

WHY AM I AFRAID TO RISK?

For I know well the plans I have in mind for you, says the LORD,
plans for your welfare, not for woe!
Plans to give you a future full of hope."
Jeremiah 29, 11

Let us pause and turn our minds and hearts to the Lord as we ask the guidance of the Holy Spirit on all who are discerning their life's vocation. How best can we live out our Baptismal commitment? Is it through Priesthood, Sisterhood, Brotherhood, married or single life
We are all called to be servants of the Lord in our own special, unique ways. Isaiah 42:1-7 foreshadows the coming of the Messiah, calling Him the "Servant of the Lord." This servant will bring justice to the world and call everyone to live righteously. Likewise, as Christians, we seek to bring gentleness, truth, and justice to the world, thus showing God to the world in a personal way. Before we are able to show God's light to the world, we must first find God's light within ourselves. This includes the ability to put our full faith in the ways of the Lord and be open and willing to hear our calling to become closer to Him and serve His more fully. There are countless ways to serve the Lord, and no work is too small or grand for the Lord. We are all different candles, but lit from the same fire – Jesus Christ.
Leigh Hill, Junior - Christian Brothers University, Memphis, TN

PRESENCE OF GOD

Be still and know that I am God.
Come, behold the works of the Lord.
Be still, and know that I am God:
I will be exalted among the people; I will be exalted in the earth.
The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge.
Psalm 46

" True Quietness of heart is not achieved through escapism, optimism or any newly invented technique, but through a relationship with Christ".
Martyn Lloyd-Jones

SCRIPTURE READINGS

From First Book of Kings (19 11-12)
Then the Lord said, "Go outside and stand on the mountain before the Lord; the Lord will be passing by." A strong and heavy wind was rending the mountains and crushing rocks before the Lord, but the Lord was not in the wind. After the wind there was an earthquake, but the Lord was not in the earthquake. After the earthquake there was fire, but the Lord was not in the fire. After the fire there was a tiny whispering sound."
When he heard this, Elijah hid his face in his cloak and went and stood at the entrance of the cave. A voice said to him, 'Elijah, why are you here?' He replied: 'With zeal I have been zealous for the Lord, the God of hosts.'

RESPONSE (based on Genesis 46:2)

I, the Lord of sea and sky,
I have heard My people cry.
All who dwell in dark and sin,
My hand will save.

Refrain

Here am I, Lord. Is it I, Lord?
I have heard You calling in the night.
I will go, Lord, if You lead me.
I will hold Your people in my heart.

I, Who made the stars of night,
I will make their darkness bright.
Who will bear My light to them?
Whom shall I send? (Refrain)

I, the Lord of snow and rain,
I have borne My people's pain.
I have wept for love of them.
They turn away. (Refrain)

I will break their hearts of stone,
Give them hearts for love alone.
I will speak My words to them.
Whom shall I send? (Refrain)

I, the Lord of wind and flame,
I will send the poor and lame.
I will set a feast for them.
My hand will save. (Refrain)



GOSPEL of MARK 16:15-20

Jesus said to them, "Go into the whole world and proclaim the gospel to every creature. Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved; whoever does not believe will be condemned."

The Lord Jesus, after He spoke to them, was taken up into heaven and took His seat at the right hand of God.

But they went forth and preached everywhere, while the Lord worked with them and confirmed the word through accompanying signs.

A THOUGHT – Sister Joan Chittister, OSB

The number of priest vocations, declines daily in the United States. And across Europe, too.

A growing number of parishes are being closed in U.S. dioceses as parishes follow middle-class Catholics into the suburbs. As a result, inner-city facilities of earlier eras are becoming restaurants and museums rather than halfway houses or hospices. The moves are neat and efficient. However, they leave adrift behind them the kinds of whole populations upon which the church was built.

The increasing number of unchurched or lapsed Catholics in the United States -- called the most religious country on earth -- surely requires some kind of explanation. Catholic church population figures hold steady only because the number of immigrant Catholics, particularly Hispanics, masks the steady hemorrhage of traditional parish populations.

The conspicuous absence of women in the official roles of the church, and the impact that might also in fact be having on the number of women seeking church vocations in our time. Women are choosing other kinds of commitment rather than entering religious communities in our own time. If not us, who will answer the call to spread the Gospel message and be a visible sign of the Beatitudes in our time? If not now, when?

Prayer for Vocations

O Holy Spirit, Spirit of wisdom and divine love,
impart Your knowledge, understanding, and counsel to the faithful that
we may know the vocation wherein we can best serve God.

Give us courage and strength to follow Your holy will, O God.

Guide our uncertain steps, strengthen our resolutions, shield our
chastity, fashion our minds, conquer our hearts, and lead us to the
vineyards where we will labor in God's holy service. Amen.

All I Ask of You

All I ask of you is forever to remember me as loving you.

All I ask of you is forever to remember me as loving you.

As we make our way through all the joys and pain,
can we sense our younger, truer selves?

All I ask of you is forever to remember me as loving you.

All I ask of you is forever to remember me as loving you.

Someone will be calling you to be there for a while.

Can you hear the cry from deep within?

All I ask of you is forever to remember me as loving you.

All I ask of you is forever to remember me as loving you.

