly tell another one that was so beautiful.

[00:44:27] **Sr. Jean Frisk:** It was taking a long time, and as I said, I really didn't have any decent shoes. I just entered with one pair of shoes. My shoes were getting holes in them. And they were kind of wet and so on, but I thought nobody's going to notice if I just walk the right way and kneel in the right place. Nobody's going to notice that I've got holes in the bottom of my shoes.

[00:44:47] **Sr. Jean Frisk:** Okay. So I come to his office one day, I don't remember exactly what for, and father says, tell, how is that with the shoes? And I got red in the face and I got just, So I had to turn around and I had to show him my soles. And he said, Oh, that's those, it's April. It's still wet and cold out there. You need better.

[00:45:06] **Sr. Jean Frisk:** You need to have better shoes. Well, I don't have shoes. And I said, and I don't have money. So father said he has shoes. So he got out of his chair and he knelt down. Under his desk, he had a pair of saddle shoes. Now, years ago, I don't know, Michelle, if you remember them, they were big white shoes with a black saddle.

[00:45:27] **Sr. Jean Frisk:** Yeah, yeah. They were kind of ugly, but they were very popular. Well, yeah. I had to put them on, but they were too big. And I knew it before. And Father looked at them and he says, He was stroking his beard and saying, They don't fit. They don't fit. And then he was thinking, and he said, Oh, Father doesn't have any money either.

[00:45:45] **Sr. Jean Frisk:** Well, wait. And then he puts up his hand like a victory sign. Typical German thing again. And he runs off out of his room. Out of his office. Not runs, but went quickly out of his office and he came back and he had a 5, a 10 bill. I'm sorry. Then he said, now go downtown and buy a decent pair of shoes. And I did that.

[00:46:09] **Sr. Jean Frisk:** And again, it was similar with a little bit of money left over, but I wasn't allowed to give it back to him either. But I had to show him the good shoes. So it was just to say, this is nature and supernature combined. We can talk religious things, we can say things, we can hear it at church, but to act out of it, to be truly giving and caring and providing and loving.

[00:46:35] **Sr. Jean Frisk:** Loving very truly. This is all what we consider the Marian Way. And the Schoenstatters then have this beautiful little chapel with our beautiful picture of the Blessed Mother. And the unique feature of the Blessed Mother, and it's not something that was planned, but the artist painted it in such a way that no matter where you stand in the vicinity of that picture, it looks like the eyes are looking at you.

[00:46:59] **Sr. Jean Frisk:** Just beautiful. It can move to the right, to the left. It's the eyes look at you. So this became another thing because then her hands, the Blessed Mother's hands, actually rest on and point to the heart of Jesus. So Jesus is in her arms, but also again, not a grasping look or time, but Blessed Mother and Jesus belong together.

[00:47:22] **Sr. Jean Frisk:** And they are in the world to help the world. To save the world, to serve the world, and so then this is how it goes. Then, Schoenstatters, when they do understand more of this, and we have meetings and we talk about these things, we talk about making a covenant with her. We actually dedicate ourselves to her and ask her to please help us to live that Christ centered life.

[00:47:48] **Sr. Jean Frisk:** And so this is the basic way of our spirituality, and we have now over 250 of these little shrines all over the world. It spreads. It's not a big public movement. It's not something that is flashy and dashy. It's quiet. It's simple because it's everyday sanctity. It's the sanctity of a home, the sanctity of a, of an office, being some day as a partner of the office with a way that is

[00:48:18] **Sr. Jean Frisk:** refreshing to the whole staff and so on. I don't know if that makes sense to you.

[00:48:27] **Michele Foley:** It does. And I think it will with our listeners sister, because so many times we go uh, I, I say we as the collective, we go to church and it's, it's a, an observation. It's like going to a movie. I'm not in the movie, but I'm watching the movie. But there are times if we, if we think about what the Eucharist is and what the liturgy is, it's participation every day.

[00:49:00] **Michele Foley:** And then we, we become part of that and that, as you said, and as you have described so beautifully that it doesn't happen overnight, it happens in tiny steps, and then it does become a way of life. You can say, yes, I accept this, but the practice of it, uh, every day, you know, doesn't become practice anymore.

