

## *To Move a Stone*

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*First in the series, "The Communities That Call Us"*

*A look at the communities that speak to us, calling us to act.*

What are you doing in Wisconsin? What are you doing in De Pere? Or what are you doing at St. Norbert College? People in this area often pose these questions to me as a Black, African, and African American. My rehearsed response is, I got married, my husband had the job, and he was making more money so I moved.

I sincerely believe that moving to this particular geographic area is part of my calling. I believe that my *arrival* at St. Norbert College is beyond a personal move, more of a spiritual calling. I live my life based on the conviction that God sent me to this part of this world to deliver a message. I truly and sincerely believe this.

*"I ask my students to ponder their role in society and how they could use their role to address the social injustices in our society."*

When I think of who I am as a professional, Christian, person of faith and human being living in this world, I believe my calling is to build a community that respects all people regardless of their race, color, age, gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic status or religion. I believe that it is my role as a Christian to speak against the unjust issues in our society and world.

I am blessed that I have been able to balance my calling as a Christian with my vocation as a Professor at St. Norbert College. Sure, there are times that I am caught between different worlds, when I am in the classroom I sometimes hear stereotypical homophobic comments. I sometimes struggle. Do I say something or do I keep quiet? As a Christian, living the truth, I say something. As a professor, hired to provide quality education, I say something. I owe it to my community to say

something. I am motivated to speak out about diversity and life's injustices.

As a messenger of God, you are called to deliver messages on life's journey. As you travel on your journey you make stops; at each stop you deliver your message. I ask what has your journey been like? What is your message? As you begin to ponder who you are, I ask you to reflect on how your professional goals or career path relate to who you are. Who are you? Do your career/professional goals reflect who you are as a person of faith? What is your role? How has it affected you as a person?



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In my role as a professor at St. Norbert College, I teach about the importance of embracing diversity. I present lectures on how race is socially constructed and how it has affected the life opportunities of students in the United States. I facilitate discussions with students about how prejudice, racism, and homophobia still exist in today's world. I ask my students to ponder their role in society and how they could use their role to address the social injustices in our society.

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I am reminded of a book that I use in my GENS 408 *Social Inequalities: Race and Minority Relations* class, *The Education of a WASP* authored by Lois Stalvey. This book is the story of a middle class White Anglo Saxon Protestant female in the 1960s that set out on a journey not knowing what her journey would be like or where it would end. Lois Stalvey learned about

the social injustices, or stones as she refers to them, that were alive in her community and she worked to remove those stones. Ms. Stalvey ends her story by asking her readers, "What stones are you capable of removing?" I am constantly and daily reminded of Ms. Stalvey's question. I leave you with that same question just as I ask my students "What stones are you capable of removing?"



*FLV Spring Book Discussion  
Paul Wadell,  
Professor of Religious Studies*

The book selected for our Spring Faculty/Staff Book Discussion is Khaled Hosseini's novel *The Kite Runner*. Beginning in Afghanistan, *The Kite Runner* is a story of love, friendship, betrayal, guilt, and ultimately redemption. It probes the importance of courage for doing what the good requires, but likewise the terrible cost of cowardice and how the things we are unable to do on account of fear can haunt us for life. As Amir's father says to him one day, "It may be unfair, but what happens in a few days, sometimes even a single day, can change the course of a whole lifetime." It's a lesson Amir learns well as he yearns for "some place with no ghosts, no memories, no sins." *The Kite Runner* demonstrates there may not be such places, and that to try to overcome guilt through denial and self-deception is always futile. But it

also teaches that "there is a way to be good again," and thus reclaim the past in hope.

For over a year *The Kite Runner* has been near the top of *The New York Times* best seller list. It is a powerful, riveting book that takes the reader into the world of Afghanistan before and during the Russian invasion, and later into that dark, cruel night that came to that country with the rule of the Taliban. Both beautiful and disturbing, *The Kite Runner* shows how painful the truth can be, but also that the truth must come out because there is no other way for individuals, communities, and even nations to be healed.

