



Dear Friends in Christ,

We're off and running! This is a busy, exciting time for the Office of Vocations. We hope to see you at some of our upcoming programs and events:

**Made for Greatness: Becoming Holy Disciples of**

**Christ**, a discipleship program for men in parishes and both men and women in high schools

**An Evening at the Seminary**, for men open to the priesthood

**Hiking Retreat**, for men discerning their vocations

**Young Disciples Retreat**, for male and female youth aged 13-17 who are active in parish service

**Come & See Weekend**, for men actively discerning diocesan priesthood

**Called by Name**, a parish-based vocations program in which parishioners nominate individuals they feel may be called to a particular vocation

If you are interested in any of these programs and events, please contact the Office of Vocations at 416-968-0997 or via email at [vocations@archtoronto.org](mailto:vocations@archtoronto.org) and we will answer any questions you may have.

The feature article in this issue outlines a few characteristics of a good priestly candidate. Wherever you are in your discernment journey, rest assured that the Office of Vocations is praying for you.

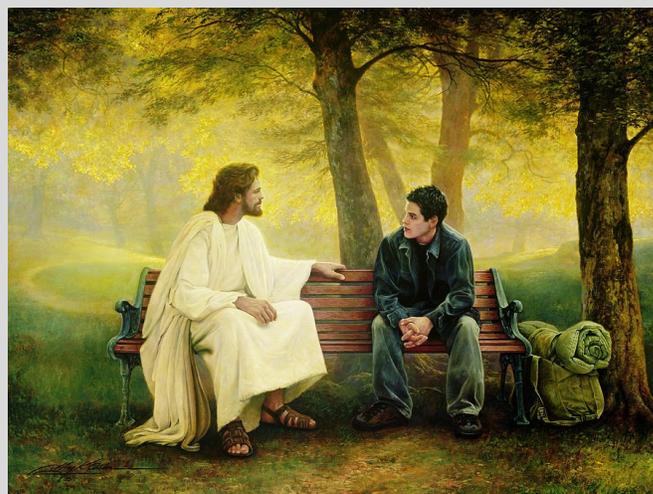
Yours in Christ,

Fr. Chris Lemieux  
Director, Office of Vocations  
Archdiocese of Toronto

## Characteristics of a Good Priestly Candidate

Sometimes you may be surprised who God calls to the priesthood, especially if He calls you! No matter what our response is to His call—whether it's about our feelings of inadequacy or our desires lying in other directions—He knows what He's doing.

Even if you feel unqualified to fill this high calling, God has the power to qualify you. He will never send you where His grace will not sustain you. In the words of one spiritual director, "God always gives us sufficient grace to live out our vocations, no matter the circumstances." God doesn't call anyone to a vocation in which they will not thrive. God wants priests to live happily, flourish, and help others get to heaven while the priest works out his own salvation.



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## CHARACTERISTICS OF A GOOD PRIESTLY CANDIDATE

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What characteristics are necessary in a good priestly candidate? Those outlined below are by no means exhaustive, and the absence of them doesn't mean that they cannot be developed. Seminary formation helps immensely with these attributes. A good candidate for priesthood:

- **Loves Jesus, and longs to share him with the world.**

A priest's entire ministry is "about the Father's business" (Luke 2:49).

- **Strives to live a life of prayer.**

An extension of loving Jesus, a life of prayer is the only thing that truly satisfies us. A good priest—and priestly candidate—will put this into practice.

- **Lives and desires to live a life of service to others.**

Like every vocation, priesthood is a total gift of self to others. Priests spend their days serving other people through the Sacraments and the life of the Church.

- **Desires to be a priest.**

Although this desire may not manifest itself immediately, it will eventually surface in any true priestly vocation.

- **Finds his call to the priesthood affirmed by Scripture.**

One young man discerning his vocation found that every time he opened the Bible, the passages were about the priesthood. This happens sometimes. Callings can also be affirmed by other people, circumstances, and events.

- **Strives to live a life of virtue.**

A good priestly candidate will find it meaningful and worthwhile to become the best version of themselves they can possibly be, every day.

- **Has good people skills.**

In a nutshell, a priest's job is to bring Jesus to people and people to Jesus. He won't be effective in this ministry if his interactions with people are strained.

- **Is physically, emotionally, and psychologically stable.**

Priesthood is demanding. It requires physical, emotional stamina and sound judgment. The Church needs a priest who is able to serve everyone in his path, some of whom may have great needs demanding unwavering stability.

- **Has above-average intelligence.**

Problem solving is a daily task in priestly ministry. As the pastor of a church, a priest will be managing its temporal affairs (such as building repair and insurance), its spiritual affairs (ensuring a sacramental life of vitality for parishioners), and interacting with a great number of stakeholders. Leading the spiritual affairs alone requires seven years of seminary preparation! Even if academia doesn't hold much appeal for priestly candidates, solid intelligence can carry them through.

- **Is joyful and has a good sense of humour.**

What appeal can heaven have if its ambassadors are sour-faced?

These qualities are each important in a good priestly candidate. *The Office of Vocations is here to help.*



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

MONDAY, OCTOBER  
7, 2019

**An Evening at the  
Seminary** | 4:45 pm

More information & registration at  
[www.vocationstoronto.ca](http://www.vocationstoronto.ca)

SATURDAY, OCTOBER  
19, 2019

**Road to Emmaus Hiking  
Retreat** | 8:30 am - 4:30 pm

More information & registration at  
[www.vocationstoronto.ca](http://www.vocationstoronto.ca)

SATURDAY, OCTOBER  
26, 2019

**Young Disciples  
Retreat** | 8:30 am - 4:30 pm

More information at  
[www.vocationstoronto.ca](http://www.vocationstoronto.ca)