



Vocation

MARCH 2026

REFLECTIONS

For Reflection

1.

In what way are you being called to listen more deeply and ponder with openness? How will you respond?

2.

What will help you to move into a space of deeper listening, e.g. a silent walk in nature, the quiet of your favorite prayer space, journaling / drawing / painting what is moving within you, some quiet time before the Blessed Sacrament, etc.? Give yourself that gift today!

Shhhhh...listen!

By Sister Carol Jean Dust, SSND

"Shhhhh," said the mother to her child, her forefinger held across her lips. "Let's listen!" And the child became curiously silent. The waves rushed up against the shore carrying the "shhhhh" sound in the eventide, perhaps as if to say, "Something deeper is coming your way. Listen!" Two siblings jostling around in the kitchen hear their father say, "Shhhhhh, pipe down! I'm trying to think deeply before this meeting I am leading." These experiences are not new nor uncommon, and we may have done or said similar things ourselves when we really wanted to listen more carefully, whether to a voice on TV, or to music, or to birds chirping, to the waves, or even to silence.

In our outside world, we often encounter chaotic moments, a confusion of sounds, and we want to escape inward. Yet there are also times when we have conflicting and chaotic sounds within us as well. Where do we go then? How to quiet these chaotic sounds and listen deeply is key to any further movements of the spirit. Listening is truly an art, and it is absolutely essential in the art of discernment. And as with most art, it takes much practice.

In the story of young Samuel from the first Book of Samuel (1 Samuel 3:1-10), God's voice could only be heard and understood after several callings. Samuel could not detect God's voice at first and thought it to be that of Eli, the priest. It even took Eli himself several interruptions before recognizing the voice was God's calling the youth. Only then Eli could counsel Samuel, "Shhhhh...listen...when God calls, respond: Your servant is listening." As the waves alert one to something deeper coming, Samuel was alerted to the sound of a deeper voice, God's own call, and all became clearer to him. Samuel could then listen to the call.

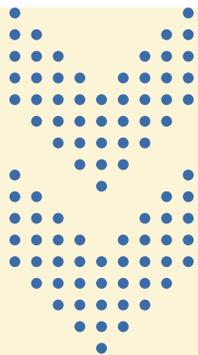
Once we really hear and listen, we can no longer unhear nor pretend we didn't hear, even when we try to avoid the call. It comes back into our pondering, nudging us for attention, gently walking us forward. Taking time to sit and listen to what rumbled within, time to connect with God in prayer, or simply being consciously in God's presence, open, trusting, and free, the "shhhhh" suddenly leads to a deeper peace which reflects the truth of the call. Mary, our Mother, is a perfect example of that stature. The SSND Constitution speaks of her in this way:

"In our attitude of listening and openness, we follow Mary. She pondered the word received and was so united with God, so desirous that his will be done, that the Word could become incarnate through her... Prayer and life are an attentive listening in order to do, a basic willingness to be led by God in order to bear fruit in mission." (*SSND Constitution You Are Sent, C32*)



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MARCH 2026



Catholic Sisters Week

March 8-14, 2026

#LikeACatholicSister



Young Adult Evening Prayer

For young adults ages 18+

March 24, 2026

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



Feast of the Annunciation

March 25, 2026



HAPPY EASTER!

April 5, 2026

Peace

Who I am
where I stand
are gifts. I am
in God's hand.

*By Sister Maura Eichner, SSND
inspired from the writings of
Blessed Theresa of Jesus
Gerhardinger*

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

La
causa de Dios
es la *única* preocupación de
nuestros corazones Beata Teresa de Jesús Gerhardinger



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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, contact sisters@ssnd.org.

