



THE LORD IS CALLING

ARE YOU LISTENING?

Dear Friends in Christ,

It's been an exciting November already for the Office of Vocations, as our Come & See Weekend at St. Augustine's Seminary was full of blessings. We were fortunate to have a strong turnout of thoughtful men who are discerning a possible vocation to diocesan priesthood. They heard the living witnesses of our current seminarians, and received a wealth of information on discipleship, seminary life, and the priestly vocation from some of our priests. An equally important component of this weekend was the time given for personal prayer.

It is this topic—the importance of prayer in discernment—that our newsletter highlights this month. The importance of prayer can hardly be overstated since certainty, particularly about one's vocation, is born in prayer. Although a spiritual director is often a tremendous help in the discernment process, the director is limited in assisting if the one discerning can't hear the more-often-than-not *quiet* voice of God.



In addition to this article, you might appreciate some of the texts listed on our website: <http://www.vocationstoronto.ca/recommended-reading>.

No one, however, says it better than Scripture. Two excerpts in particular invite us to pray: “Your Father knows what you need even before you ask Him” (Matthew 6:8); and “Ask and it will be given, seek and you will find, knock and the door will be opened” (Matthew 7:7). With promises like these, who are we to deny ourselves the treasures waiting for us on the other side of prayer?

May your discernment be strengthened this month by the prayers we offer for you!

Your friend in Christ,

Fr. Chris Lemieux
Director of Vocations
Archdiocese of Toronto

THE ROLE OF
PRAYER IN
DISCERNMENT

Priesthood? Religious life? Marriage?

As you contemplate what to do with your life, be confident that God has a specific plan for you, and that you can discover it through prayer.

Continued on back...



THE ROLE OF PRAYER IN DISCERNMENT

...Continued from front

Authentic prayer goes beyond saying a couple of Our Fathers and Hail Marys in a church pew. Put simply, the deepest kind of prayer is a heartfelt conversation with Christ. In fact, prayer helps us to achieve union with God, which is the vocation of all Christians. *No matter which vocation God has in mind for you, it is essential that you learn to pray well.* While you can pray about your vocation anywhere, it is often helpful to do so before the Blessed Sacrament.

Read Inspiring Scripture Passages

Prayerfully reading scripture can spark a great conversation between you and the Lord. Here are a few suggested passages to get started:

- Matthew 19:16-30 (Jesus's encounter with the rich young man)
- John 1:35-51 (The calling of the first disciples)
- Luke 14:25-33 (Following Christ no matter what the cost)

Contemplate Life Changes

Everyone, no matter how holy, can always live more perfectly. Think about the things in your life which may be holding you back from making commitments to God. Start with the little things – but don't be afraid to tackle the big things!

Talk to God about your Friends and Family

If you make the decision to pursue priesthood or religious life, your parents may not understand. Your friends may be skeptical. If so, ask God for guidance in these relationships. Remember that Jesus himself had family and friends

who didn't always understand him; he can sympathize with what you are going through.

Confront your Fears and ask for Courage

For a healthy single person, considering a celibate life is difficult, since our nature draws us toward family life. Likewise, many men are afraid seminary will be too challenging or that public speaking will prove too difficult. Talk to God about these concerns, then ask for courage and peace. If you confront your fears now, with God's help, your discernment will be much less complicated.

Ask God to Show you your Strengths

If God is calling you to religious life, He will have given you certain qualities that will make you a good religious sister or brother. The same is true of priesthood and marriage. Spend some time examining your personal gifts, then imagine how you can use them to serve in different vocations. You may discover you have a lot to contribute to the Church!

In the end, spending time with Jesus should be like a conversation with a good friend. Speak to him from your heart and then listen. You're not likely to hear anything with your ears. Instead, "hearing" results in an increase in understanding, acceptance, and willingness to follow God's path for your life. Prayer is the surest way to know what God wants you to do with your life – and to gain the grace and courage to do it!

The Office of Vocations is here to help.



U P C O M I N G E V E N T S

Made for Greatness:

Men Becoming Holy Disciples of Christ

Starting in parishes throughout the archdiocese in November, Made for Greatness is a program for men who want to deepen their personal encounter with Christ and listen to where he might be leading. Contact our office to find a group near you. Locations include:

- Oshawa
- Barrie
- Ajax
- Scarborough
- Brampton
- Richmond Hill
- Mississauga
- Markham
- Toronto

More resources
on our website:
www.vocationstoronto.ca

Did you know? The Office of Vocations gives vocation presentations to university, youth ministry, parish, and high school audiences. Contact us for more information.

Follow us



on social media.