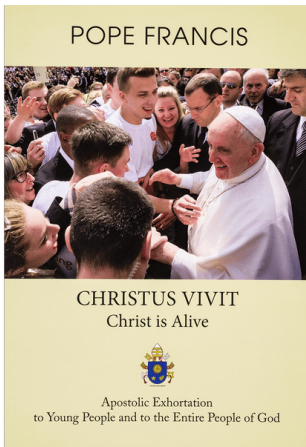


Vocation Reflections

September 2023



**Blessed Theresa of Jesus Gerhardinger, SSND Foundress, reminds us:
Do not lose courage. Jesus will stand at your side.** (Letter #714: May 30, 1847)



This month we continue with short paragraphs from [CHRISTUS VIVIT \(Christ is Alive\)](#), the Apostolic Exhortation of the Holy Father Francis to Young People and to the Entire People of God. What Pope Francis shares in these paragraphs can be helpful as you seek to know God's call...

- ... we have to realize that it is a calling from a friend, who is Jesus.
- ... when the Lord thinks of each of you and what he wants to give you, he sees you as his close friend.
- ... if he plans to grant you a grace, a charism that will help you live to the full and become someone who benefits others, someone who leaves a mark in life, it will surely be a gift that will bring you more joy and excitement than anything else in this world.
- ... More than rules and obligations, the choice that Jesus sets before us is to follow him as friends follow one another.

The call of Jesus our friend

287. To discern our personal vocation, we have to realize that it is a calling from a friend, who is Jesus. When we give something to our friends, we give them the best we have. It will not necessarily be what is most expensive or hard to obtain, but what we know will make them happy. Friends are so sensitive to this that they can already imagine the smile on their friend's face when he or she opens that gift. This sort of discernment that takes place among friends is what I suggest you take as a model for trying to discover God's will for your lives.

288. I want you to know that, when the Lord thinks of each of you and what he wants to give you, he sees you as his close friend. And if he plans to grant you a grace, a charism that will help you live to the full and become someone who benefits others, someone who leaves a mark in life, it will surely be a gift that will bring you more joy and excitement than anything else in this world. Not because that gift will be rare or extraordinary, but because it will perfectly fit you. It will be a perfect fit for your entire life.

289. A vocation, while a gift, will undoubtedly also be demanding. God's gifts are interactive; to enjoy them we have to be ready to take risks. Yet the demands they make are not an obligation imposed from without, but an incentive to let that gift grow and develop, and then become a gift for others. When the Lord awakens a vocation, he thinks not only of what you already are, but of what you will one day be, in his company and in that of others.

290. Sheer vitality and strength of personality combine in the hearts of young people to make them constantly aim higher. This exuberance will be tempered by time and painful experiences, but it is important for "this youthful and still untested yearning for the infinite" [160] to encounter the unconditional friendship that Jesus offers us. More than rules and obligations, the choice that Jesus sets before us is to follow him as friends follow one another, seeking each other's company and spending time together out of pure friendship. Everything else will come in time, and even failures in life can be an invaluable way of experiencing that friendship, which will never be lost.

REFLECTION

- As you read these paragraphs, what excites you?
- With which of your friends could you share these words and thoughts?
- What is your prayer for today?

This month's vocation resource:

Listen to vowed religious women and men talking about choosing consecrated life:

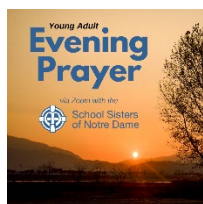
<https://youtu.be/gkJiBryEjRs?si=-tktk87tI0a9bXy>

DID YOU KNOW?

Back issues of Vocation Reflections are available [online](#).
Stay up-to-date with SSND Vocations at flowpage.com/ssnd or scan the code below.

Looking ahead

Click the event title to learn more and register for the Zoom link.



Online Evening Prayer

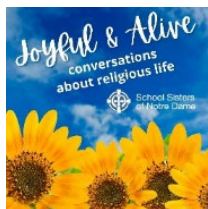
For young adults ages 18-45

September 26, 2023

October 24, 2023

November 28, 2023

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

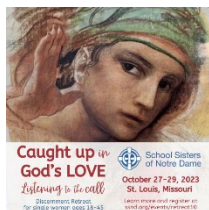


Joyful & Alive Conversation

For single women ages 18-45

October 8, 2023

4 p.m. ET / 3 p.m. CT

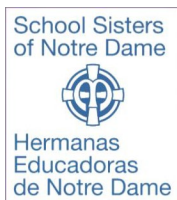


SSND Discernment Weekend

For single women ages 18-45

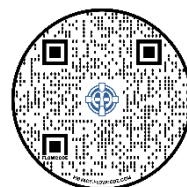
October 27-29, 2023

St. Louis, MO



God's cause
is the *only* concern of
our hearts

Diosos
Thronos
of Jesus
Centering



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.