

Vocation Sunday

(Shepherding Sunday 2024)



**Vocations Resources,
Prayers, Newsletter Inserts,
Children's Resources.**

World Day of Prayer for Vocations

The World Day of Prayer for Vocations is celebrated annually on Good Shepherd Sunday, which is the fourth Sunday of Easter. Mindful of the Lord's instruction to, "Pray the Lord of the harvest to send labourers into his harvest" (Mt 9:38; Lk 10:2), the day was instituted by Pope Paul VI in 1963. The purpose of World Day of Prayer for Vocations is to encourage members of the Church most especially pray that young men and women hear and respond generously to the Lord's call to the priesthood, diaconate, religious life, societies of apostolic life or secular institutes.

Newsletter Inserts

World Day of Prayer for Vocations

Today the Church throughout the world prays for vocations. Will you make a special effort in prayer to ask the Lord for vocations to the priesthood and religious life? Pray for the priests who have ministered to you throughout your life, both living and dead. Encourage young people to consider a vocation as a priest or religious brother or sister. Pray a rosary for more young men and women in our diocese to respond to God's call. For further information, contact: Fr. Tony Gonoude 044 9373923 or vocations@dioceseofmeath.ie

Pray for Vocations!

As Catholics, we firmly believe that God has a plan for our lives! He calls some to marriage, some to the priesthood, and others to religious life or to live as generous single people. Fully living our own vocations—and teaching young people how to discern God's call is a great grace. During this week, please encourage young people to be open if God calls them to priesthood or religious life.

For further information, contact: Fr. Tony Gonoude 044 9373923 or vocations@dioceseofmeath.ie

How can I help?

On Vocations Sunday, the Church throughout the world prays for vocations. Will you make a special effort to ask the Lord for more vocations to the priesthood and religious life?

- Pray for the priests who have ministered to you throughout your life, both living and dead.
- Keep our parish priests in your prayers throughout the week.
- Encourage young people to consider a vocation as a priest or religious brother or sister.
- Pray a rosary for more young men and women in our diocese to respond to God's call.

Ten Signs You Are Being Called By God

1. You have inherent desire to explore a vocation.
2. You cannot shake the feeling that you are being called to be a diocesan priest.
3. Those you trust see you have a calling to the diocesan priesthood.
4. You don't feel like a vocation is a place to hide, but a place to truly be yourself.
5. You initially experience extreme unease when thinking about a vocation to the priesthood.
6. You eventually experience extreme peace when thinking about a vocation.
7. Actions beyond your control seem to keep guiding you towards a vocation.
8. The thought of answering a vocation becomes clearer and clearer.
9. You know your heart would be uneasy doing anything else.
10. The thought of giving control to God is freeing, not confining.

Prayers for Vocations

1.

Lord our God,
you renew the Church in every age by raising up holy priests
to teach and sanctify your people.
Fill the hearts of young men with faith and courage,
that they may answer your call generously.
Give parents the grace to encourage vocations in their family
by prayer and good example.
Raise up, in this Diocese of Meath, worthy priests for your Altars
and ardent servants of the Gospel.
We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

2.

O Jesus, send labourers into your fields, which are awaiting
holy apostles, saintly priests, heroic missionaries and dedicated
sisters and brothers.
Enkindle in the hearts of men and women the spark of a vocation.
Grant that Christian families may desire to give your Church,
helpers in the work of tomorrow.
Amen.

(St. Joseph's Young Priests Society)

3.

Loving God, you call all who believe in you
to grow perfect in love by following in the footsteps
of Christ your Son.
Call from among us more men and women
who will serve you as priests and religious.
By their way of life, may they provide a convincing sign
of your Kingdom for the Church and the whole world.
We ask this in Jesus' name. **Amen.**

4.

O God, Father of all Mercies,
Provider of a bountiful Harvest,
send Your Graces upon those
You have called to gather the fruits of Your labour;
preserve and strengthen them in their lifelong service of you.