[00:49:26] **Michele Foley:** It becomes part of you. And that's what I see in your, your community and in your, your, your, uh, movement and things that I have read about other movements or, uh, other communities like the Marianists and, uh, Michael and I were, were educated by the Sisters of Charity of Newark, New Jersey, and they no longer exist because they've died.

[00:49:52] **Michele Foley:** You know, all of them have died. But they were mostly they, you know, we it's the same. It's simple daily life lived with Christ and his mother. And so we thank you so much for sharing this incredible and beautiful journey. And the, the, the way of walking with Mary in your life and the life of your sisters and someday maybe you can, uh, come back and tell us, um, because I know you, you interacted with Father Kentenich for many years while he was here in the United States, because he is truly a gentle person and, or was, and, um, um, um, bears, bears knowing about, as I have said.

[00:50:44] **Michele Foley:** And Schoenstatt, tell us what Schoenstatt means. It

[00:50:48] **Sr. Jean Frisk:** means? Schoenstatt means a beautiful place and it really has its long history as well. It started, it was a little convent place in Germany along the Rhine River that was a valley that was named a beautiful place. Eine schöne stadt, a beautiful place. And the sisters there had a convent too.

[00:51:09] **Sr. Jean Frisk:** But as time went on and the Swedes came down the Rhine. Uh, they moved into the city, but this old place was still there, and it had this little chapel, an old little chapel, and it had a potbelly stove in the corner, and so on. It was just sort of left over. But when Fr. Kentenich started working with his boys, and they still wanted to talk about things kind of privately, then they found out that this little old chapel was empty.

[00:51:39] **Sr. Jean Frisk:** They fixed it up as best they could and they would have their meetings. There was a little potbelly stove in the back. It could be nice and warm. And this chapel became somehow a home for them. And then, along the way, someone, a teacher, actually found that picture somewhere. And at first, the boys didn't like it.

[00:51:58] **Sr. Jean Frisk:** Oh, that was so sweet, that picture. But that picture because if she looks at you and invites you, it became their special picture. And so then the boys, it came along, First World War, they were out on the battlefield, and when they would write back, they would write to Father Kentenich, who was their teacher and spiritual director, and they would tell how they would turn to the Blessed Mother, and one after the other.

[00:52:25] **Sr. Jean Frisk:** Did lose their lives, but others were also protected and saved in a very real way by Mary. They can all tell their little stories. And this is what happened, and it grew and grew. It grew with young people. And then women wanted to join. It was first boys and young priests, but then women wanted to join naturally, but they became the stronger branch.

[00:52:50] **Sr. Jean Frisk:** Now, right now, still to this time, they are the stronger branch in the many different branches of the Schoenstatt movement. Every place, the whole point is this everyday sanctity. The whole point is living this life in an everyday way. But the reality of the supernature, the reality of God among us, and the Blessed Mother with us, walking with us, holding us.

[00:53:17] **Sr. Jean Frisk:** And this is, we have a little prayer that's actually very ancient in the church. It's called the little consecration. I'll pray it for us. My Queen, my Mother, I give myself entirely to you. And to show my devotion to you, I consecrate to you this day, my eyes, my ears, my mouth, my heart, my entire self without reserve.

[00:53:41] **Sr. Jean Frisk:** As I am your own, my good mother, guard me and defend me as your property and possession. This little prayer is really approved by the church many centuries already, and it becomes for us a whole thing to think about. My eyes, my ears, my mouth, all of me belongs to God. All of me. And it's a way that this becomes a way to bring healing.

[00:54:08] **Sr. Jean Frisk:** To bring love to bring care to the world in the simplest way possible.

[00:54:14] **Michele Foley:** Thank you. Thank you so much sister Jean and adieu until we meet again. Thank you dear listeners of this wonderful program all things Marian brought to you by the International Marian Research Institute of the University of Dayton Dayton, Ohio.

[00:54:32] **Michele Foley:** God bless you all. God bless Radio Maria. And next week, I think, we begin the Maria-thon and we hope that you join us again because next week we will have a married couple sharing their journey with Mary. God bless you. Thank you, Radio Maria. Until next Thursday. Goodbye.

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