

Vocation Reflections February 2019



Blessed Theresa, foundress of the School Sisters of Notre Dame, reminds us:

“Love is the sign through which the world should be convinced that we believe in Jesus”
– Letter #949

Two questions to ponder:

- To whom do I want to entrust my life?
- To what do I want to entrust my life?

A Reflection on those questions...

Years ago in an address to the National Catholic Student Coalition, I identified these two questions as being fundamental in discernment. Now, fifteen-plus years later, I am being invited to say a bit more about these two questions. My recollection of the significance of these two questions focused on the phrases “to whom” and “to what.” And indeed these are significant elements. However, I would like to begin by unpacking the work “entrust.” What does it mean to entrust something or someone? Webster has some thoughts by way of definition pointing out that “*to entrust*” means *to turn over responsibility, or consign, to put into someone’s care or protection, to commit or commend. Entrust implies committing with trust and confidence.*

I don’t often look to the dictionary for inspiration or direction but I think this definition is helpful. Discernment is a way of life, not just a movement or process for decision-making. Each moment invites a commitment coming from a place of profound trust and deep confidence, a place where God’s spirit dwells. To whom and to what do I entrust my life? God alone is deserving of such heartfelt trust and commitment. God’s presence in us, in others, in all creation is the manifestation, the incarnation, the spark that enflames our hearts in a selfless response, not once and for all, but moment by moment for time and eternity.

To WHOM do I entrust my life? To the God within, beyond, among – the God of mystery, yet the God made manifest. To WHAT do I entrust my life? To God’s work, to God’s design in whatever shape it comes, and in whatever way we choose to respond. One of God’s greatest gifts, maybe THE greatest gift is freedom...freedom to choose! Discernment is not about God playing “hide and seek” with us, allowing us to stumble around until we find what seems to be “God’s will.” Rather, God’s great love and expansiveness provides us with multiple choices, multiple goods, from which we might choose. God’s deepest desire and design is our happiness...not just a sense of satisfaction, but happiness that is grounded in discovering who we are and what is being asked of us, and attempting to respond with all the love and passion that we can.

Years ago, I heard this little prayer and it continues to put into words my own “entrustment.” *God, remember my younger heart’s desire.* Life experience has led me to believe that this simple prayer is answered time and time again, inviting my older, sometimes battered and bruised heart to trust in a God who knows and remembers my younger heart’s desire.

-Sister Catherine Bertrand, SSND

Looking Ahead:

Come and Be – Join us for dinner, a concert and prayer

5135 Mill Run Road - Dallas, TX – NEW LOCATION!

We’ll gather, grab a bite to eat and head to the David Haas Concert in Arlington and join in sung prayer

Friday, February 15 6-9:30pm – **Please RSVP by Thursday, February 14th at 8:00pm**

Contact Sr. Bridget for more info at bwaldorf@ssnd.org or 507-217-0663

Radio Show: Dare to Love

Next Airing: March 7

1st Thursday Monthly 8-8:30 a.m.

WNDZ 750-AM Chicago

Vocation Reflections is a monthly newsletter for those interested in learning more about discernment, prayer, and other topics related to the consecrated/vowed life. For questions, comments and [subscription information, please contact sisters@ssnd.org](mailto:sisters@ssnd.org)

SSND Women's Leadership Luncheon: Dallas – St. Louis – Milwaukee – Twin Cities

In 2019, the luncheons will focus on **human trafficking**: the causes, who is targeted and what is being done to eradicate it. Each location will feature a speaker who is knowledgeable about human trafficking and who works closely with those who have been affected by it. Attendees will gain an understanding of SSND's stance on human trafficking and what sisters are doing to remedy the problem. The luncheon is **free** to all guests.

- Milwaukee – March 7 Contact Madelyn Kempen at mkempen@ssndcp.org or 262-787-1036 |
- Dallas – March 19 Contact Sr. Bridget for more info at bwaldorf@ssnd.org or 507-217-0663
- St. Louis – March 25 Contact Debbie Rohrich-Tyler at drohrichtyler@ssndcp.org or 314-633-7032
- Twin Cities – March 29 Contact Sr. Stephanie for more info at sspandl@ssnd.org or 651-278-4498

<https://www.ssndcentralpacific.org/news-events/womens-leadership-luncheon>

Vocation Jamboree

University of Mary

Bismarck, ND

March 19-21, 2019

<https://www.umary.edu/events/vocations-jamboree.php>

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: Listen to the highlights from a young person's panel on vocations (November 2018)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=856Bh0aRqfw&feature=youtu.be>