Open the hearts of Your children
that they may discern Your Holy Will;
inspire in them a love and desire to surrender themselves
to serving others in the name of Your son, Jesus Christ.

Through the intercession of the Most Blessed Virgin Mary,
all the Angels, and Saints, humbly hear our prayers
and grant Your Church's needs, through Christ, our Lord. **Amen.**

5.

Gracious and loving God,
help the men and women of our parish
to hear the call to serve in the Diocese of Meath.
Our needs are great and our people
thirst for your presence.

Open the hearts of many,
raise up faithful servants of the Gospel,
dedicated, holy priests, sisters, brothers and deacons,
who will spend themselves for your people and their needs.

Bless those who are serving now
with courage and perseverance.
Grant that many will be inspired by their example and faith.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Quotes from Pope Francis on Vocations to Priesthood and Religious Life

Dear friends, it is not always easy to discern our vocation and to steer our life in the right direction. For this reason, there needs to be a renewed commitment on the part of the whole Church – priests, religious, pastoral workers and educators – to provide young people in particular with opportunities for listening and discernment. There is a need for a youth ministry and a vocational promotion that can open the way to discovering God’s plan, above all through prayer, meditation on God’s word, eucharistic adoration and spiritual accompaniment.

Pope Francis, World Day of Prayer for Vocations, 2019

“No vocation is born of itself or lives for itself. A vocation flows from the heart of God and blossoms in the good soil of faithful people. Did not Jesus say: “By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another” (Jn 13:35)?

Pope Francis – January 16, 2014

“Every vocation is born of that gaze of love with which the Lord came to meet us, perhaps even at a time when our boat was being battered by the storm.”

Pope Francis, 57th World Day of Vocations, 2020

“God calls us to encounter him through faithfulness to concrete things – God is always encountered in concrete things: daily prayer, Holy Mass, Confession, real charity, the daily word of God, closeness, especially to those most in need spiritually or physically. Concrete things, such as obedience to one’s superior and to the rule in the consecrated life.”

Pope Francis, 23rd World Day for Consecrated Life, 2019

“Vocation, more than our own choice, is a response to the Lord’s unmerited call.”

Pope Francis, Letter to Priests, 44 August 2019

The Lord’s call is not an intrusion of God in our freedom; it is not a “cage” or a burden to be borne. On the contrary, it is the loving initiative whereby God encounters us and invites us to be part of a great undertaking. He opens before our eyes the horizon of a greater sea and an abundant catch.

Pope Francis, 56th World Day of Vocations, 2019

The Lord’s call – let it be said at the outset – is not as clear-cut as any of those things we can hear, see or touch in our daily experience. God comes silently and discreetly, without imposing on our freedom. Thus it can happen that his voice is drowned out by the many worries and concerns that fill our minds and hearts.

We need, then, to learn how to listen carefully to his word and the story of his life, but also to be attentive to the details of our own daily lives, in order to learn how to view things with the eyes of faith, and to keep ourselves open to the surprises of the Spirit.

Pope Francis, 55th World Day of Vocations, 2018

What the Scriptures say about Vocations

This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers and sisters. If anyone has material possessions and sees a brother or sister in need but has no pity on them, how can the love of God be in that person? Dear children, let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth.

1 John 3:16-18

Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: rejoice! Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Philippians 4:4-7

You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.

Matthew 5:14-16

The word of God was addressed to Jeremiah as follows: “Go down to the potter’s house, and there I will give you my message.” So I went down to the potter’s house, and I saw him working at the wheel. But the pot he was shaping from the clay was marred in his hands; so the potter formed it into another pot, shaping it as seemed best to him. Then the word of the Lord came to me. He said, “Can I not do with you, Israel, as this potter does?” declares the Lord. “Like clay in the hand of the potter, so are you in my hand, Israel.”

Jeremiah 18:1-6

Psalm 138

O Lord, you search me and you know me;
You know my resting and my rising;
You discern my thoughts from afar.
You mark when I walk or lie down;
All my ways lie open to you.

O where can I go from your Spirit;
Or where can I fly from your face?
If I climb to the heavens you are there,
If I lie in the grave you are there.