Laughter, joy and presence: the only gifts you are.

Have you time? I'd like to be with you.

All I ask of you is forever to remember me as loving you.

All I ask of you is forever to remember me as loving you.

Persons come into the fiber of our lives,
and then their shadow fades and disappears.

All I ask of you is forever to remember me as loving you.

All I ask of you is forever to remember me as loving you.

Prayer

My Lord God, I have no idea where I am going.

I do not see the road ahead of me.

I cannot know for certain where it will end.

Nor do I really know myself, and the fact that I think I am following

Your will does not mean that I am actually doing so.

But I believe that the desire to please You does in fact please You

and I hope that I have that desire in all that I am doing.

And I know that if I do this, You will lead me by the right road

although I may know nothing about it.

Therefore will I trust You always though I may seem to be lost
and in the shadow of death, I will not fear, for You are ever with me

and You will never leave me to face my perils alone."

Thomas Merton

Message of Pope Benedict XVI

"Pray!" he urged the Church, emphasizing that "prayer for vocations should be continuous and trusting."

"The vocation to the priesthood and to the consecrated life constitutes a special gift of God which becomes part of the great plan of love and salvation that God has for every man and woman and for the whole of humanity."

God takes the initiative, he noted, "of choosing some to follow his Son Jesus Christ more closely, and to be his privileged ministers and witnesses."

"Let us give thanks to God, because even today He continues to call together workers into His vineyard."

Benedict XVI noted: "Our first duty, therefore, is to keep alive in families and in parishes, in movements and in apostolic associations, in religious communities and in all the sectors of diocesan life this appeal to the divine initiative with unceasing prayer. We must pray that the whole Christian people grows in its trust in God, convinced that the 'Lord of the harvest' does not cease to ask some to place their entire existence freely at His service so as to work with Him more closely in the mission of salvation."

The Pope exhorted those who are called to a vocation to respond with "careful listening and prudent discernment, a generous and willing adherence to the divine plan, and a serious study of the reality that is proper to the priestly and religious vocations, so as to be able to respond responsibly and with conviction."

"Dear friends," said the Holy Father, "do not become discouraged in the face of difficulties and doubts; trust in God and follow Jesus faithfully and you will be witnesses of the joy that flows from intimate union with Him."

He concluded: "Imitating the Virgin Mary whom all generations proclaim as blessed because she believed, commit yourselves with every spiritual energy, to realize the heavenly Father's plan of salvation, cultivating in your heart, like her, the ability to be astonished and to adore Him Who is mighty and does 'great things,' for holy is His name."

Prayers of Intercession

Response: Lord of the harvest, hear us.

That families will strive to make their homes places where children can hear God call them by name. We pray:

That parents may realize their responsibility to be an example of faith for their children. We pray:

For each of us, for our families and our friends, that we respond fully to the call of our baptism, and accept the grace to remain open to God's call to serve. We pray:

That those who feel a call to and desire for priesthood or religious life may find the courage to say yes to what God asks of them. We pray:

That our parish communities will nurture religious vocations through their lives of prayer and service, giving witness to God's loving action in the world. We pray:

In thanksgiving for those priests, sisters, and brothers who inspire and strengthen us by the witness of their commitment. We pray:

We pray to you, our good and gracious God that you will continue to call women and men of faith to serve as ministers in our church. We pray:

We Will Be Your People

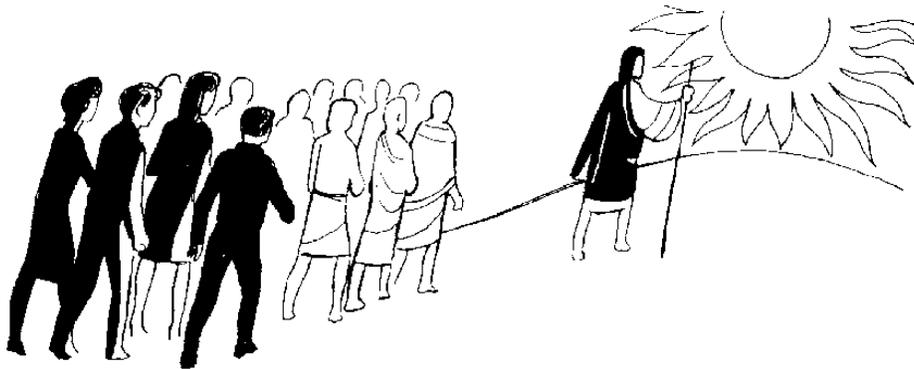
We will be Your people--
We have made the choice.
We will be Your Body,
Heart and soul and voice.
We will be Your presence;
We will be Your hands,
Always gladly giving
All that love demands.

We will be Your people,
We will trust Your Word.
Fear is not our master;
Comfort is not Lord.
We will lay behind us
All that weighs us down,
Run the race with courage
Till we share Your crown.

We will be Your people;
You will be our God.
You will go before us
As we sow the Word.
You will give a harvest
Time cannot destroy.
Planting lives of service,
We will reap Your joy.

Saint John Baptist de La Salle
and all you holy Brothers who have gone before us,
inspire others to live of service in the Church.

Live Jesus in our hearts.
Forever!



Don't hide your light under a basket!
Share it with others through ministry.