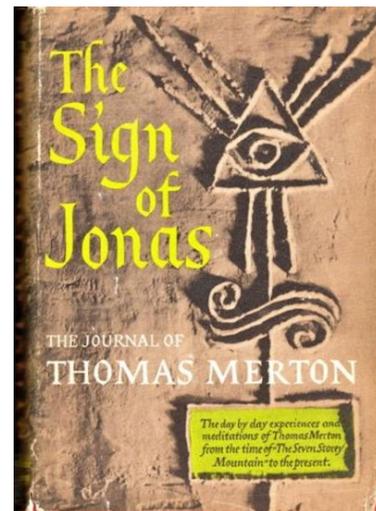
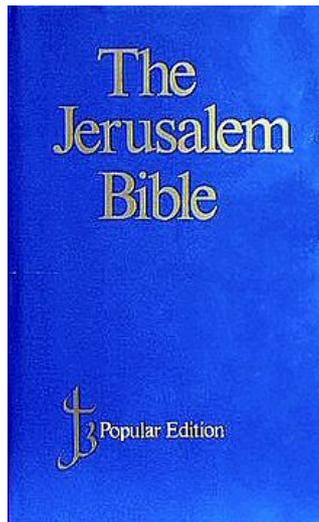
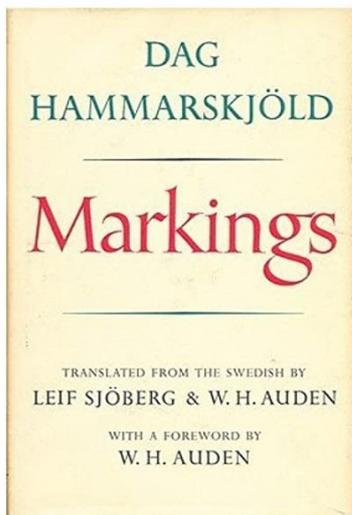


VOCATION STORY: Sister Maureen Tinkler DC

*At every moment you choose yourself. But do you choose ***your* self? Body and soul contain a thousand possibilities out of which you can build many I's. But in one of them is there a congruence of the elector and the elected. Only one--which you will never find until you have excluded all those superficial and fleeting possibilities of being and doing with which you toy, out of curiosity or wonder or greed, and which hinder you from casting anchor in the experience of the mystery of life, and the consciousness of the talent entrusted to you which is your ***I****** DAG HAMMARSKJÖLD – *Markings*



In 1967 many things were going on in my life. I was 15 years old. The Beatles had just released: Sergeant Pepper's Lonely Heart Club Band: I was in the throws of teenage love with John: I was studying for my O'levels: The Jerusalem Bible had just been published and I had discovered a small book called "MARKINGS" by Dag Hammarskjöld. I also began reading the writings of the Cistercian monk, Thomas Merton. The Church was in the throes of Vatican II. My prayer life became more reflective. I was an active parishioner in my home parish of St Cuthbert's, Stockton-on-Tees. I was becoming aware of the inequality of society – the massive divide between rich and poor. I had been taught by the Daughters of Charity of St Vincent de Paul and I knew of their great "hands on" service of vulnerable people. I admired them greatly.

For the next 3 years my Catholic faith became much more real and personal. I was moving from being an "**admirer**" of Jesus to becoming a genuine "**follower**". What was the Lord asking me to do with my life? At this point I really enjoyed the Sciences and I was studying A 'level Physics, Chemistry and Biology. I applied to study for a B.SC in Biochemistry at Liverpool University and was accepted. But somehow my heart was not in it. **Who was the "I" that God was calling me to become? More and more I felt the "pull" to give my life to God as a Sister.** My friends thought that I was "mad" and my family thought that I was too young and inexperienced to make such a life-changing decision.

But I felt "at peace" and responded wholeheartedly with joy and enthusiasm. In September 1970 I left my home and travelled to Mill Hill, London NW7 to begin my initial formation as a Daughter of Charity. That was almost 50 years ago. Like all lives - my vocation story has its

“ups and downs” but, at the deepest level within myself, I feel loved, blessed, and grateful to God for my call and vocation. I have led a very full and rich life in community, serving many vulnerable people who have become my friends. I trained as a Secondary Teacher and taught Science; I also trained as a Teacher of Deaf Children and enjoyed teaching for many years. I have also been “missioned” by my Province at different times to work with young people; I was part of the Province Leadership Team for 9 years. I have served as a Parish Sister; worked as a Hospital Chaplain; collaborated with the other groups in the wider Vincentian Family on spirituality, values, and justice issues. For a time, I was the Director of Formation training new postulants and novices and latterly, I have worked with asylum seekers and in school chaplaincy.



As you reflect on who God is calling you to become and what God is asking you to do, listen to the “pull” going on inside you. Don’t sit forever on the fence ...listen and take the risk ... God is there taking the risk with you!