

**Blessed Theresa of Jesus Gerhardinger:**

**God, in his wisdom and mercy, can and will direct all for our best.**

- Letter 4884, December 30, 1873

**How does God guide us and help us discern? Part 2**

We continue with understanding how God guides and helps during our discernment. The following from Fr. Stephen Wang<sup>1</sup> are more indicators that may be helpful:

- **Inner Conviction:** You might have a *clear, inner conviction that something is right for you*; almost like an unshakeable knowledge of who you are and what is important for you. More than just a desire or an attraction – it is like a sense of inevitability; part of your identity. It might have been a part of you for as long as you can remember; or it might have dawned slowly; or it might come upon you like a moment of inspiration.



- **Ordinary Prayer:** When you are praying – talking to God, asking his help, or just sitting in silence – do certain ideas keep coming back to you? When you let go of your distractions for a moment, and open your heart to God in prayer, it can allow your deepest concerns to come to the surface, and allow the Lord to ‘speak’ to you. *Sometimes an idea comes to mind in prayer, or a memory, or a concern, or a task. It nags.* It seems important, it seems especially meaningful. And when you reflect on it later, it still seems important for you.

- **Holy Scripture:** In a similar way, when you are reading the bible alone, or listening to scripture readings at Mass, *a phrase can strike you with unexpected force.* A passage that you have heard many times before can suddenly seem clear and powerful. It moves you or challenges you or almost impels you to do something. This is another way that the Holy Spirit can inspire

and guide you -pointing you, through these words and the response they evoke, to something that is important for you.

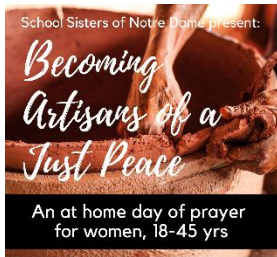
- **Extraordinary Experiences:** Not often, but sometimes, *God steps into our life in a quite extraordinary and unexpected way.* You ‘hear’ a voice in prayer, or ‘see’ a vision or witness a miracle – and you are quite convinced that this is God’s direct work, and that God is speaking to you personally in this way, and guiding you in a certain direction or asking something of you. You have to be very careful here: you can deceive yourself, and harmful spiritual forces can trick you into believing what is not true. Talk about them with a wise priest or spiritual director and try to make sense of them in the *light of all the other ways that God is guiding you.*
- **Realism:** Finally, you have to be realistic. You may have many desires and dreams, but they must grow out of who you are and what is possible for you at this time. Your thoughts about the future should be rooted in the reality of your life and of your situation. You need to have the humility to accept your limitations, and a sincere gratitude for the person God has created you to be.

**Reflection #1:** God ‘speaks’ to us in many different ways. Life is not a puzzle where we have to analyze every clue in order to reach a tidy conclusion...we simply get on with life, doing the best we can – ‘listening’ to God, paying attention to all these different areas, seeing if there is a pattern, stopping to think when something strikes us with a new force or clarity. *As you listen to God in your life, what are you hearing? What do you think might be a helpful next-step?*

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)

**Reflection #2:** The past weeks here in the United States have been unlike any other with the ongoing COVID-19 crises, the death of George Floyd and the ensuing protests, news reports and cries for change. *Have these experiences been a way that God has stepped into your life in an unexpected way? If so, how is this impacting your journey of discernment?*

## Looking Ahead: On-line Opportunities



### SSND Day of Prayer : *Becoming Artisans of a Just Peace* – An At Home Day of Prayer in Communion with Others

**When:** Saturday, June 20, 2020

**Time:** 9:00-3:00 PDT / 10:00-4:00 MDT / 11:00-5:00 CDT / 12:00-6:00 EDT

**Who:** Women, 18-45 years

Register with Sr. Stephanie Spandl, SSND [sspandl@ssnd.org/651-278-4498](mailto:sspandl@ssnd.org/651-278-4498)

Group sharing via video-chat in the morning and afternoon will bookend a day of private prayer and reflection

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**SSND Vocation Reflections ZOOM Meeting: Unpacking Your Reflections – Ever wish you could talk about these Vocation Reflections with others? Join us for an hour-long conversation about this month's newsletter ... or other topics you'd like to explore**

Monday, June 29, 2020 - 5p PDT / 6p MDT / 7p CDT / 8p EDT

Email [Sister Bridget](mailto:SisterBridget) for the ZOOM Link

- **Women's Discernment Group: Chicago Archdiocese Vocation website:** <https://www.vocationscava.org/online-discernment-group/>

## Did you know?

Each of our *Vocation Reflections* is available on-line at our website:  
<https://ssnd.org/become-sister/vocation-resources/>

**This Month's Resources for Discernment:** If you have a question or would like to speak to an SSND sister about vocations, we are available to meet with you personally. Please feel free to contact us....

Sister Carol Jean Dust – [cjdust@ssnd.org](mailto:cjdust@ssnd.org) (habla español)

Sister Nancy Gilchriest – [ngilchriest@ssnd.org](mailto:ngilchriest@ssnd.org)

Sister Jill Laszewski – [jlaszewski@ssnd.org](mailto:jlaszewski@ssnd.org)

Sister Stephanie Spandl – [sspandl@ssnd.org](mailto:sspandl@ssnd.org) (habla español)

Sister Bridget Waldorf – [bwaldorf@ssnd.org](mailto:bwaldorf@ssnd.org)

<sup>1</sup> Adapted from : *How to Discover Your Vocation* by Fr. Stephen Wang distributed by Ignatius Press.

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