



Boston Catholic Journal

www.boston-catholic-journal.com
editor@boston-catholic-journal.com

"And now I have set foot in thy gates, O Jerusalem ..."
(Psalm 121.2)



VOCATIONS AND THE TRAMPLED VINEYARD

The vineyard has indeed been trampled and the hedges breached. It is undeniable except to the most doctrinaire of those who pulled down her walls and whose disaffection from the Church remains as virulent as the opiated miasma of the '60's that still hovers as a pall of smoke over the ruins. The swath of the destruction of Religious Life ... consecrated life lived in community as it had been for well over 1000 years ... in the name of "Renewal" ... has been so overwhelming as to render the Church effectively unrecognizable from a mere generation ago. Vestiges remain, but they are vestiges only, redolent of a continuity

no longer grasped, and in large part, no longer construed as real.

All that had been holy within had fled when the walls were pulled down in the "Renewal that became a requiem" --- and the world rushed in, pillaging what was sacred, and leaving in its wake profane litter and utter desolation --- a mausoleum of dreams that once flourished in a monastery.

We *still* await the "renewal" 40 years later --- even as we watch our Churches close and our monasteries crumble. We had traded vestments for vests and habits for habiliments. We went *into* the world and we became the world's own. We became *of* the world, converted *to* the world, sanctified every obscenity and called it holy, placed the *self*, and no sacrifice, on an altar of our making ... and declared the "Renewal" a success ...

But winds are stirring in the East. The generation that wandered for 40 years in the desert can now, at long last, see beyond the Jordan ... but they themselves who had been feckless with God will never cross it. Another generation will gather up our bones and cross that bourne. It is our children who will proclaim that, "When the Lord brought back the captives of Zion, we were like men dreaming. Then was our mouth filled with laughter; and our tongue with rejoicing!" (Psalm 125.1). Our captivity to the world may well be at hand, our exile from the land of our fathers at a close. It is not us, not us, but our children who will utter as at the end of an arduous journey, "*And now I have set foot within thy gates, O Jerusalem!*"

Do not, then, be discouraged by the paucity of present vocations. Did not Christ himself say, "Many are called, but few are chosen"?

Our Holy Mother St. Colette said, "The end is approaching, many are called but few are chosen. Many solemnly pronounce their vows, but alas, how few there are who acquit themselves of them to God who knows all things!"

A life lived with God, in God, for God, calls for nothing less than conspicuous heroism, unflinching courage, unending love --- in short, a *total* response to God's invitation.

Not in numbers does strength and power reside, but in *love Christened as holy*, for God Himself is holy; in the unstinting self-giving of the soul to God, "*Qui potens est*"¹, as Mary joyfully declares in her *Magnificat*!

Do not be afraid that you are little, have little ... for it has pleased Christ to do great things through that which the world esteems small and insignificant.

Ours is to trust, to hope and *to pray*, in obedience to Christ Jesus², for holy and zealous vocations to the Priesthood and Religious life --- for the fields are, perhaps as never before, "white to harvest"!

¹ "Who is mighty" (St. Luke 1.49)

² St. John 4.35

A Poor Clare Colettine Nun



<http://www.boston-catholic-journal.com>