



Vocation Connections

Vocation:

“A call, we have come to understand, commits us. Each of us. All of us. Individually. We come to realize that whatever gifts we may each have, however difficult it is for me to give myself to it, the giving of it is exactly what I have been born to do. When those two things—when individual gifts and the human thirst for them—come together for me, that is my call. Not my job. My call.”

Joan Chittister, OSB

Vocation is Living a Life that Matters

As Roman Catholics celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Second Vatican Council we are reminded that by baptism, each of us is called—each receives a “vocation.” Vocation means a call. Vatican II reminded us that each of us is called to holiness. We are invited to respond by loving and serving God and other people. We do this in a variety of ways—we have life choices. Each person is unique and is an essential part in who we are as Church.

This summer I had the opportunity to make the Retreat Seminar on Vocation with Julie Massey, Paul Wadell and Becky Welch. We came from varied lifestyles, ministries and lived experiences. We all felt called to our Christian vocation.

The seminar started with the understanding that a vocation is a living thing. It is a very personal call and highly communal in nature. Our vocation needs to be tended to and nurtured throughout our whole life. Because it is living, it is also ever changing. So our vocation takes on a different facet as we journey through life.

The greatest part of the retreat was sharing with the other retreatants from the SNC Community. To be able to hear their stories and see how similar our lives are, was a treasure. It was not difficult to understand why the Fathers of Vatican II opened our eyes and hearts to recognizing we are all called by God in our life. From the talks we heard and the stories shared, I came away with the understanding that all of us are called to live out our faith and values everyday. Whether we live in a family or community setting we are called to use our gifts to build relationships and be active in what we believe. I felt challenged to be more reflective on how I relate with others. I came away with seeing vocation (the call from God) as a way of life. It is more than ministry. It requires a certain attitude and mindset. It is being flexible to serve in a variety of ways. Vocation is about journeying with others in faith and knowing we are at a place in life where we can feel God’s presence and share God’s love. Vocation is Communion—a life lived in common with the world around you.



Sr. Laura Zelten, OSF
Pastoral Associate, St. Norbert College Parish

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Spring Reading Group: *When Callings Challenge*

Often we look at vocation as a life-giving experience of identifying our gifts and passions and sharing them generously in the world. Such a view does not deny that our callings can ask us to make difficult choices – to question the ground we stand on or to move to new ground.

These three memoirs, each accessible and engaging, invite us to hear three distinct voices on the theme “When Callings Challenge.”

Leaving Church: A Memoir of Faith by Barbara Brown Taylor

In this memoir, Taylor shares the journey of how she decided to end a twenty-year career as an Episcopal priest. *“These days I earn my living teaching school, not leading worship, and while I still dream of opening a small restaurant in Clarkesville or volunteering at an eye clinic in Nepal, there is no guarantee that I will not run off with the circus before I am through. This is not the life I planned, or the life I recommend to others. But it is the life that has turned out to be mine, and the central revelation in it for me -- that the call to serve God is first and last the call to be fully human -- seems important enough to witness to on paper. This book is my attempt to do that.”*

In Good Company by James Martin, SJ

In this memoir Martin, whose prose is consistently praised as engaging and enlightening, shares his move from the world of business to his ordination and ministry as a Jesuit priest. In the book’s final chapter he writes, *“I never intended to become a Jesuit. My background prepared me to be something completely different from what I had become...I expected to have lots of money and healthy bank account, credit cards, a car, and maybe even a mortgage...In just two years, almost despite myself, my life had changed entirely. And completely for the better.”*

Called to Question: A Spiritual Memoir by Joan Chittister, OSB

From Chittister’s Prologue: *“If there is one thing that we have all been taught to fear, it is surely questions. There are some things, we learn early, that are never to be challenged. They simply are. They are absolute. They come out of a fountain of eternal truth. And they are true because someone else said they are true. So we live with someone else’s answers for a long time. Until the answers run dry. I know that because I myself have been caught in the desert of doubt and found the answers to be worse than the questions could ever be.”*

The group will meet from 4:00-5:30 pm on the following dates:

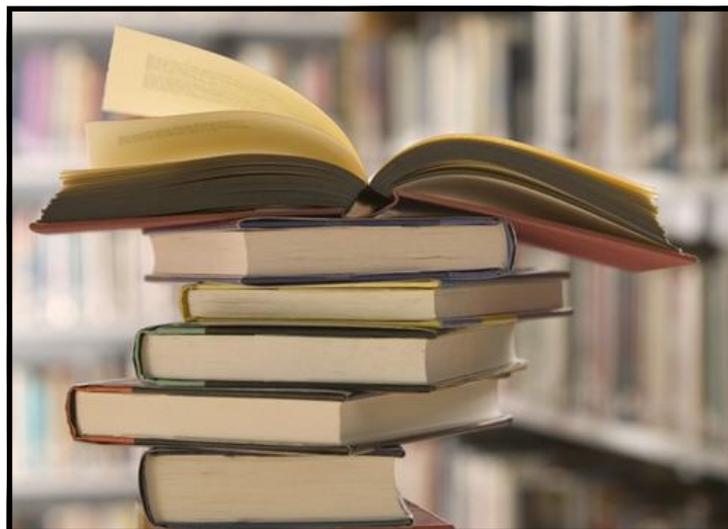
Tuesday, February 5

Tuesday, March 26

Tuesday, April 16

To apply for the Reading Group, please go to the link on our website at snc.edu/vocation

The deadline to apply is Friday, December 14



Meet the 2012-13 ALIVE Team



Bergstrom Hall

Coordinator: Danny Haggerty
Apprentices: Megan Griffith & Jessi Nelson

Burke Hall

Coordinator: Sarah St. John
Apprentices: Carly Barry & Elliott O'Melia

Madelaine/Lorraine Hall

Coordinator: Kaitlyn Miller
Apprentices: Andrew Janquart & Rachael Schubarth

Sensenbrenner Hall

Coordinator: Brianna Klink
Apprentices: Mary Maher & Jasmyn Nett

Team Coordinator

Sarah Haggerty

Upper Class Hall Coordinators

Katie Jensen, Alex Kaminski,
Jen Sorensen, Katie Summers &
Sean Topacio

Last Night the Rain Spoke to Me

by Mary Oliver

Last night
the rain
spoke to me
slowly, saying,

what joy
to come falling
out of the brisk cloud,
to be happy again

in a new way
on the earth!
That's what it said
as it dropped,

smelling of iron,
and vanished
like a dream of the ocean
into the branches

and the grass below.
Then it was over.
The sky cleared.
I was standing

under a tree.

The tree was a tree
with happy leaves,
and I was myself,

and there were stars in the sky
that were also themselves
at the moment
at which moment

my right hand
was holding my left hand
which was holding the tree
which was filled with stars

and the soft rain -
imagine! imagine!
the long and wondrous journeys
still to be ours.

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The editor invites your comments, suggestions, and contributions.

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