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My First Theological Conversation

By Becky Sue Davies



Two years ago when I was making the big college decision, my main goal was to go somewhere different than my brother and sister. While Eric and Tracy both attended Creighton as biology pre-med majors, I was determined that this was my chance to step out of their shadows and pave my own path through life. Who would have thought that two years later, here I am — a biology, pre-med student at Creighton University.

When people ask me why I chose to attend Creighton University, I make certain to specify that I did not come here because my brother and sister came here. As much as I love my siblings, the last thing I want is to be labeled as the “little sister.” However, the more I think about it, the more I realize that my siblings are the reason that I go to school where I do. I chose a Jesuit education because I noticed something different about both Eric and Tracy when they came home for fall break of their freshman years. No, it was not multiple tattoos or the freshman fifteen. Rather, it was something deeper, something that intrigued me to check out the Jesuit experience for myself.

I had my first theological conversation with my older brother during fall break of his freshman year. We had never actually talked about God before. Even though we grew up in a Catholic household, weekly mass mainly consisted of rolling marbles

up and down the pew when our parents were not looking, and singing stuffy hymns as obnoxiously as possible. This might explain why I was completely stunned when Eric wanted to have the “God talk” with me after he came home from college. Eric told me all about his theology 101 class, sharing impressive theological insights that I found quite intriguing. In addition to school, he was participating in weekly service to build houses, coordinating a spring break service trip, and playing his violin in church. After our heart-to-heart talk, I realized that Eric was becoming a different person. What in the world had the Jesuits done to my brother?

The Jesuit experience had a similar impact on my sister. When Tracy came home on break, my parents were suddenly in deep trouble for not buying fair trade coffee. Social justice became the main topic at the dinner table. My sister had always been a compassionate and loving person, but I could not understand how two months of school had instilled in her such a deep passion for social justice and concern for other people. I must admit that I became a little jealous of Eric and Tracy’s new world views. They suddenly had a strong passion for life and an even stronger passion for the world around them.

I am not sure if it was jealousy or sheer admiration of my brother and sister that inspired me to undertake a Jesuit education for myself. Whatever it was, nothing could have

prepared me for what I have experienced so far.

In the past two years, I have questioned my faith, my future, and my life more times than I care to admit. My classes have not only exposed me to new ideas and new concepts, but have forced me to define the values and beliefs that make me who I am. Now I find myself spending my spring break learning about rural poverty and environmental issues in the Appalachian Mountains. I find myself not only aware of social justice issues, but voicing my opinion and standing up for my beliefs. Most surprising to my parents perhaps, I find myself singing in the church choir — and singing the words with some sense of meaning.

It turns out that following in my siblings’ footprints was not so painful after all. While the Jesuit education has challenged me to live for and with others, I am honored not only to identify myself with my brother and sister but also to join in the forefront of making a Jesuit difference. ■

Becky Sue Davies is a junior at Creighton University.