If I take the wings of the morning
And dwell at the sea's furthest end,
Even there your hand would lead me,
Your right hand hold me fast.

For it was you who created my being,
Knit me together in my mother's womb.
I thank you for the wonder of my being,
For the wonders of all your creations.

O search me, God, and know my heart.
O test me and know my thoughts.
See that I follow not the wrong path
And lead me in the path of life eternal.

Look towards him and be radiant.
Taste and see that the Lord is good.
The Lord is close to the broken hearted;
Those whose spirit is crushed he will save;
Those who hide in him
Shall not be condemned.

Vocation Vocabulary

DIOCESAN PRIEST

Priest ordained to serve in one particular area of the Church overseen by a bishop or archbishop.



DEACON

An ordained minister who may preach the Gospel, teach, baptise, lead prayers. Witness marriages and conduct wake or funeral services.

PRIEST

Men who offer leadership and service to the Church and administer the sacraments to God's people

MONK

A member of a men's religious community who lives a life of prayer in a monastery..

ORDINATION

Liturgical ceremony for men who have fulfilled all the requirements to become a priest; they receive the Sacrament of Holy Orders.

BROTHER

Men who belong to a religious community and promise to serve the Church in a special way for like (unlike a priest, they do not administer sacraments).

SEMINARY—Place of learning specialising in studies for students preparing to become a priest (seminarians).



MOTHER HOUSE

The main home/headquarters for sisters.

NUN

Women in religious orders (sisters) living a cloistered (secluded) life of prayer in a monastery.

NOVITIATE

Time of intense spiritual formation in which candidates (often called novices) learn about the community and way of life they want to join.

SISTER—Woman who takes vows to serve God in a special way, such as teachers, doctors, parish workers.

MONASTERY

Home of monks or nuns devoted to prayer.

PERPETUAL VOWS

Promise made to commit oneself as a priest, sister or brother for the rest of one's life.

RELIGIOUS ORDER/CONGREGATION

National or international group of priests, sisters or brothers who take vows to serve the Lord in as special way, such as teaching, healthcare, or missionary work.

TEMPORARY VOWS

Promise a man or woman makes to spend a period of trial and testing with a religious order.



SACRAMENTAL MARRIAGE

A covenant between a baptised man and a woman that establishes a partnership of the whole life, which is ordered toward the good of the spouses and procreation and education of offspring.

HOW TO BECOME A PRIEST BROTHER OR SISTER

To become a diocesan priest:



Discernment

Interested men meet with a vocations or spiritual director to learn more about the priesthood and priestly formation. They then become a candidate for a specific diocese and embark upon a year of formation known as a 'Propaedeutic Year'.



Seminarian

After completing a requisite number of courses in philosophy, one begins four years of graduate studies in theology. During their years of formation seminarians also deepen their prayer life, work on becoming a well-rounded person, and minister in parishes.



Deacon

During the last year of theology and upon the recommendation of your bishop, candidates are ordained as a transitional deacon and begin ministry such as preaching, catechetical instruction, counselling, and service to the community.



Priest

Having successfully completed their studies and deepened their spiritual, intellectual, human and pastoral understanding, the deacons promise to be a priest forever and are ordained by their bishop.

To become a sister or brother:



Postulant

Most candidates start in or after college. They spend several months to a couple of years getting to know the community they wish to join.



Novice

For one to two years, they continue their studies, deepen their knowledge of the religious order, their charisma, work, ministry or apostolate.



Temporarily Professed

In each of the next three or more years, they will take temporary vows, deepening their commitment to God and the religious order.

