



Blessed Theresa reminds us:

“All the works of God proceed slowly and in pain; but then, their roots are the sturdier and their flowering the lovelier.” - Blessed Theresa of Jesus Gerhardinger (SSND)

What We've Read:

It is Advent. A time of waiting and believing and hoping and trusting. Blessed Theresa's quote (above) is something to ponder as we move through the foundational steps of discernment – and through Advent too.

Here is an example of the lived reality of the quote from Blessed Theresa. St. Augustine was born in Thagaste, North Nigeria in 354. He is probably more popularly known for what he was converted from than what he was eventually converted to. His youthful sexual wanderings and brash arrogance is more fascinating to most people than his later life as a monk, mystic and bishop. He wrote the book *Confessions* to confess (make known) what he believed about God, to give God praise and to tell his life story to show what God can do with God's humans. In it we read of a soul's struggles to be itself. We see how his inner life, at every step, was linked with his very deep need of God. But time and again, he resisted taking the road that would lead him there because, as he said, he was 'led astray by the mists of a befouled heart.'

His deep need to 'belong and to be somebody' was finally understood when he recognized he was called by God and belonged to God as a follower of Jesus. His 'restless heart' had found its home. He wasn't rejected but was re-orientated so his gifts could be used to build up the kingdom of God. His passionate curiosity was transformed through his conversion into a pursuit of Right love and Right Will. His ear for eloquence was transformed into a search for Truth. His genius for friendship was transformed into his love for community.

His conversion is marked when he was 32. He was struggling with that since he was 16. His discernment was aided greatly when he met Bishop Ambrose. I believe it was the confirmation for which he was looking. He flowered into one of the Doctors of the Catholic Church.

- Sister Rose Rita Hueselman, SSND

Thoughts on Prayer / Reflection Questions

- Augustine was guided by the application of Scripture to his life. What is a scripture quote that inspires you?
- In Augustine's life, learning had such a deep impact that he reports on it in *Confessions*. While he was writing the book, he was working out who he really was. He didn't simply have an intellectual conversion; he felt that he was unconditionally loved by God. What may be an example of a learning that manifested itself in a change in your life?
- The story of Augustine's conversion is my story and probably your story also. To read more about him, check out this site by the Augustinians: <http://www.augnet.org/en/life-of-augustine/growing-up/>
- To pray with Augustine: For all of you whose spirit is restless and waiting...

Lord, I've prayed for a cure, but none has come. I've prayed for understanding of "why," and haven't received that, either. I sit, stand, and wait, Lord, for your wisdom and word, but O, Lord, my spirit is restless.

Inside of me is worry, and it is growing stronger. Disappointment, and it festers. My courage is flagging. My patience is falling away. And, even more, my spirit is restless.

So, Father in Heaven, instead of praying more for a cure or understanding or a release from pain, I turn to you with another supplication: Please, Lord, be with me and help me. Help me in my frustration and disappointment. Help me in my fragility.

And, most of all, Lord, help me in my restlessness so that I may be still and quiet and truly listen and truly hear. For I love you, Lord, with all my heart. And my restless spirit does, too.

- Maureen Pratt

Looking Ahead:

Candlelight Christmas Novena with the School Sisters of Notre Dame

Our Lady of Good Counsel, Mankato, MN

Sunday December 16 and/or Friday December 21. Meet at 5:45 p.m.

Join the School Sisters of Notre Dame for their annual candlelight Christmas Novena with chanted psalms and prophecies. You are welcome to come early to join us for supper or for an afternoon of prayer. An overnight visit is also an option.

To register contact Sr. Stephanie at sspandl@ssnd.org or 651-278-4498. RSVP by Dec. 14

Come and Be – Dinner & Advent Prayer with the SSNDs

5135 Mill Run Road - Dallas, TX

Thursday, December 14 6-8p

bwaldorf@ssnd.org

507-217-0663, please call or email to let us know you'll be joining us!

*National Vocation Discernment Retreat for **Hispanic women (ages 21-40)*

San Antonio, TX [Please contact Sister Bridget - bwaldorf@ssnd.org if you need transportation between Dallas-San Antonio]

March 7-10, 2019

\$30 registration fee – includes retreat, lodging and meals!

Deep Encounter: Listening with An Open Heart / Profundo Encuentro: Eschuchando Con un Corazon Abierto

Offered in English and Spanish

Hilton Airport Hotel

Online Registration due January 15, 2019

www.nationalcatholicsistersproject.org

**While this invitation is to Hispanic women in particular, we welcome all single women between the ages of 21-40 to join us!

Visiting Women's Religious Communities

St. Paul, MN

Saturday April 6, 2019

Contact Sr. Stephanie for more info at sspandl@ssnd.org or 651-278-4498

This Month's Resources for Discernment:

<https://anunslife.org/blogs/discovering-god-s-calling/how-do-the-spiritual-themes-of-advent-connect-with-discernment>

Love gives everything gladly, again and again...
El Amor da todo con alegría y lo renueva cada día.
- 24th General Chapter of the School Sisters of Notre Dame

www.ssnd.org

www.gerhardinger.org

www.ssndcp.org

www.amssnd.org