Join us for a discussion of *The Kite Runner* on Tuesday, February 28 in the Kress Inn Conference Room. There will be two discussions; one at 12 noon and one at 3:30 PM. Please register at <http://www.snc.edu/vocation/bookapply>. Be sure to indicate if you need a copy of the book.

*In Celebration of Convocation*  
*Julie Massey, Director*  
*Program of Faith, Learning, and Vocation*

About a year ago, at a Lilly Endowment sponsored conference, I had the opportunity to hear liberation theologian Gustavo Gutierrez. Gutierrez shared with us his perspective that vocation is always a convocation. He asserted that we are not only individually called to be children of God, but to be a part of the family of God. In his eyes a true sign of the gospel kingdom is a Christian community, albeit one rooted in concern for each individual.

It is exactly this perspective our Program holds as we celebrate the successful acquisition of a sustainability grant from the Lilly Endowment, in the amount of \$500,000. This is not my success as director. It is not a success of the handful of us who work for the program. It is not the success of the gifted colleagues in Advancement who helped craft a first-rate proposal. Rather, it is a testimony to the convocation that has been occurring on our campus over the past five years. The College community's willingness to reflect on calling, at levels both personal and communal, is the reason the Endowment saw fit to grant this additional support.

We are filled with gratitude for those who have served as student leaders in our program, for their supervisors and mentors, for our Advisory Council and Study Group members, and all who have participated in our book discussions, days of renewal, or Retreat-Seminar on Vocation.

I am aware that there are schools with Lilly grants such as ours that did not experience our same success. They suggested vocation, but no convocation resulted. It is clear to me that our success with this proposal is directly linked to the many people who have supported, challenged, and enriched our work over the past five years.

You have our gratitude.

A quick preview of our new Program focus, which will begin in earnest during the 2006 – 2007 academic year:

- ALIVE Team Members and Apprentices focusing their work in our seven residence halls
- Ministry Internships, primarily off-campus, including a Summer Ministry Interns program
- Alumni Vocation Retreats

- Annual retreats for students pursuing a Masters in Theological Studies
- The long-requested Retreat-Seminar 2, for colleagues who have attended Retreat-Seminar 1. This retreat will build on the vocation understanding we have already developed and consider issues of institutional vocation.
- Ongoing book discussions
- Vocation Study Groups – offered in alternate years to faculty or staff
- Support for colleagues attending conferences related to vocation
- A second retreat for members of our Board of Trustees
- A conference for our partner Lilly schools in which we will consider together questions of institutional calling.



*Intersections* is an occasional newsletter published by the Program of Faith, Learning, and Vocation.

The editor invites your comments, suggestions, and contributions.

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*Called to This Community*  
*Beth Adamski '07, ALIVE Team Member*  
*First student article in the series, "The Communities That Call Us"*



Let's face it. College is definitely a time of transition; it is four years filled with rapid change, high stress, and lots of demands. It's also a time when you start to really question who you are, why you're here, and what you're supposed to do with your life.

I was excited to come to college. I didn't have the greatest high school experience and everybody kept telling me that college would be so much better. However, they failed to mention all the challenges that I would have to face.

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My freshman year was rough; it was filled with transitions that did not go well. I had a hard time making friends. I was overwhelmed. I was homesick. I was stressed out from classes. I was lonely. I started questioning who I was and what the purpose of my life was or for that matter, whether there even was a purpose. I also started questioning my faith.

Luckily, I had chosen to come to the college community of St. Norbert for the very reason that it is exactly what it says it is: a college *community*. I found a supportive network of people, a community that I could turn to. While it wasn't easy making it through my freshman year, I have grown so much as a person from all of those difficult experiences and have learned more about myself than I have ever known.

I have also grown tremendously in my faith. Even though my faith was completely shaken last year, it was the first time that I'd ever really started to question my faith. However, I learned that it's okay to question your faith; in fact, it's normal to question your faith. I spent a large part of last year exploring and figuring out what I believed and how I was going to live that out.