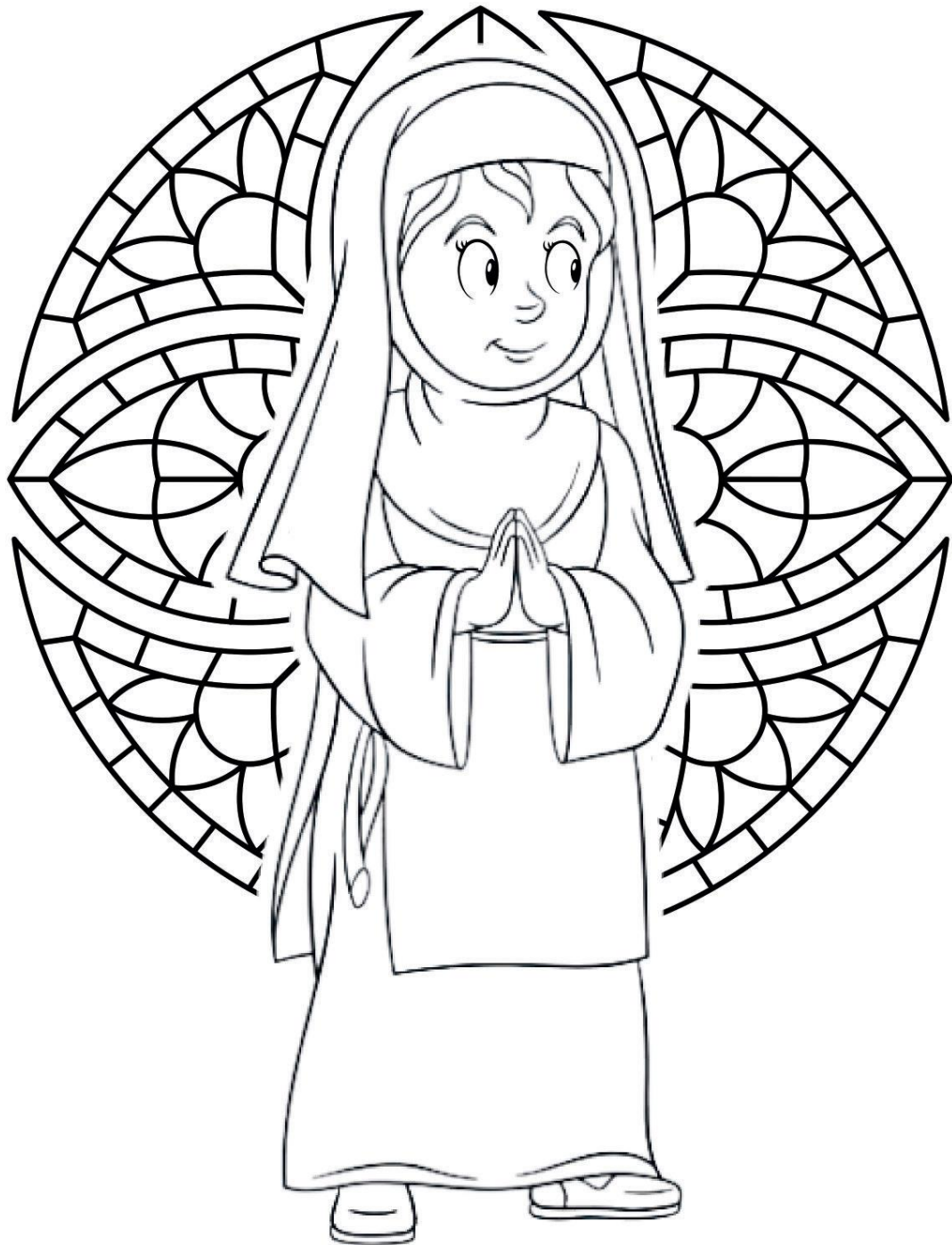


Sister/Brother

Having completed their formation, candidates take final vows, a promise that they will remain a sister, brother, or religious priest forever.



Children's Corner



Children's Corner



Sources:

<https://www.atonementfriars.org/10-signs-you-may-have-a-calling-csj/>

Children's Corner – 'Design a Priest or Sister' – www.vocationministry.com

How to Become a Priest, Brother or Sister – adapted from www.vocationministry.com

Vocation Vocabulary – adapted from www.vocationministry.com

How can I help? – Adapted from Vianney Vocations – www.vianneyvocations.com