

## Upcoming Vocation Events & Programs

### Come & See Weekend

St. Augustine's Seminary  
March 15-17, 2019

For men in Grade 12\* and older who are considering a possible call to Diocesan Priesthood. Weekend live-in experience includes visits with seminarians, individual prayer, shared meals, the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Holy Eucharist, plus recreation with fellow men discerning. Register online at [www.vocationstoronto.ca/comeandsee](http://www.vocationstoronto.ca/comeandsee) or contact us for more information.

\*Men aged 17 require parental consent.

### Coming Soon

Archdiocesan  
Day of Prayer  
for Vocations  
May 3, 2019

Ordination  
Prayer Vigil  
May 10, 2019

Priestly  
Ordination  
May 11, 2019

### Made for Greatness: Becoming Holy Disciples of Christ

Offered in parishes throughout the archdiocese, Made for Greatness is a program for men who want to deepen their personal encounter with Jesus and listen to where he might be leading. Locations include:

- Oshawa
- Barrie
- Pickering
- Scarborough
- Brampton
- Richmond Hill
- Mississauga
- Markham
- Toronto
- Notre Dame CSS

Visit <https://www.madeforgreatness.ca> or contact us to find a group near you.



Learn more on our website.  
[www.VocationsToronto.ca](http://www.VocationsToronto.ca)

Follow us on social media.



Enjoy Fr. Chris Lemieux's blog.  
<http://FatherLemieux.com>

## St. Joseph Vocation Society Prayer for Vocations

Lord Jesus, as you once called the first disciples to make them fishers of men, let Your sweet invitation continue to resound: Come follow Me! Give young men and women the grace of responding quickly to Your voice. Support our bishops, priests, and consecrated people in their apostolic labour. Grant perseverance to our seminarians and to all those who are carrying out the ideal of a life totally consecrated to Your service. Awaken in our community a missionary eagerness. Lord, send workers to Your harvest and do not allow humanity to be lost for the lack of pastors, missionaries, and people dedicated to the cause of the Gospel. Mary, Mother of the Church, the model of every vocation, help us to say "yes" to the Lord who calls us to cooperate in the divine plan of salvation. Amen.

—Pope St. John Paul II

**Want to pray this every day? Let us know!**



# VOCATIONS TORONTO TODAY

## From the Director's Desk

Dear Friends in Christ,

Welcome to the third issue of *Vocations Toronto Today*, a newsletter celebrating the rich vocations playing out in the very place we live.

Thank you for being our partner in nurturing vocations. Holy marriages, priestly vocations, and religious vocations grow out of loving, supportive communities—and the Archdiocese of Toronto is full of them!

Yours in Christ,



Fr. Chris Lemieux  
Director, Office of Vocations

In this issue, we are sharing the programmatic work of our office. One article captures the longstanding Associates Program, a unique pre-seminary formation program for men discerning diocesan priesthood. Another feature highlights our Made for Greatness program, which is the new name of our general discernment program formerly called Quo Vadis. The last article highlights the outreach work we are doing to build a culture of vocations in our Catholic schools. Upcoming vocations events are listed on the back cover.

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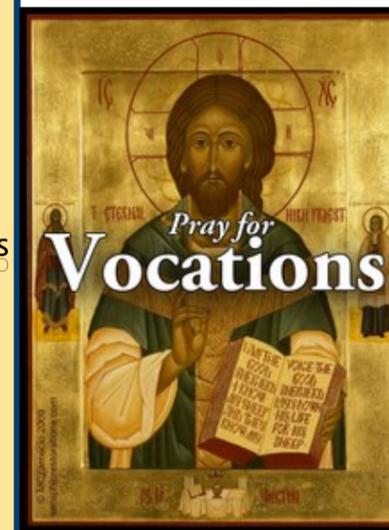
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## St. Joseph Vocation Society

Imagine 1,000 people praying for the same thing every day. What might the impact be? This vision is our hope for the emerging St. Joseph Vocation Society, composed of individuals who commit to praying every day for vocations to the priesthood and religious life. Will you join us? There are no dues or meetings, just the promise of your prayerful support. In gratitude, you will be remembered in a monthly Mass celebrated by the Archdiocesan Vocation Director. See back cover for the daily prayer.

The life of St. Joseph bears remarkable witness to the mystery of God's call. Never wavering from the message of the angel, St. Joseph steadfastly persevered in his vocation despite serious hardships for the Holy Family.

## Made for Greatness: Becoming Holy Disciples of Christ

This year we continue our commitment to helping people in the Archdiocese of Toronto discern their vocations. Our entry-level general discernment program (previously called *Quo Vadis*, Latin for “Where are you going?” and taken from Peter’s encounter with Our Lord carrying his cross) is now known as Made for Greatness: Becoming Holy Disciples of Christ.

