



Anita Paul Sister Teresa

WASP Class 44-W-6

'The young generation needs to know that you can do something that serves a purpose without saying, "What's in it for me?"'

Anita Paul is the only WASP to become a cloistered Carmelite nun.

She grew up in a bilingual family of French descent in an 18-room house on a 250 acre farm owned by her grandmother. Anita and her sister helped on the farm with all manner of chores, from digging potatoes to holding up the cows' tails while they were being milked. For each chore, they received pennies, sometimes a nickel, which they put in a piggy bank to send to their missionary each Christmas. Anita's dream was to become a missionary and "fly for God."

She attended Catholic grade schools, where English was taught one half of the day and French the other half. For high school, she attended public school because her parents could not afford private school tuition. She graduated as salutatorian of her class. Unable to afford college, Anita found a job as a secretary. Six months later, war was declared and she went to Washington, D.C., to work for the Army's Quartermaster Corps.

While working there, she heard about the experimental program to teach qualified young women pilots to fly military aircraft. Although she had never been in an airplane before, she quit her job and moved to a nearby airport so she could learn how to fly.

When she had accumulated enough hours for her private pilot's license, she applied for the training. After passing all the tests, including a personal

interview and a physical exam, she was accepted as a trainee in the AAF flight training program. Following seven months of intensive training, Anita graduated and received official AAF orders to report to Altus Army Air Field in Oklahoma.

There, she was assigned as an engineering test pilot. At the same time, the Catholic chaplain asked her to be his pilot and take him to outlying bases on Sundays. That was one of the highlights of her WASP experiences. Flying for God? (The motto of the Central Flying Training Command, which included Altus Army Air Field, was "Ut Vira Volent," which means, "That Men May Fly.")

When the WASP were disbanded, Anita got a secretarial job, but she was not happy. She thought about her childhood dream of becoming a missionary and flying for God. She inquired, but learned there were no radar stations in Alaska; the Catholic Bishop she consulted told her there were just no foreseeable plans for "flying nuns" to serve in Alaska. After much soul searching, she decided to become a cloistered Carmelite nun and pray for others so she became Sister Teresa.

Cloistered Carmelite nuns usually stay in their first

convent for the rest of their lives. However, because she was fluent in French, Sister Teresa was asked to serve in convents overseas. She spent more than a decade as a cloistered nun under unbelievably deplorable living conditions in monasteries in Korea, Japan, and Africa.

The first monastery in America's original thirteen colonies was the Mt. Carmel Monastery in Port Tobacco, Md. It had been abandoned for years; its acres becoming farm land. In 1973, Sister Teresa was sent from the French Antilles to coordinate the reactivation of this historic monastery.

Her life at Port Tobacco was filled with miracles! With faith and using her hands and a hammer, she helped to build her vision: a monastery with individual hermitages for the nuns—the only one in the United States!

When her mission there was finished, she returned to the convent in the French Antilles, where she lives today, praying for others that they may someday "fly to God." From New England to Korea, Japan, Africa, the French Antilles, and then back to the United States, Anita Paul has flown around the world. How did she do it? She changed COMMANDERS!



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WASP Toons!

Drawings and cartoons from The Fifinella Gazette, The Avenger and the WASP!



Stick or throttle arm? But Hospital had enough shots for both arms!

318th & 319th
AAFTD