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Faith has and always will be a part of my life and a part of who I am, so when I heard about applying for the ALIVE Team in the spring of 2005, I knew God was telling me to go for it. I felt called to serve in a Residence Hall, but there was the question of which Residence Hall. Initially, I put Mary Minahan McCormick as my first choice, as that's where I would be living. However, that changed, when in my interview I began sharing about my rough transition into college and how my faith was shaken, but also transformed, from that experience. I talked about how the year had been full of challenges, but how I came out of those challenges stronger, and knowing more about myself. Sitting there, talking about those experiences, I felt God calling me not to the community of Mary Minahan McCormick, an upper-class Residence Hall, but to a community of new students.

I believe that everything that happens to us in life happens for a reason. Often times, that reason isn't clear. I believe that God has a plan for all of us, and everything that happens in our life is part of that plan. I also believe that God works in mysterious ways, whether it be through the sun shining, through friends or through difficult experiences. Sometimes those experiences teach us about ourselves. Sometimes they show us the person that God wants us to be. Sometimes they show us that God is with us, working through others. And sometimes they are a calling.



*Beth Adamski, center, having fun with Rachel Mankiewicz and Ashleigh Hall, at the Sensenbrenner weekly ALIVE Team program, "Get Connected".*

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While I still have to question why God put me through such a difficult time, sitting there in that interview, I realized that my experience and the strength that I had gained from it was a calling.

*"God was calling me to help other women  
along their journey . . .  
who they are, what they believe in, where  
their place is in the world,  
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Having learned a lot about myself in that past year, I knew I had a gift of creativity, a passion for helping others, and I loved just having a heart to heart talk with friends. So, not only did I feel that I was being called to serve in a community of new students, but I felt called to a community of all women, where there tends to be an abundance of creativity and energy, and where there's always the possibility for some good old "girl talk" and heart to heart sharing. God was calling me to Sensenbrenner Hall, to a residence hall community of primarily first-year women, to a community of women who, like me last year, are facing so many changes. God was calling me to help other women along their journey of finding out who they are, what they believe in, where their place is in the world, and how they want to live their life.

While Residence Hall ALIVE Team Members are given somewhat of a choice of where they would like to serve, the final decision falls to the directors of the program, Julie Massey and Tony Carbrello. So when I received the letter inviting me to accept the position in Sensenbrenner Hall, I knew that this truly was my calling.

I followed my calling, and as the ALIVE Team Intern in Sensenbrenner, I run a weekly program called "Get Connected", a program designed to provide the opportunity for the women of Sensenbrenner to connect with each other, with themselves, and with God. I am so blessed to be a part of a community, where every Monday night, so many people come together to learn more about themselves and about others, whether it be through their amazing creativity, socializing, or heart to heart sharing.

As part of God's plan for us, I believe that God puts people and places in our lives to help us on our journeys. Even though at times it may feel like it, we are never alone. God is with us and is always working through others and often times, God is working through communities, communities that we can turn to for support and guidance. In fact, as I have found out, God doesn't expect us to find those communities all on our own; God calls us to those communities. Sensenbrenner Hall is just one community that I have been called to.

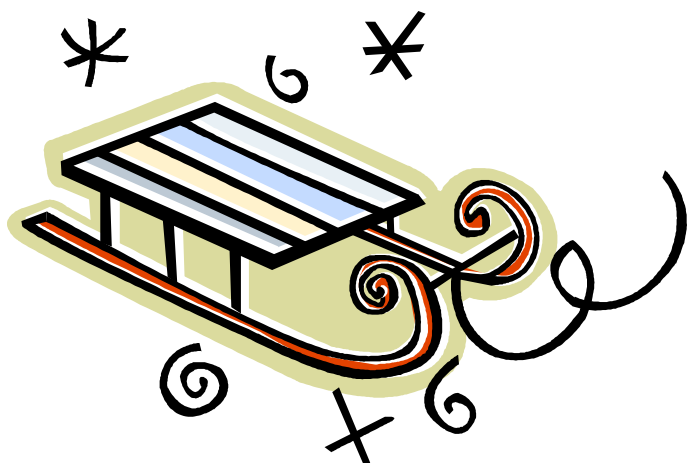
## *Ultimate Frisbee, Twister, and Spook-a-palooza ATM's Have It All Covered*