It was through previous experiences with *Quo Vadis* that we discovered the need to take a more general approach to discernment—as opposed to discerning a particular vocation. We also learned that discernment begins with discipleship. Made for Greatness emphasizes discipleship born out of a personal encounter with Jesus and focuses on the universal call to holiness. In time, the program also exposes participants to

the particular vocations of priesthood, marriage, and religious life. In October 2018, we started a number of groups in key locations, including two Catholic high schools, and we continue to look at where we might establish new groups. Join us!

“The Made for Greatness discernment program is providing students the opportunity to reconsider how they have been planning for and deciding their future,” says Paola Fraietta, chaplain at Notre Dame Catholic Secondary School, who facilitates a group for girls. “They are learning the skills necessary to hear God’s invitation and follow faithfully wherever that invitation leads. They are embracing the freedom that comes with allowing God alone to shape their lives. It’s an honour to journey with them!”



## The Associates: a Pre-Seminary Formation Program

Every other Saturday, a group of men gather to discern a possible call to diocesan priesthood. They read excerpts from a variety of texts, hear presentations from priests, and meet seminarians. Most importantly, the day begins and ends with food! The Bread of Life—Christ in the Eucharist—opens the day, and pizza often ends it.

For the past 30 years, this discernment program known as The Associates has played a unique and vital role in the Archdiocese of Toronto. In fact it is more robust than a discernment program; it provides pre-seminary formation for its participants, developing and preparing men for the seminary. Conversely, the Associates Program also helps men listen carefully to the voice of God, and in some cases reveals to them that priesthood is not their vocation.

One former participant, James Cyfko, shares his experience: “The Associates program was an eye-opening assistance in my discernment of whether the priesthood was for me. Hearing priests talk openly about their own relatable journeys, having honest discussions with seminarians, and meeting other guys who were thinking about that vocation too all made me realize where God was calling me — in this case, to the seminary!”

We’re grateful for this program that not only helps men discern the priesthood, but also prepare them for the seminary. Men are formed and developed in the Associates, easing the transition to the next chapter which is full of change: community living, academic rigor, and a formal departure from other vocations.



## High School Outreach A Deeper Take on “Vocational” Education

“As our grade 12 students are preparing to graduate and enter the next phase of their lives, we welcomed the opportunity to have Joe and Cady from the Vocations office speak to them on the topic of discernment and vocations. They were able to listen to their stories and see the many different ways Christ calls us in our lives and the role faith plays on our journey.”

—Erica Gismondi, Chaplain at Sacred Heart Catholic School in Newmarket



Long-time Office of Vocations employee and former teacher Joe Di Fonzo presenting to students.

The academic year 2018-19 makes it the third that Joe Di Fonzo has been visiting Catholic schools on behalf of the Office of Vocations. More often than not, he presents to grade 12 religion classes, and his topic? You guessed it, vocations. But he doesn’t just say, “This is what priesthood is, this is religious life, this is holy marriage....” He begins with a striking story about a young man who wanted a \$90,000 car for his 18th birthday. Instead, his father gave him a Bible—and then died suddenly. So the young man has to reconcile this “book containing all the answers to life” as his father described it, with the hefty surprise check tucked away in its pages.

Di Fonzo’s presentation goes on to explore happiness. What is it made of anyway? Through anecdotes and Scripture, audiences discover that happiness comes from loving, lasting relationships (which are the centerpiece of every vocation). In fact, our ultimate happiness is rooted in one particular relationship: the most important—and hopefully the most personal—one we have, that is, with Jesus. Holiness and happiness go hand in hand.

An image Di Fonzo returns to throughout his presentation is that of a tree: branches full of leaves, a strong trunk, and solid root system. Being grounded in Christ is the root system, a life of virtue is the trunk, and the particular vocations are the branches.

Di Fonzo describes the Universal Call to Holiness as being “the best version of yourself.” He says that service is what’s common to all vocations, often to the point of sacrifice, and that is the most profound expression of love.

“Joe and Cady did a good job of reinforcing themes explored in our curriculum regarding service and discernment. It was nice to have a female presence speak to our young ladies about the various ways we can dedicate ourselves to Christ without necessarily entering into a holy order. Thank you for your service!”

—Adriano Misuraca, grade 12 religion teacher at Sacred Heart Catholic High School in Newmarket



The four F’s—free, full, faithful, and fruitful—are another universal in the world of vocations. That is, each person is designed to give themselves freely, make a full gift of themselves to *the other* (whoever that might be in a given vocation), be faithful to their vocation, and bear fruit in it.

This year, Di Fonzo is joined by a co-presenter, his colleague Cady McClurg, who like him is also a former teacher. She elaborates on how the four F’s play out in each vocation, and also shares some of her own personal discernment journey with students.

If you’re interested in having the Office of Vocations present to your class, let us know. We’re here to support everyone’s discernment process in the Archdiocese of Toronto.

