



# Stream ~ Lines

E-News from CSA Office of Vocation Discernment

## The Road Less Traveled (Part I)

Submitted By Sister Jean Hinderer, CSA

***"Two roads diverged in a wood, and I  
-- I took the one less traveled by,  
and that has made all the  
difference." Robert Frost***

Let me introduce to you Arrienne W. who is from Germantown, Wisconsin, and will be entering the Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods in Indiana. <http://www.spsmw.org/> The poem selection above from *The Road Not Taken* reminds me of Arrienne's journey to the Woods of the Sisters of Providence. She has been discerning her road for a number of years and has now applied, been accepted, and will enter their formation program beginning in January 2012. While she was visiting our CSA motherhouse, I asked if I could interview her so that she could give words of encouragement, clarity, or even a spiritual nudge to those women like herself who are sitting on the fence and hesitant to make a move to act on the *CALL* within that may be an invitation to join a religious community. Below are Arrienne's responses, in shortened form. If anyone who is reading these responses is feeling like Arrienne, please give our CSA Office of Vocation Discernment a call (920.923.2310) or email us at [vocations@csasisters.org](mailto:vocations@csasisters.org) and we'll be glad to help you sort out the blurry from the clear!

### 1. How did you know that you had a call to religious life?

"I think that I first recognized I had a call in high school. I was a sophomore and I had a dream one night and I just had this feeling waking up the next day that I was supposed to consider being a sister. The next day I talked to my best friend about it, and I tried to run away as far as I could from this idea. I tried to ignore it. There were so many things popping up in my life that made me think about being a sister and I thought okay God, I know, but at this time I really wanted to be a mother and have a family. It was when I started working at the TYME OUT Youth Center in Nashotah, WI <http://www.tymeout.org/> when I felt I needed to keep my foot in the door of ministry in the Church and the Center helped me open up some of those doors while meeting the sisters that worked there. But it was in my freshman year at college during finals week, I went to mass that Monday night and I had this intense spiritual experience where I thought, okay, I'm really supposed to pay attention to



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"Our times are calling us forward, the mission of Jesus burns in our hearts, and our current reality as women religious offers so many new possibilities for the future if we but take the risk to open our lives and fully welcome what is unfolding within us and before us."  
*(Sister Joann Sambs, CSA General Superior on Installation Day, Sept 12, 2009)*

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this. The next day, after talking to my hall minister who was a Jesuit, I was encouraged to investigate the call. However, I didn't push it away, but it was in my senior year and I was supposed to go to medical school but I couldn't make that choice. For some reason there was something that was holding me back. All my friends were being accepted into programs and schools but I kinda freaked out because I didn't have a plan.

"A friend of mine thought I should do a year of service. So Marquette <http://www.marquette.edu/> had a volunteer fair where I gathered up the booklets and circled all the booths that had medical programs. I methodically went to each table, picked up information, and put my name on the list. I then narrowed my choices to three programs. I applied to two and got accepted to one – the Providence Volunteer Ministers. I then went to the Woods (Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods) and worked in the free clinic. I remember when I got there I kept thinking I'm not going to be a sister, I'm going to get married. It didn't take much time for me to figure out when I was down there that it was something I really needed to face. At first, I wasn't

willing to confront that fact that I had this call or that I had these feelings and that I needed to be honest about them. Obviously no matter where I turned at the Woods there was no place for me to run. Seems that there was always a sister on the path. And after awhile of being at the Woods and living with the sisters and seeing their witness to the life and why they chose it, and hearing their stories, I began to realize that their stories were my stories. I could hear my story when they were talking. I then began to feel like I was "home."

## 2. How did you go about discerning your call?

"For me it was first of all being open – just letting myself feel what I was feeling, allowing myself to recognize when I was being pulled one way and then another. Since I'm a talker, I have a lot of friends, and some family members that I went to to talk about this and tried to discern what was real, what was something I needed to listen to, and what did things mean. I find that when I am talking with someone and something clicks then I know I should pay attention to that insight. Also a lot of personal prayer is helpful along with talking to others and seeking their advice."



## Delighting in the Little Things A Busy Persons Retreat

By Sister Susan Seeby, CSA

Busy persons retreats are offered by campus ministry departments and Neumann Centers at many colleges and universities during the school year. During the retreat, busy students, staff, and faculty members are invited to find some quiet time to reconnect with God.

From Sunday, November 6, to Thursday, November 10, ten staff members and students at Mount Mary College in Milwaukee, Wisconsin <http://www.mtmary.edu/> took time to “Delight in the Little Things”. The wonderful week was planned by Mrs. Lea Rosenberg, campus minister and Mount Mary alumna. Participants received a retreat booklet with reflective readings that enticed them to revisit their childlike love of God. As this was a busy persons retreat, the participants were asked to commit themselves to only two things - a half-hour of prayer each day and a daily half-hour visit with their spiritual guide. All of the other marvelous practices were to be added at the retreatants’ discretion. The daily spiritual practices included mass every morning at 7:30, a spiritual talk based on the retreat theme, “Delighting in the Little Things,” given by Lea each morning at 10:00 a.m. and repeated at 5:00 p.m. In addition, every day offered the participants a chance to experience a different prayer practice. One day it was communal prayer at noon, another day it was walking a labyrinth, and finally, participants had the opportunity for a communal reconciliation service. We closed the retreat on Thursday with a festive lunch.