The 2005-06 ATM's and apprentices have been very busy! Most residence hall ATM's are providing weekly programs. In Sensenbrenner, ATM Beth Adamski and apprentices Callyn Harding, Gina Leonardelli, and Linda Maier have been busy each Monday evening with their program, "Get Connected", including the cookie decorating, ghost story telling "Spook-a-palooza". Amber Hartl and apprentices Wendy Morrison, Steve Petrie, and Amy Winter have been holding their weekly meetings on Wednesdays in Mad-Lor where they have just begun a new program, "Have Fun With It!" They play well-known games (i.e., Twister) while connecting the games with life, faith, and purpose. Molly Dillon and apprentices Billy Korinko and Mandy Smith, host their weekly program on Wednesdays in Bergstrom. Tanya Simon and apprentices Andy Domagola, Ed Honn, and Katie Trzaska offer "Faithfully Surviving College" on Thursday night in Burke after the 9:00 PM Mass.

Amanda McGovern hosts a Bible Study in MMM on Monday evenings. In the fall, one was held outside under the stars! VMC ATMs, Christy Kuplic

and Alli Skibbie, along with Michel's ATM Katie Pierre, hosted a concert in the courtyard of VMC to benefit victims of Hurricane Katrina during Family Week-end. Several residence halls worked together to sponsor a game of ultimate frisbee earlier in the semester.

Katie Andaloro, Caitlin Dally, and Becky Pieters are serving in off-campus ministry internships. Six ATM's work in on-campus placements: Melissa Bennetts in the Justice House, Kyle Clark with Journey-Men, Rachel Costello in LSI, Amanda Houston in Music Ministry at Old St. Joe's, Amy Johnson in Greek Life, Amir St. Clair works on Campus Ministry retreats, and Brian Wiehr in the Peace and Justice Center. Becky Zehr, Student Coordinator, has been doing an outstanding job offering feedback to ATM's about their work. Julie Preisler has been a valuable addition to the team by holding everything together as Office Assistant. We look forward to Christy Ernst's leadership as an additional student coordinator in the spring, when she returns from student teaching abroad.



## Upcoming Events

Book Discussion - Tuesday, February 28, 2006, 12 Noon—1:00 PM and 3:30—5 PM in the Kress Inn Conference Room. This semester's selection is Khaled Hosseini's novel *The Kite Runner*. Please register at <http://www.snc.edu/vocation/bookapply.html> or by calling Debi Nejedlo at Ext. 3155. Do you have a suggestion for a future Book Discussion? Give us a call at x3155 or email us at [vocation@snc.edu](mailto:vocation@snc.edu).

Course Development Support - Stipends are available to develop a new course related to vocation or to revise an existing course adding a vocation component. Please apply at <http://www.snc.edu/vocation/courseapply.html> Applications are accepted anytime.

Summer Retreat-Seminar on Vocation - May 23-26, 2006 - Norbertine Center for Spirituality. This Retreat-Seminar is designed for faculty, staff, and administrators. This four-day event is an in-depth opportunity to explore vocation within the context of the St. Norbert College mission. The aim of the Retreat-Seminar is twofold: (1) to help individuals understand and appreciate the concept of vocation as it relates to each of us, and (2) to explore how to integrate vocation into our roles within the college community. Please call Ext. 3155 or register online at <http://www.snc.edu/vocation/sumsemapp.doc> Applications are due by April 21, 2006.

**Please deliver to:**

