Blog
Arts and Media



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Every morning, as the sun rises and I sip my first cup of coffee, I am reminded of the incredible journey I began two years ago at Global Sisters Report. My days are filled with reading and editing columns from sisters around the world, each one offering a unique glimpse into matters of spirituality, social justice, ministry and religious life, to mention some. It's a role that has taught me so much about technology, time management and the profound value of international friendships.

I am blessed to learn about life in Spain, Kenya, India and many other countries through the columns shared with me. Occasionally, I come across accounts that bring me to my knees in prayer — stories from Ukraine, Nicaragua, Chad or Cuba that speak of the profound challenges faced by sisters there. It takes courage for sisters to write about the things they experience in the places they serve. It also takes courage to make their reflections public. Yet, the reflections and experiences of all the sisters I serve through my ministry at Global Sisters Report have profoundly transformed my own life.

Often, after a sister publishes a column, as her editor I receive emails from readers who are deeply moved by the messages. I always make sure to forward these encouraging notes to the authors. Recently, I received a particularly beautiful email and asked the sender if I could publish it as a letter to the editor. She graciously agreed.

Dear Sr. Corbin,

I read your Aug. 4, 2023, article titled "Uncovering my inner light, living in synchrony with God," and I like it very much. In your article you say, "The journey in is the journey out. Self-discovery is not a selfish, isolated journey. The journey inward ultimately leads us outward."

When I read this, I thought of something Dag Hammarskjöld said in his February 1960 address to the Swedish Touring Association. Hammarskjöld was the second secretary-general of the United Nations, and I studied his work in graduate school. The following passage is from a paper I wrote on Hammarskjöld:

> *When Dag Hammarskjöld came to the United Nations from his native Sweden where he had been an avid outdoorsman — a skier, a hiker, and a mountain climber — he brought with him an Arctic wilderness he kept*

> *deep within his heart. As the UN Secretary-General, he was inspired by his love of the Arctic to explore an international political terrain and to map his expeditions in his public addresses and statements. In his February 1960 address to the Swedish Touring Association, he spoke symbolically of his journey through UN territory: "The road inwards can become a road outwards. For the traveler with open eyes and alert senses, on the other hand, the outward road can, in a deeper sense, become a road home." For Hammarskjöld, his outer journey to find peace at the United Nations became "in a deeper sense ... a road home."*

Your saying, "The journey inward ultimately leads us outward" is like Hammarskjöld saying, "The road inwards can become a road outwards." I thought I would share Hammarskjöld's words with you since they are so much like your own. Thanks for writing this piece. I think it is excellent.

Best wishes,

Darlene Martin

These messages and letters I receive are a testament to our mission of amplifying the voices of women religious around the world and sharing their stories with the broader community.

I pray we can continue to empower women religious to tell their stories. There is much joy, wisdom, strength, courage and grace in the lives of women religious. Their stories need to be heard because they touch the lives of many, including my own.

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I shared with Darlene Martin, the author of the letter, that I too resonated with the column because, being an introvert, going outside of myself always leads me back to my center. She responded to my email and shared that she thought of something that artist Bo Beskow, Dag Hammarskjöld's friend and biographer, said about Hammarskjöld:

> He was very clear and straight. He gave me the impression of moving around a vertical center line, like an old Egyptian sculpture or an Oriental

> dancer. In our Western classical ballet the dancers extend their movements to all the corners of a geometrical room, but a Hindu dancer moves around an inner axis and always returns to this. Dag moved gracefully around his center, but never farther out than that he could return to his core.

Apparently, Dag Hammarskjöld was an introvert, too! So, like Hammarskjöld, I venture around the world, listening to the stories of many sisters, helping them tell their stories. Along the way, they broaden my perspective, allowing me to experience the world through their eyes and to connect with them and the people they serve in a profound way. Then, somehow, I circle back to my center and bring it all in prayer back to God.

For this, I am grateful.