

# THE VOCATION BASICS



*Holiness is everyone's primary vocation. Holiness means trying to be like Jesus. After the decision to follow Christ, your vocation is the most important decision in life.*

We all have a call to further the kingdom of God, whether that is as a priest, deacon, religious, married person, or single person. Each has a call from God and the community to live out our lives in service to another. *What is your call?*

**Priesthood:** Priests bring Jesus to people and people to Jesus through preaching and the sacraments. Priests are very active as they counsel people, teach classes, prepare homilies, administer parishes, and much more. Many surveys show that priests are among the happiest people in the world!



**Religious Life:** Both men and women can join religious orders such as the Franciscans, Dominicans, Benedictines, etc. The life and work of religious orders varies greatly – some are primarily devoted to prayer; others work actively in schools, hospitals, orphanages, etc. Common to all religious orders are the vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience.

**Marriage:** Most people are called to marriage – to wholeheartedly love their spouses and to joyfully welcome children. The purpose of marriage is for a man and a woman to help each other get to heaven, and to teach their children to do the same. Like any vocation, marriage must be discerned, not assumed.

**Single Life:** Some people serve God as single people, without marrying or making special vows. While not a “vocation” in a strict theological sense, single people “contribute greatly to the good of the human family” (CCC 2231). “Some live their situation in the spirit of the Beatitudes, serving God and neighbor in exemplary fashion” (CCC 1658).

In Latin, the word “vocare” means to call, to name, or to invoke. As Catholic Christians, we believe that God through the community calls each of us into work for the kingdom of God. We all remember being taught the priests and nuns have a calling. However, since Vatican II the Church has made it clear that we are all called in some way. This week, November 1-7, the Church celebrates "National Vocation Awareness Week." *What will you do to support and sustain your call to the mission of Christ and the call of others?*

For more information about celebrating this week of the Church, please visit [www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/vocations/national-vocation-awareness-week.cfm](http://www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/vocations/national-vocation-awareness-week.cfm).

## Prayer for Vocations

*Loving and generous God, you called the prophets to bring your word to your chosen people. Your Son, Jesus, called the first disciples to be bold proclaimers of the good news. In the modern world, you continue to call your sons and daughters to the priesthood, diaconate, and consecrated life, in addition to married life and single life. Calm the chaos and soothe the sounds of our world, and allow more to hear your soft voice calling them to pick up their cross and follow. May the Holy Spirit fall upon your church in a profound way, so that we may experience a tremendous harvest of grace. May vocations increase ever abundantly and may your church stand as a witness to the world of the good news of your Son, Jesus Christ. Amen.*