

“Pray again and again that the Holy Spirit may let you recognize and do what is right!”
Blessed Theresa of Jesus Gerhardinger, SSND foundress
Letter 3615



How does God guide us and help us discern? (Part 3 of 3)

When discerning a choice or a vocational call, some patterns will emerge and provide a sense that you are being drawn in a particular direction. We continue with understanding how God guides and helps during our discernment. The following from Fr. Stephen Wang¹ are some indicators that may be helpful:

- **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.

¹ Adapted from [How to Discover Your Vocation by Fr. Stephen Wang](#).

For Reflection:

God “speaks” to us in all kinds of different ways. How open were you to receiving God’s messages in the past? How about now?

This month’s vocation resource:

[Feels Like Home: A Single Catholic Woman’s Guide to Religious Life in the U.S.](#)

By Susan Flansburg, 2023 (self-published), 110 pp.

This quick and easy read guides inquirers along the path of discernment to religious life and provides examples and advice from those who have already walked it.

DID YOU KNOW?

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Looking ahead

Click the event title for more information or go to ssnd.org/events.



Young Adult Evening Prayer

June 27, 2023

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

Online

Please register in advance for the Zoom link

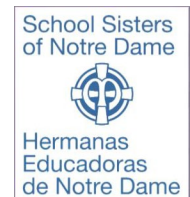


SSND Summer Service Week

June 11-17, 2023

at Whole Kids Outreach in Ellington, Missouri

Limited space still available.



God's cause
is the *only* concern of
our hearts
Blessed Theresa of Jesus
Catherine



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.