

Vocation Reflections

March 2022



School Sisters of Notre Dame

“Prayer and fasting are two wings on which our hearts soar to God.”

Blessed Theresa of Jesus Gerhardinger, foundress of the School Sisters of Notre Dame

Letter #2780 written in 1858

In the Gospel reading for the First Sunday of Lent ([Luke 4:1-13](#)), Jesus is confronted by temptations in the desert. He is resolute in his ability to say “yes” to God’s desires and “no” to those things that might get in the way of God’s desires (ill-fed hungers, power, false gods). As we discern God’s call for ourselves, there are similar obstacles that can get in the way of hearing and acting on that call. Sometimes it’s enough just to name them. But if you meet a real difficulty, pray about it, and talk to someone about it so it doesn’t become insurmountable.

What can get in the way of discerning a vocation?

(adapted from [How to Discover Your Vocation](#) by Fr. Stephen Wang)

- **Worry, anxiety** – *Trust that God is more powerful than all your worries.* Share your honest anxieties and put them in God’s loving hands.
- **Lack of trust** – You may have a distorted image of God. You may think God is like an absent parent who doesn’t love you, or a kind relative who will never make any demands on you, or a vengeful tyrant who is punishing you for something, or even an unpredictable boss who wants to force you into a vocation that will not be right for you. Instead, *trust God.* God is a tender parent who is both loving and demanding. God cares for you more than you care for yourself. Sometimes God may challenge you and call you to something unexpected – but it will always be for your ultimate good and happiness.
- **Noise, busyness, overwork** – Perhaps you can’t hear God’s call because you don’t make space to listen. Every hour is full, and your mind is constantly cluttered with work, noise, music, and other distractions. Make space for God and for at least some moments of silence in each day.
- **Not praying, not living your faith** – We will never know ourselves properly or know God’s call if we don’t make space for prayer each day and try to live our Catholic faith.
- **Sin, worldliness** – If trapped in some habitual sin or caught up in a worldly lifestyle, it may be impossible to listen to your own heart or to God. Be honest with yourself; go to confession; try to make a new start even if you are still struggling. Lent is an opportune time to begin anew.
- **Addictive behaviors** – Alcohol, drugs, and even activities that seem harmless in themselves – like work, exercise, texting, gaming, social media, television – can become like addictions that cover up our deepest needs and cut us off from our true selves. Try and break any addictive patterns of behavior you are trapped in – and if you can’t, then get help.
- **Avoiding the question of vocation** – If the question of your vocation is nagging at you, don’t just run away from it. It will come back whether you like it or not! And in the meantime you will make yourself more and more unhappy. *So face it honestly*, in prayer and in conversations with someone you trust.
- **Fear of commitment** – We rightly value freedom but in the Western world we confuse freedom with being able to choose from an endless variety of options. Commitment to anything, let alone for life, seems like a limitation, even a loss of oneself. But to have a series of endless options is actually to have no options – because you never embrace any one of them with your whole heart. *God may be inviting you to make a lifelong commitment, to put down roots so that you can truly flourish, to build one concrete life rather than to fantasize about innumerable possible lives, to take responsibility for your own life.*

Check out this resource:

The Beauty of Consecrated Life

Sisters Connie Harkin and Mary Jeanne Davidson were interviewed about their call and ministry as SSND by the Archdiocese of Grouard-McLennan in Alberta, Canada.

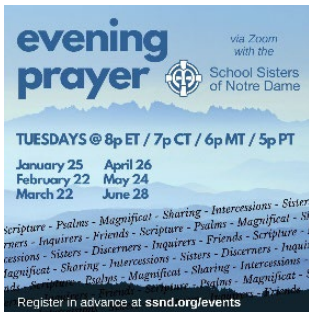
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Did you know?

Each of our Vocation Reflections is available online at ssnd.org/become-sister/vocation-resources/.

Looking ahead

The following events are all virtual. Learn more and register for the Zoom link at ssnd.org/events/.



Evening Prayer with the SSND Vocation Team

Every fourth Tuesday of the month

8 p.m. ET / 7 p.m. CT

March 22, 2022

April 26, 2022

May 24, 2022

June 28, 2022



Scan me

Catholic Sisters Week

March 8-14, 2022

Joyful and Alive Conversation

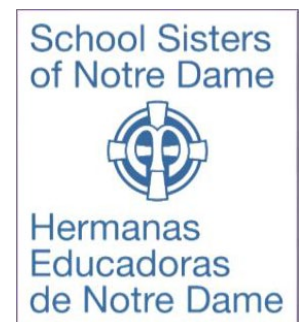
March 9, 2022

8 p.m. ET / 7 p.m. CT

Living our Call as SSND: Around the Globe

May 2022 (date TBA)

The final in our three-part series on Transformative Education.



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.