

Spring 2013

Vocation:

Life consists in learning to live on one's own, spontaneous, freewheeling: to do this one must recognize what is one's own—be familiar and at home with oneself.

This means basically learning who one is, and learning what one has to offer to the contemporary world, and then learning how to make that offering valid.

Thomas Merton

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Vocation Connections



“The Gyroscope of Intuition”

An Excerpt from *Leaving Church: A Memoir of Faith*
By Barbara Brown Taylor

In Leaving Church Barbara Brown Taylor shares with the reader her journey out of active parish ministry as an Episcopal priest and her move into a teaching career. The book's early pages offer a view of how she approaches callings, as she and her husband discern whether to leave their busy urban lives and move to a quiet, rural community.

Since we are both intuitive types, we do not decide things as much as we gravitate toward them. This is not very theological language, I know, but on the subject of divine guidance I side with Susan B. Anthony. “I distrust those people who know so well what God wants them to do,” she once said, “because I notice it always coincides with their own desires.” Having been somewhat of an expert on the sanctification of my own desires, I try not to pin them on God anymore. At the same time, I recognize the enormous energy in them, which strikes me as something that God might be able to use.

When I read the stories in the Bible about people such as Sarah, Jacob, or David, what stands out is not their virtue but their very strong wants. Sarah wanted her son to prevail over Hagar's son, Jacob wanted his older brother's blessing, and David wanted Bathsheba. While these cravings clearly brought them all kinds of well-deserved trouble, they also kept these characters very, very alive. Their desires propelled them in ways that God could use, better than God could use those who never colored outside the lines. Based on their example, I decided to take responsibility for what I wanted and to trust God to take it from there.

Intuition may be one way of speaking about how God does take that—takes things from here to there, I mean. Since intuition operates lower down than the frontal lobe, it is not easy to talk about how it works. In general, I tend not to pay much attention to it until I have completed all of my research, compiled my lists of pros and cons, and made a rational decision based on facts. Then, when I cannot sleep because the rational decision seems all wrong to me, I start paying attention to the gyroscope of my intuition, which operates below the radar of my reason. I pay attention to recurring dreams and interesting coincidences. I let my feelings off the leash and follow them around. When something moves in my peripheral vision, I leave the path to investigate, since it would be a shame to walk right by a burning bush. At this point, reason is all but useless to me. All that remains is trust. Will I trust my intuition or won't I? The more I do, the more intuitive I become. This is as close as I can come to describing the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

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ALIVE Team Reflections

I can hardly believe that it has been a year since I read the email offering me a post on the ALIVE Team. I opened it at about 1 o'clock in the morning and immediately ran to wake my mom up and tell her the news because I simply could not contain it. I could not wait to get started. Throughout high school, I had been involved in Student Ministry Team, and I was ecstatic that I had the chance to continue peer ministry in college. Being on the ALIVE Team this past year, I have met so many wonderful people both my age and older.



The team really is a second family. I have developed how to better articulate my beliefs and to help others come to realize the full scope of their personal values and faith. I have come to a fuller understanding of the wide range of faiths that are out there. This has helped me to really open up my mind and step inside different faiths to understand different approaches to life. Through the ALIVE Team, I am able to exercise my creativity and passion in new ways I love with people I love. I hope to continue my work in ministry beyond my college career by moderating a team in whichever high school I end up teaching in.

Megan Griffith, '16



I applied for the ALIVE Team at the very last minute, thinking that it was something that I might possibly be interested in. Three years later, I cannot begin to imagine my life without it. This Team has become my foundation and my family, and I am outrageously grateful and humbled to have been a part of it for so long. Over the past three years, I have served the Team as an Apprentice, a Hall Coordinator, and finally the Team's Coordinator.

I have immensely enjoyed being a part of a group that is responsible for generating a space to talk about faith, and so often I have walked away from a conversation feeling as if I were on a theological high. I have experienced the joy that participants feel when they are compelled to stay hours after a program has officially ended in order to talk about important life and spiritual questions, because they felt that they were in safe environment conducive to such a conversation. A participant once told me that my programs had gotten him to talk about things that he desperately needed to talk about, but otherwise wouldn't have. I am so proud to have had the profound opportunity and responsibility of facilitating these enlightening spiritual conversations that I know for a fact have made a difference in the lives of students on campus. While I will miss being a part of this team terribly, I know I will take these experiences with me wherever I may go.



Sarah Haggerty, '14

New Offerings from FLV

90-Minute Workshop ~ *Mentoring from a Vocation Perspective*

This past January, Julie Massey and Becky Welch met with staff members in Auxiliary Services for FLV's newest workshop, "Mentoring Through the Lens of Vocation." Built from an idea that was hatched at a regional conference which FLV hosted on this very topic, the workshop has two goals:

- To recognize and name the mentoring that takes place all over campus
- To offer resources and support for those mentoring and supervising our students in an effort to foster vocation exploration on campus

Examples of topics covered in the workshop include defining a mentor, building mentoring communities, and fostering students' vocations in formal settings (e.g., supervisory relationships) and informal settings (e.g., working alongside students).

The interactive workshop includes plenty of time for lively small and large group discussion. Evaluations from participants were very positive and included the following comments:

- "Nice job sharing what y'all have learned at other conferences! We need more interdepartmental sharing of ideas and learned concepts."
- "So well done. The combination of very timely information, empathy and humor can't be beat. So worth the time."

Interested in bringing this workshop to your own area? We would be happy to work with you and tailor it to your needs and roles on campus. Simply contact our office at x3155 or vocation@snc.edu

One-Day Seminar ~ *Talking 'bout this Generation: Supporting vocation exploration among today's college students*



- ◆ Learn more about our students
- ◆ Share experiences with colleagues
- ◆ Enjoy some hospitality—including lunch

Register at snc.edu/vocation

June 5, 2013
9:00am-5:00pm
Campus Center

From A Mystical Heart

Often we anxiously seek the will of God,
as if God had gleefully hidden dreams for us
deep in unfathomable places.

As if it were God's intention
that our whole lives be spent
in endless searching for signs and directions
buried in obscurity.

The will of God is that which brings us
peace and fullness of life.

The will of God is the seed of our dreams
ever gestating with possibility
and longing to leap forward
scattering new and surprising blessings
in our gray reality.

~ Edwina Gateley

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Vocation Connections

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We invite your comments, suggestions, and contributions.



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