

Vocation Reflections

January 2024



Blessed Theresa of Jesus Gerhardinger, SSND Foundress, reminds us:

O Holy Spirit, enlighten us, strengthen us, so that we may comprehend our divine call and recognize what we are, what we should be, what we must and really want to do in order to reach this goal.”

(Letter #29, written in 1837 at Neunburg vorm Wald, Bavaria – birthplace of the SSND congregation)



Have you ever tried to put a key in a keyhole in the dark with only a tiny light shining from somewhere? You must hold the flashlight just right in order to light up the keyhole, or you must position your body so as not to be in the way of the lamplight, or you must not let yourself cast a shadow on the clarity of the keyhole. Getting the most perfect light on the keyhole takes adjustments in order to open the door. Could this not also be said of vocational discernment... light ... adjustments ... key to open the message?

Just concluding the Advent and Christmas seasons, we have been reminded frequently of the gift of Radiant Light to our world. **Jesus Christ, our Light**, came into the world to light our path, to light the “keyhole” where we can then unlock the message or call of God to us, in essence to “enlighten us”:

“In the beginning was the Word; and the Word was with God and the Word was God...All that came to be had life in the Word, and that life was the light of humanity, a light that shines in the dark, a light that darkness could not overpower...**The Word was the true light that enlightens** all; and he was coming into the world.” (John 1:1, 4-5, 9)

A very “key” element of discernment is **openness to the light of Jesus**, who is the Word and true light. In the journey to hear God’s call and discern freely we look for light, we try to adjust to best see both ourselves and God. We long to see with God’s light, and then let it grow ever brighter to **enlighten** our questions, our pondering, our prayerful response.

To comprehend your divine call, as Blessed Theresa prayed, you are invited to take some quiet moments to ... *peacefully pause with, rest in, and ponder* these words of Sacred Scripture, staying **open to God’s light to enlighten** your mind and heart.

- “*A light has risen in the darkness for the upright of heart; the Lord is generous, merciful and just.*” (Psalm 112:4)
- “*The people that walked in darkness has seen a great light; on those who live in a land of deep shadow, a light has shown.*” (Isaiah 9:1)
- “*The Lord preceded them, in the daytime by means of a column of cloud to show them the way, and at night by means of a column of fire to give them light. Thus, they could travel both day and night.*” (Exodus 13:21)

- "...Jesus said to the blind man in reply, 'What do you want me to do for you?' The blind man replied to him 'Master, I want to see.' Jesus told him, 'Go your way' your faith has saved you.' Immediately he received his sight and followed him on the way." (cf. Mark 10:46-52)
- "For God who said, 'Let light shine out of darkness,' has shone in our hearts to bring to light the knowledge of the glory of God on the face of Christ." (2 Corinthians 4:6)

FOR REFLECTION

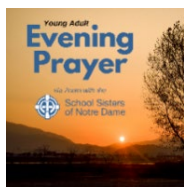
1. Reflect with the Scripture passages. Which passage(s) most nourishes or brings light to your present life journey, to the keyhole of the door you wish to open? How is this passage enlightening you?
2. Come in touch with a darkness you still experience. Choose a picture to accompany your journey, as you seek that Light which will open the door of your searching.

This month's vocation resource:

[We are all called to community](#)

Looking ahead

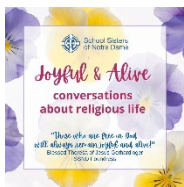
Click the event title to learn more.



[Online Evening Prayer](#)

For young adults ages 18-45

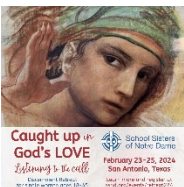
Every fourth Tuesday of the month in January-June 2024!
8 p.m. ET / 7 p.m. CT



[Joyful & Alive Conversations](#)

For single women age 18+

January 11, 2024 - 8 p.m. ET / 7 p.m. CT
April 13, 2024 - 11:30 a.m. ET / 10:30 a.m. CT



[Discernment Retreats for Single Women](#)

For single women ages 18-45

February 23-25, 2024 - San Antonio, TX
April 26-28, 2024 - in Baltimore, MD



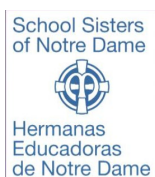
[Summer Service Week 2024](#)

For women ages 18-45

July 10-14, 2024
Whole Kids Outreach in Ellington, MO

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



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