

# Thomas, Maria and Monica Long: The Trio

written by Maryanne Meyerriecks |



## Q&A: What are three items you can't live without?

**Maria:** I can't live without my phone, my weighted blanket that helps me sleep well and my sketch book because I like to draw.

**Thomas:** A camera for visual storytelling, coffee so I can relax and personal prayer time so I can reflect and identify where God's voice is in my daily life.

**Monica:** My two dogs and cat — my pets — my blanket and my twin sister.

Thomas, Maria and Monica Long, who attend St. Michael Church in Van Buren, grew into church ministry by working alongside their parents as young teens. They sang with the youth choir their father, T.C. Long, directs. They volunteered at religious education, Vacation Bible School and other activities while their mother, Angela, worked as an assistant director of religious education.

All three have served as lectors and Communion ministers. As home-schooled students, most of their activities were family activities, and they were able to focus on service to their parish community and developing individual skills in music, visual arts, writing and film.

"We've attended Mass every Sunday since I've been born, gone to daily Mass, ministered at Mass, participated in adoration and reconciliation regularly and made faith a part of our lives," Monica Long said.

Thomas, 20, is active in campus ministry at St. Thomas Aquinas University Parish in Fayetteville. He trained with McAfee Studios so he could take over the videography ministry at St. Thomas this fall. He assists at retreats, including St. Michael confirmation retreat, leading skits. He wants to go into youth or campus ministry in the future, using his media skills to make the Church more accessible to young people. Twins Maria and Monica, both 18, who will attend the University of Central Arkansas in Conway in the fall, also plan to get involved in campus ministry.