

12 YEARS WITHOUT CHOCOLATE

YEAR 1, 32nd Sunday of Ordinary Time

A Story of Perseverance, Patience and Prayer by Sr. Mary Elizabeth Albers, S.O.L.T

[Discernment of Spirits – Sr. Mary Elizabeth Albers, S.O.L.T.](#) (16:45-20:12)

At the age of 25, Betsy, a lay member of the Society of Our Lady of the Most Holy Trinity, decided to give up chocolate for all of Lent so that her grandmother, who had never had any interest in Christian faith or baptism, would convert to Catholicism by the end of the season enjoys the sacrament. So the end of Lent comes and Grandma still hasn't asked for baptism and Betsy reasons, "Well, I can't start eating chocolate now. That wouldn't be very good. So, ok, I'll continue to not eat chocolate until my grandmother comes to the sacrament of baptism." A year goes by and she reevaluates, "Well, I can't stop now. I got to keep going." Two years go by, three years go by, twelve years go by and she would only eat chocolate during the octave of Christmas and Easter and she called it the "choctave". But for those *twelve years* she refrained from eating chocolate.

At 37 years old, Betsy sends an email to the Sisters of the Society of Our Lady of the Most Holy Trinity and asks them to pray because her grandmother really isn't doing well. Then the next day Betsy sends another email saying, "Grandma's asking a lot of questions; keep praying." And day after day the Sisters get her prayer updates until a week goes by and then they hear, "Grandma is asking for a priest. She wants to be baptized!" The next day Betsy sends a text message to the Sisters with six Reeses peanut butter cups all lined up in front of a Dr. Pepper. Her grandmother was baptized, received first Holy Communion and Confirmation then passed away less than a week later. Truly, the mercy of God!

Betsy said she never really struggled with any awful temptations to eat chocolate. Although, one day she thought she had a bit of chocolate on her finger and went to lick it off only to realize that it was magic marker. She had to admit to God, "Oh Lord, you got me!" Despite her moment of weakness, she still never really ate any chocolate. But the hardest times came when another year would pass, and she would reevaluate, "Ok, Grandma's still not baptized do I want to commit to another year?" There were these temptations towards, "Well, it hasn't done any good so far. It's been eight years. Are you sure it's going to bare any fruit?" The evil one would try and disquiet her; he discourages. But in that discouragement she would pray, "Ok Lord what's from you?" She would discern and saw that, "No, this is what I'm supposed to do." And now all can see the peace and joy of that small sacrifice that just radiates through her family now that they know their grandmother is a saint in heaven.