

Sisters of Mercy welcome new candidate

Nordia Brusola was accepted as a candidate for the Sisters of Mercy New York, Pennsylvania, Pacific West Community at a service Aug. 16 at Our Lady of Mercy Chapel, Erie. Sister Nancy Hoff, community president, and Sister Patty Moriarity, incorporation minister for the community, presided.



Mercy Sister Nancy Hoff, president of the Sisters of Mercy New York, Pennsylvania, Pacific West Community, left, and Mercy Sister Patricia Moriarity, incorporation minister for the community, pray over Nordia Brusola, who was welcomed as a candidate for the religious community on Aug. 16.

Brusola, 47, a native of the Philippines, graduated in May with a master's degree from Mercyhurst College's Organizational Leadership Program. She came to Erie in 2007 to explore the possibility of entering the Sisters of Mercy community. Before coming to the United States, she spent 23 years as owner of a successful handicraft business in Legazpi City,

Philippines. Currently, she is managing the bookstore at Mercyhurst Prep and working in the office at St. Mark the Evangelist Parish, Lawrence Park.

"All the difficulties and hardships that my life presented to me have positively increased my desire to become a Sister of Mercy," Brusola said. Those difficulties included adjusting to a different culture and losing both her parents within a year while she studied at Mercyhurst.

"The talents and experiences that God gave me have made me a stronger person and have also solidified my desire to be part of the workings of God and to make a difference in the lives of people in need," she said.

As a candidate, she will begin a two-year period of discernment in which she will live as a lay woman in community with the Sisters of Mercy. During that time, she will learn more about the spirit, tradition and charism of the Sisters of Mercy and their foundress, Catherine McAuley.

Candidacy is the first of four steps in the process to become a Sister of Mercy. Others are: Novitiate, in which the woman receives the title "Sister" and embarks on a two-year period of discernment, prayer and study of the vows; Temporary, or first, vows, which includes further theological study and experiences in ministry; and at least three years later, a sister is eligible to take the final step: final vows.

The Sisters of Mercy in Erie are part of the Sisters of Mercy New York, Pennsylvania, Pacific West Community, which also includes Buffalo, the Philippines, Pittsburgh and Rochester.