Dear Katarina, 7/19/14

You’ve just finished your last week of Notre Dame Vision (as a high school summer camp counselor), and you’re probably feeling a little tired but mostly just trying to hold onto this summer before everyone leaves you- and the (graduating college) seniors go their separate ways, and the rest won’t be around you all the time-especially if going abroad in the fall. You love being around people like those at Vision because of their faith, their love, their real-ness. You’re probably a bit upset at what (professor) Tim O’Malley said about leaving- how this wasn’t about you and wasn’t for you to create a happy little Vision click, how your Vision family shouldn’t be the main/only ones you hang out with on campus next year. You’re probably wishing that weren’t true yet feeling it makes sense. You’re probably wanting to have the frequent Grotto visits, nights at the Dome, and fun hang-out time with no worries of schoolwork to continue- along with the normal and frequent deep conversations. These people have probably heard you share more about who you really are than those you’ve known since day 1 freshman year or even from back home. You probably want the constant mass, prayer, and Father Pat /Pete presence to continue. You’re probably wanting to hold on and never leave. Probably? Of course, this is how you feel (because if this were God writing, He would know for sure and because its you writing, you know this is how you feel).

But this wasn’t about you. ‘Your life is not about you anymore…If fact it never was that way’. ‘You’ve got to share the gifts you have been given because its only in giving that you truly gain…make it rain.”

You were made to serve Me and serve your neighbor. It’s important for you to be happy too, but a lot of times (or actually it should be all the time), you will find that happiness and joy in the service of others. Seeking out real, authentic friendships isn’t wrong- in fact its actually really good for you because they will help you grow in faith and become the more true you. The problem is when you only spend your time with them and don’t branch out. Its trye you shouldn’t waste your life trying to please people you don’t want to be friends with, but you also need to shine My Light other places- share it other places- too. Include others. Create the beauty of Vision in your community now in Breen-Phillips (dormitory), in clubs, in friend groups. Go deep with them and don’t worry if they’ll think it’s weird.

I hope you learned this summer that you love to work with high schoolers and that they bring you much joy. Obviously they like you back too- just look at your affirmation letters. You have really made a difference in their lives these past few weeks. Even if you’re working in something small scale- 7-8 kids in small group or 350 total- you’re still making a huge impact of their individual lives. Big impact is good, but small-scale works well too.

Thank you for letting Me into your small groups especially that 4th (camp) week. You prayed ‘Come Holy Spirit’ and you felt My Presence there, working in the kids, the small group, the relationships.

I want you to always remember from Vision (especially week 1), that you should not be so quick to judge others, that you should look at the whole person and not just the part you think your interaction/ relationship with them should focus on (like only faith).

Also remember (especially from week 2) that its important to pay attention to things that require your attention and are important and difficult, but in doing so, don’t also lose sight of everything else beautiful and important too that is right in front of your eyes. Don’t be so focused on one person/thing that you forget about the others. They matter too.

Remember (especially form week 3) that assertiveness is a good thing…also not to put people in boxes- because they wont ever fit- and also to see people for their goodness, not assuming/thinking about their outside life/intentions.

Remember (especially from week 4) that there is always more to learn. Just because you think you know/understand something doesn’t mean there isn’t ore to be done than you could have imagined on your own. Welcome in the Spirit. Look to others for great possibilities. Get excited to be surprised. More brilliant things can be created.

Overall lessons I hope you got this summer:

Live in/be in community with others. You’re never alone. Just go to the Sacraments, and you’ll see that. In fact, yes- go to do the Sacraments and often too. Receive My Love and Grace.

Be Real, Ready, Radical. The time is now to do awesome things. Please though, be yourself. I love you that way because I created you. Don’t worry about what others think, about stars/dots. Be happy and joyful around all. Say hello even if you’ve only met someone once. Smile. Stop looking away, looking down. Be in communion with people. ‘The fact that you are breathing is not sufficient proof that you are not yet dead’. ‘Are you breathing a little and calling it a life?’.

LIVE! LIVE ABUNDANTLY WITH JOY!

I love you, and you are Mine.

I am Hope for all who are hopeless.

I am Peace the world cannot give.

Standup, now walk, and live.

Say ‘Thankyou’ more- to other people, to Me. Remember the prayer ‘Bless us O lord for these Thy gifts’ for everything.

Include Me in your daily life. I’m not asking you to choose between Me and other things. I’m asking you to include Me and not shut Me out: Bring Me into your sorrows, joys, studies, fun, relationships. Know that resting in Me is what will truly make you happy. You will find pace. Don’t just search for the first thing available to satisfy your deep longing, deep desires. You’ll only find what you truly want in Me.

Don’t let My fire keep you warm. Let it set you ablaze, burn, transform you. Be not afraid.

Drop the box. I did not create you to live in one.

Speak your mind. Give your opinions.

Visit the Grotto. Go to mass and adoration more. Come talk to Me. Practice and you will improve at the game. Come receive My love poured out in the Eucharist. Spread it to the world. What else could you do with a gift so great but share it.

Trust in Me. Let it go. Even if you don’t understand how, I will make it work. Peace be with you.

I want you to know that you can do it. You are gifted. You were so worried you wouldn’t be able to lead a small group on your own ever and look what happened with your Finding Nemo group. I came. I was with you. I always am. I always will be. You may see a mess, but I see a YES, I’m so proud.

YES!

When you leave, which is what you’re supposed to do since Vision was never a destination- only a journey- bring My Love and Joy with you. Share your gifts and spirit with others. Find a community that can help you thrive. I will always be with you no matter where you go. Listen to Me. Be still to feel Me pull at the kite strings of your heart. I am I the whisper. In your difficulties and joys. See others as works in progress like you-and as whole people, not just one-dimensional. ‘Everybody has their story. That’s the general rule, and there are no exceptions. I am Mercy. I’m always loving you.

Love

,

God