

For Your Vocation

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Remember when you first felt the call to become a catechist?

Who asked you to consider becoming a catechist? Who was a model for you? What did others do to make it easy for you to say “yes”?

God is always calling all of us to a life of holiness. But some of us are called to more —consecrated life, religious life, or the priesthood. The following are our suggestions on how to help your students recognize the call and nurture and respond to it.

Be a Witness to Your Own Vocation

Pope Benedict XVI taught that witness awakens vocations. Your students learn about vocations by the way you model a life of faith through the words and actions that reflect your integral love for God and willingness to do his will. Your students can point to you as witnesses just as you can point to significant persons in your life who nurtured your love for the Lord by their example.

Ask Your Young People

One of the greatest reasons young people never consider a call to the priesthood or consecrated life is that they are never asked! Inviting youth to consider God's call in their hearts helps them recognize God's love for them and God's plan for their future (cf. Jeremiah 29:11).

There are many ways you can introduce students to the vocations of priesthood and consecrated life, and help them see the beauty and joy of these vocations. One specific tool is the ForYourVocation.org website, developed by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops.

Better educate yourself on how to ask and respond to questions about a vocation. Watch the on-line interviews of priests, seminarians, religious brothers, religious sisters, consecrated virgins, Societies of Apostolic Life, and family members of those who have become priests or religious—those who have dealt with these very questions. Invite your pastor or the vowed religious in your parish to share their stories of how they recognized and discerned their vocations.

Teach about Vocations

ForYourVocation.org offers resources for men and women discerning their vocations, families, educators, and youth leaders, as well as vocation directors.

- * Download and adapt the on-line lesson plans for elementary school- through high school-age youth, especially during the week after the Fourth Sunday in Easter (Good Shepherd Sunday).
- * Show the video interviews to spark discussion and answer questions about God's call to the priesthood or consecrated life, and about vocations in particular.
- * Gather youth to pray and reflect about particular vocations in the Church or particular dimensions of discerning a vocation using the Life Teen Youth Nights lesson plans.

Build a Vocations Culture

Vocations flourish when the larger community supports and sustains the process of discernment over time.

- * Use the video interviews to encourage youth to attend the Sacraments and nourish their faith and love for God.
- * Encourage students' parents to visit the site to learn how to help their children be open to God's will for their lives.
- * Explore the "Best Practices and Resources" section for ideas on how to build a culture of vocation in the home, school, and parish through vocation, youth, and/or parish events, service activities, and retreat resources.

The need for consecrated and ordained men and women reflects the change around us. Catholics in the United States are almost 50% Hispanic/Latino. With that comes an increased need for leaders and resources. Many of the on-line resources are also in Spanish to support this.

The Harvest, the Laborers

Like the rest of society, Catholics are becoming more engaged in social media. The blog and Facebook fan page for ForYourVocation.org are available to catechists and young people, especially those who are discerning and want a more interactive means of addressing this process.

As we know, the harvest is plenty and the laborers are few. As catechists, remember your call and response, and help us sow the seeds of vocation for the next generation.

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