

Saturday 7/7 Noon

Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, “Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?” And I said, “Here am I; send me!” [Isaiah 6:8](#)

I invite you to close your eyes. Take a deep, deep breath...breathing down deeper than your normal, every-day breath. Envision yourself on the threshold of home. It is a thin place, that space which is no longer at home, but not yet on the road. In your mind’s eye, see what is behind you, what it is you are leaving. Turn your gaze to the path outside the door. Does it extend far into the distance, or can you only see a few steps ahead? [Pause] ring the bell.

When we last saw our Heroine, she had just experienced some kind of crisis, or call, or catalyst. Maybe someone has died, or some other thing has ended. She has been faced with a choice: Should she just hunker down at home and stay put? That would sure be easier. [Is there anyone here from the Diocese of West Missouri? Do you remember, years and years ago, Bp. Arthur Vogel’s slogan for the diocese was “God’s presence changes the status quo.”] Should our heroine stay safe at home, in the status quo, or is there is there something calling her outside, and onward?

Our Heroine realizes that this is a spiritual issue. These are not just thoughts and questions swirling around; this is *discernment*. Thinking and worrying and mulling things over can get the job done, but there is a tendency to get stuck in our own thought processes. Discernment is different. To discern is to take one’s thoughts and worries and questions and offer them to God, to make them an offering. The Latin from which comes the word discern has a sense of sifting, separating, like pulling a knot apart strand by strand. To discern is to offer the tangled knot to God in prayer and with a heart open to all the possibilities.

Our heroine has decided to head out onto the path. Looking back, she can see where she has been; she can see the path clearly as she looks back. But looking forward, the path is not clear. She can't see the future, but she certainly feels a nudge. She realizes that God may not exactly have a *plan*... the path is not laid out clearly. Our heroine feels her heart burning within her; she feels propelled out the door of her status quo life into something—she doesn't know what. Writer Anne Lamott describes it this way: you are standing in a circle of light. You know where you are, but don't know what the next step is. Wait in the light. Stand in the circle of light and watch, all around you. Watch for another circle of light to open up in front of you, and then...step there. Step into the light as it appears ahead of you.

Our heroine stands in her doorway, having decided to set out in response to God's call. She decides to set out on a new path, undertaking new challenges, engaging the struggle of life in a new way. What will happen on the way? What will befall her? Tune in on Monday.

God bless the path on which you go
God bless the earth beneath your feet
God bless your destination.
God be a smooth way before you
A guiding star above you
A keen eye behind you
This day, this night, and forever.
God be with you whatever you pass
Jesus be with you whatever you climb
Spirit be with you wherever you stay.
God be with you at each stop and each sea
At each lying down and each rising up
In the trough of the waves, on the crest of □ the billows.
Each step of the journey you take.
- *Celtic Blessings, Prayers for Everyday Life*, compiled by Ray Simpson
(Loyola Press 1999)

