News
Ministry
Spirituality



Sr. Rini Rose of the Sisters of the Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament makes rosaries at her community's convent in Ambalavayal, Kerala, India. (Courtesy of the Sisters of the Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament)



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Sr. Rini Rose was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis when she was 26. As a result, she has become physically weak, which limits and slows down her movements.

Rose made her first profession at the age of 20 as a member of the Sisters of the Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, a congregation based in the southern Indian state of Kerala. The debilitating disease hit her as she was completing a three-year nursing course in Andhra Pradesh, another southern Indian state.

Now, after 15 years, Rose spends most of her time inside a convent in Ambalavayal, a village in Wayanad, a district in northern Kerala. She prays for others and receives prayer requests from people both known and unknown to her. She also makes rosaries and deposits them into the rosary bank she created until she gives them to people who need them.

Her prayers have helped hundreds of people to lead a life of blessings, peace and grace, and people keep going back to her for more prayers and intercessions. She said she feels blessed and thankful to God when people acknowledge the power of her prayers and for receiving the desired results that have brought about positive changes in their lives.

Despite her health problems, Rose said she is happy and content without any complaints. She says prayers have helped her to accept her condition in life.

Rose spoke to Global Sisters Report earlier this year about her life and work.

***GSR*: What was your reaction when you were diagnosed with MS?**

Rose: I was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis in 2005, just before I could start working as a nurse. Since then, I have been on medication.

I was sad and distressed when I was told I was suffering from MS. But my strong faith in God helped me overcome my sorrows and lead a fulfilling life.

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According to my doctors, MS affects the central nervous system, especially the brain, spinal cord and optic nerves. This can lead to a wide range of symptoms in the body.

After my diagnosis, I began to feel my health deteriorating. I also began to experience more limited physical movements. Now, I need double the time and effort to do my daily regular activities. I also need to use extra energy to move around that causes physical strain and tiredness. Even to move around within the convent, I need help from others. My sisters always lend me a hand.

I have regular physiotherapy, which helps lessen my mobility problems. So, physiotherapy has become part and parcel of my life. If I stop doing physiotherapy, I know I would become bedridden.

How do you keep occupied despite the health challenges?

Because of my limited physical movements, I spend most of my time within the four walls of my convent.

I use my free time to make rosaries. As I bind the beads together, I recite prayers and remember those who have requested prayers and their needs. I also pray alone and with my community. People like to talk and share with me their life's difficulties and challenges. As I live in a convent attached to a hospital, my sisters share with me different prayer needs of patients and their families. Reading and writing Bible verses is also part of my daily activities.



Sr. Rini Rose of the Sisters of the Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament at her community's convent in Ambalavayal, Kerala, India (Courtesy of the Sisters of the Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament)

I also get prayer requests from Hindus and Muslims. Most of their problems are related to health, finance and family relationships. Those seeking prayers have told

me that they have great faith in my prayers and that my prayers have positively impacted their lives. A Muslim woman once told me that after experiencing the power of my prayers, she began to have faith in Jesus Christ and Mother Mary.

I remember a Christian woman, a senior officer in an insurance company, asking me to pray for her marital life. She said her husband was uncaring and indifferent. I prayed for them. Before long, she called me to thank me, saying her husband has changed his ways, showering love and care on her.

What do you do with the rosaries you make?

Praying for others and surrendering my suffering to the Lord gives me great joy. I receive prayer requests from people most days. However, some days, no prayer requests come. So, I thought of letting my prayers be credited in a spiritual account, and when needed, I could share it with others. It is from this thought that I have started the rosary bank.

What is the rosary bank?

It is a spiritual bank I started in 2005. The bank is based on a Gospel verse, "For nothing will be impossible with God," Luke 1:37, which is also the account number of the bank. I deposit my rosaries in the account. I have made more than 1,000 rosaries since 2005.

There are days when I receive many prayer requests. At the same time, I may not be able to pray for all of them. On the following days, when I may have more time, I pray for them. Then I open my spiritual account, reciting the Gospel verse, and I withdraw the needed rosaries and offer them to the people who have asked for prayers.

How has the COVID-19 pandemic affected you?

As part of the COVID-19 protocol in India, I try to keep social distancing by not meeting people from outside of the convent. I have made arrangements to hand

over rosaries to people who need them: The sisters from the convent pick up the rosaries from me and take them to the local parish for distribution. I have also kept the rosaries at the reception area of the convent. People are encouraged to collect them from there.

The pandemic has stopped me from going to the hospital to do physiotherapy. I go to St. Martin Hospital, just next to my convent, which is managed by my congregation. In recent months, the hospital has been admitting COVID patients for treatment. So, I am advised not to go to the hospital.

Without the help of a physiotherapist, I can't do the exercises by myself. I start feeling unwell and uncomfortable when I don't do them continuously. This is a matter of concern to me now. But one of these days, I will venture out to the hospital to restart the physiotherapy in spite of the possible COVID threat.



The convent of the Sisters of the Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, where Sr. Rini Rose lives, in Ambalavayal, Kerala, India. (Courtesy of the Sisters of the Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament)

Is your congregation supportive?

I would not be what I am today if not for my congregation and the sisters. The superiors and other sisters are very kind, compassionate, caring and understanding, and that has helped me tremendously to cope with my health conditions. Regular medical attention, care and concerns by the congregation help me go through the rough patches in my life.

What made you become a sister?

As a young girl, I was regular at Mass. Those days, I used to keep close contacts with the sisters who were in my parish. I learned from them about religious life.

Thus began in me an interest to join religious life. I was keen on spending my time in prayer and meditation and in serving people. I came to know about my congregation from my cousins, who were already members there. They narrated to me about the religious life and work and the activities of their congregation.

What makes you happy?

First and foremost, it is my prayer life that gives me motivation and inspiration. There are many people who have helped me in my life. There are many who gave me strength and courage to accept the difficulties and face challenges of my life and to go on with it. Such people are also my inspiration and motivation.

I try to find joy in what I am able to do. In fact, I count my blessings and value the love of people who accompany me and strengthen me. I have learned to do what I can do with my limited physical movements. I find joy in making rosaries, reading and writing Bible notes and passages, praying for those in need, giving time to those who like to share their life difficulties.

I try to live without complaining. I also try to make people happy.