Our life is from God, who willed to form man in His own image and likeness and lets us exist in the world. He gave us parents who are representatives of God in nourishing and educating us. Nevertheless, as is normal in life, we will leave our family when growing up. So did I.

I left my family with my beloved parents and siblings for a calling.

God began that calling through nuns serving in my parish. I was attracted to their holiness and charity. Actually, after high school, I had already decided what I wanted to do and be in the future. However, I also found myself drawn to a call within that I could not ignore. Later on, I realized I was called to a way of life different from that of my friends. I responded to Jesus' call to consecrated life in the Congregation of the Lovers of the Holy Cross in Hue.

My journey to follow Jesus began with aspirancy. Five years of this period was graceful time that shaped me into a girl dedicated to God. Together with other aspirants, I spent my time learning at the university and at the convent as well.

I was called to the second stage, namely postulency. One year in this period, I more and more experienced and touched God's love in Jesus Christ. My love for the congregation also grew. I have come to understand more fully the significance of the name "Lovers of the Holy Cross". Day by day, I have grown in consecrated life.

At the present moment, I am a novice. I am thankful for this special period. I am absolutely separated from the outside. I am not allowed to meet my family, my relatives and friends. However, I never forget to pray for them. In novitiate, I spend all of my time to with the Lord and grow closer to him. My happiness is finding God's love in all I see. Furthermore, I like quiet atmosphere here; it makes me easy to meet God. I'm really happy and peaceful.

In general, my life is thanksgiving and praise to God. I am certain that God makes me whole. He is my happiness and joy. In spite of difficulties, troubles and temptations, I can overcome all things by His power and love. I trust that God always accompanies and guides me. If I had the chance to choose one more time, I would continue to choose consecrated life. For me, everything in the world is limited, only God and belonging to Him are endless. I have the same thought and feelings as Saint Paul: "I consider everything a loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them garbage, that I may gain Christ" (Pl 3,8). I wish to become a nun to follow Jesus and improve myself every day. I would like to dedicate my whole life to God's Kingdom and to His people.

Maria Nguyễn Thị Ánh Vân