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## "I MET WITH MOTHER HILL TO TALK ABOUT BECOMING A NUN, BUT I KEPT IT TO MYSELF."

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***Sister Virginia Rodee '57, '74 (MA),  
Assistant Vice President for Mission and Ministry, firmly believes that God  
wants people to be happy so their gifts can come to life.***

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"I started here as a student in 1953 and everything was brand new and beautiful. Today, students talk about how beautiful the university is, but in those days it was breathtaking. The dorm rooms were furnished to feel like home. The doors had panels of colored glass and sunlight shone through, making colored light dance everywhere.

Founders Chapel was a special place. Morning Mass was at 7 and the nuns were finishing morning prayer. They prayed for us every day and it was so comforting. Their love was so concrete. They laughed and were absolutely genuine. Also, they were very educated and had experienced the world. I was attracted to that.

Mother Hill's cross is something I cherish deeply. She received it in Belgium in 1907 when she made her Final Profession. When our Religious pass away, we're not buried with our cross, only with our rings. So when I heard about her death, I asked the Superior if I might have her cross. I don't even know why I moved forward with that, but I realize now how incredibly special it was to me. It's an endearing symbol of her rich life legacy, and a timeless connection to the university she helped build.

I made my Profession in Rome in February 1966. Two years later, at a meeting here on campus, the announcement was made that I would go to Korea. I was so elated! I left on Feb. 14, 1968. Aside from six years in Rome and some time to come back here for study and for family visits, I was in Korea until 1997 when I returned to USD. It was like coming home. God has been very good to me. I am very blessed."