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New Book Inspires Youth to Become Everyday Heroes

What Happens When a Marist Brother’s Plans for a Spiritual Journey Goes to Plan B

Forest Hills, New York - The phrase “Leading by example” is not a practice many young adults think they have the experience to put into action. A new book by Marist Brother Dan O’Riordan proves they can. ***Never too Young to Change the World*** (December 2020) tells the inspiring true stories of remarkable young adults who demonstrate that one person’s acts of kindness and their ability to overcome hurdles can affect real change in the world.

“I have led more than 100 mission service trips with many extraordinary and amazing young people who have been a great witness of faith to me and many others. This book tells the story of many of those young heroes,” said Brother Dan.

Never too Young to Change the World will resonate with anyone whose goal it is to provide leadership to faith-based youth groups or secular youth groups including parents and teachers. It is also a wonderful gift to a young person. The model of being an everyday hero translates across all faiths and institutions.

Among the youth featured in the book are:

Ellen - who volunteered in West Africa for two years and built a children’s library for children, who had no access to books.

Opal - who spent her vacations during college working with homeless children in Jamaica, West Indies.

Newton - who grew up in an orphanage and overcame incredible tragedies to become a successful chef and employer to many other young orphans.

Brother Dan says the youth featured in the book have several characteristics in common:

- 1) They were not afraid to live their faith
- 2) They had a great desire to affect change in the world
- 3) They were open to receiving support to reach their dreams

“Each of the young people featured overcame different challenges. And they all at times needed encouragement and some direction in how they might pursue their dreams of impacting the world. That’s the role of the adult—whether it be a youth minister, teacher or parent,” said Brother Dan.

“Especially now, as we’re all struggling with how to be resilient in the face of this pandemic. To those of strong faith, I would simply say that remaining open to allowing God’s plan for us to unfold, even when it’s not what we hoped for is important. It will never be the exact road or path we had planned to take but will be the one we were meant to be on.”

Brother Dan knows a little something about having his plans deferred. For most of his adult life he’d dreamed of taking the famous pilgrim’s journey along the Camino de Santiago (The Way of St. James), which is the scallop shell trail for 500 miles across the Pyrenees from the French town of St. Jean Pied de Port leading to the shrine of the apostle Saint James the Great in the cathedral of Santiago de Compostela in Galicia in northwestern Spain. He was scheduled to make his pilgrimage in early 2020 when COVID-19 struck. The story of how he adapted is in his first book [A Plan B Camino 2020](#) where he shares his personal reflections as he walked an alternative path through the mountains of New Hampshire.

Discussion Topics Brother Dan can share with listeners, readers and viewers:

- How to keep a secular or spiritual (prayer) journal
- How to motivate young people
- How to plan a spiritual journey – where to go during these COVID-19 times
- Suggested readings for spiritual journeys, retreats, and hikes
- Provide guidance and training for Spiritual Directors – youth and adult

About the author

Currently based in Forest Hills, New York, Br. Dan O’Riordan (<https://brdanbooks.com/>), FMS, has been a Marist Brother for over 28 years. After graduating from Archbishop Molloy High School in Briarwood, NY, he earned a bachelor’s degree from University College in Cork, Ireland, and an MA at Marist College in Poughkeepsie, NY. He has served as the Vocations Director and Vice Provincial his USA Province as well as a teacher, coach and campus minister for numerous Marist High Schools. He has been inducted into the Archbishop Molloy High School Hall of Fame, the Roselle Catholic You Make A Difference Wall of Honor and The Bishop Donahue Athletic Wall of Fame.

Br. Dan has coordinated more than one hundred mission service trips allowing many young people the opportunity to serve the least favored in communities around the world. He has also led numerous pilgrimages and continues to be a featured speaker on youth retreats and youth gatherings, where he encourages young people to find ways to answer God’s call and use their gifts and talents to respond to the many needs of our world.

Never too Young to Change the World is now available for sale on Amazon.com. Visit the link below:

<https://www.amazon.com/Never-too-young-change-world/dp/B08NF356JQ/>

Proceeds from the sale of Br. Dan's book are donated to the [Marist Brothers Center in Esopus](#).

Learn more about Brother Dan at his website: <https://brdanbooks.com/>

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