Sister Barb Linke, SSND, and I served as spiritual guides for the retreat. I was honored and awed as I witnessed the amazing way in which God worked in the life of each person. Despite the fact that my four students were weighed down with classes, jobs, and homework, each one discovered anew their love relationship with God. It was a pleasure to see their tensions dissolve into real laughter and joy as they once again connected with their inner spiritual life. Busy persons retreats always serve to remind me that we need to find time for God in our lives no matter how much is going on. In fact, give God a minute and you will once again, “Delight in the Little Things.”

If you would like to learn more about the campus ministry program at Mount Mary College, you can “Like” them on Facebook at “Mount Mary’s Flight-Campus Ministry.”

## Three Minutes of Thunder!

By Sister Susan Seeby, CSA



*(On October 22-23, 2011, Sister Sue Seeby organized a CSA Mini-Vocation Fair at Holy Family Parish, Fond du Lac, WI. At each liturgy of the weekend, a CSA sister gave a 3-minute witness talk at the beginning of the liturgy. This is Sister Sue's talk.)*

As I prayed about this witness talk, what came to mind was Mary's Magnificat and the refrain, "God who is mighty has done great things..." That is my story, too! Twenty-six years ago, I said "YES" to a vocation to religious life as a sister and, leaving all I knew, got back 100 times more "pressed down and flowing over."

I've been awestruck by the power of the Gospel message in the lives of my "gangbanger" boy students on the south side of Chicago, in a neighborhood where 17% of public school kids graduate high school, while 98% of our kids from the school in which I taught not only graduated but got accepted to college. "God who is mighty has done great things..."

I've been moved to action on behalf of the poor after visiting four food pantries overseen or staffed by four sisters from CSA, the Poor Handmaids, and the PBVM's from Dubuque, Iowa, <http://www.dubuquepresentations.org/Index.cfm>. These four individual pantries meet the combined needs of 1200 families EVERY WEEK. "God who is mighty has done great things..."

I've found motivation to commit myself to persevere in the mission of Christ because I've been surrounded by the love and faith of a group of women who put the needs of others before their own and who continue to minister to folks even though they themselves are in their 70s, 80s, or 90s. "God who is mighty has done great things..."

I've been moved to wonder and hope by the story of St. Agnes Hospital. Fond du Lac, WI, needed a hospital and the leaders went to Mother Agnes. Even though we had no money or nurses, it got built and the school to train the nurses came later. "God who is mighty has done great things..."

The bottom line is, say a whole-hearted YES to God in whatever vocation to which you've been called: marriage, single life, priesthood, consecrated religious . . . and God who is mighty will do great things!

## CSA Out-n-About!

By Sister Cyndi, CSA, Ph.D.



I am an Assistant Professor of Religious Education. I currently teach online graduate level classes, such as "Faith and Moral Development" and "Peace and Justice Education." I live by the quote by Meister Eckhart as it helps me remember what is most important in life!

*"Such are permitted to know that the very best and utmost of attainment in this life is to remain still and let God act and speak in you." Meister Eckhart*

## A Prayer

May God bless you with discomfort at easy answers, half-truths, and superficial relationships, so that you will live deep in your heart.

May God bless you with anger at injustice, oppression, and exploitation of people and the earth so that you will work for justice, equity, and peace.

May God bless you with tears to shed for those who suffer so you will reach out your hands to comfort them and change their pain into joy.

And may God bless you with the foolishness to think that you can make a difference in the world, so you will do the things which others say cannot be done.

*(Source Unknown)*



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and click the "like" button

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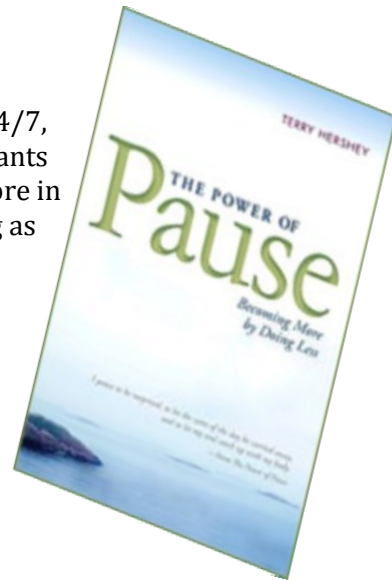
## Undercover Work: *The Power of Pause*

"*The Power of Pause* is a counter-cultural book which goes against the 24/7, multi-tasking, hurry-up and don't let-up trends of our times. Hershey wants us to slow down and savor the present moment. He quotes Thomas Moore in *Care of the Soul*: "Living artfully with time might only require something as simple as pausing." The book is divided into 52 short but snappy essays organized thematically around the seasons from early winter to late autumn (that's part of Hershey's garden perspective)."

<http://www.spiritualityandpractice.com/books/books.php?id=19256>

<http://www.terryhershey.com/>

<http://www.loyolapress.com/the-power-of-pause.htm>



### CSA STATEMENT OF MISSION

We, the Sisters of St. Agnes, participate in the mission of Christ by joyful service in the Church, always aware that we, too, are among the needy and are enriched by those we serve. Inspired by our founders—by the missionary zeal of Father Caspar Rehr, the courageous initiatives of Mother Agnes Hazotte, and the spiritual influence of Father Francis Haas—we continue to respond in our own times to those whose faith life or human dignity is threatened.

Rooted in Christ through prayer and worship we serve in both rural and urban settings throughout the United States and in Latin America. We strive to minister with simplicity and hospitality in the fields of education, health care, pastoral ministry and social service.

We are committed to transformation of the world, the church, and ourselves through promoting

- systemic change for the quality of life
- justice for the economically poor
- furtherance of the role of women in church and society
- mutuality, inclusivity, and collaboration.

Love binds us together, and by sharing our lives and our faith in community, we support one another to live with singleness of purpose: that among us and in our world the Risen Christ be discovered and revealed.