

Resources for Vocations Sunday 2014

Sunday 11 May 2014 | World Day of Prayer for Vocations | Vocations: Witness to the Truth



"I invite you to listen to and follow Jesus, and to allow yourselves to be transformed interiorly by his words, which 'are spirit and life' (Jn 6:62)."

"Let us dispose our hearts therefore to being 'good soil', by listening, receiving and living out the word, and thus bearing fruit."

"Today too, Jesus lives and walks along the paths of ordinary life in order to draw near to everyone..... I turn now to those who are well disposed to listen to the voice of Christ that rings out in the Church and to understand what their own vocation is."

**- Pope Francis
Message for World
Day of Prayer for
Vocations 2014**

Vocations: Witness to the Truth

Pope Francis has a simple way of both speaking and living. He has used many memorable phrases and images to communicate the 'Joy of the Gospel' – but, most of all, he shares that joy in the way he interacts with people.

However, this Gospel joy is not just a pleasurable feeling, some sort of spiritual candyfloss. It is a joy born of mission. In his message for this year's Vocations Sunday 2014, he

encourages all in the Church to expect great things from God, and from ourselves in his service. Joy for that sort of disciple enables him or her to venture beyond the narrow limits of our comfort zones.

That means taking risks, being prepared to journey, allowing God to be God in our lives. In *Evangelii Gaudium*, he wrote of the "unruly freedom" of the Word of God, for "*we are neither its masters or owners,*

but its guardians, heralds and servants".

In this year's message, he calls for heroes who will go into the great harvest where many people are harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. 'And the harvest will be plentiful'.

**Bishop Donal
McKeown
Chairman,
Bishops' Council
for Vocations.**

An introduction to the resources

The resources for Vocations Sunday this year have been prepared by the Bishops' Council for Vocations. The Council is made up of people who work to promote vocations and who strive to create a culture of vocations in

the Irish Catholic Church. Members of the Council include priests, religious, seminarians and laity. This year's resources are offered for use in parishes, religious houses, homes and schools. They comprise liturgical materials, the papal

message for Vocations Sunday, articles, prayers, and a new resource for schools (Day in the Life series).

For more information please see www.vocations.ie.

Message of Pope Francis for Vocations Sunday 2014

“Dear Brothers and Sisters,

1. The Gospel says that 'Jesus went about all the cities and villages... When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, “The harvest is plentiful, but the labourers are few; pray therefore the Lord of the harvest to send out labourers into his harvest” (Mt 9:35-38). These words surprise us, because we all know that it is necessary first to plow, sow and cultivate to then, in due time, reap an abundant harvest. Jesus says instead that “the harvest is plentiful”. But who did the work to bring about these results? There is only one answer: God. Clearly the field of which Jesus is speaking is humanity, us. And the efficacious action which has borne “much fruit” is the grace of God, that is, communion with Him (cf. Jn 15:5). The prayer which Jesus asks of the Church therefore concerns the need to increase the number of those who serve his Kingdom. Saint Paul, who was one of 'God's fellow workers', tirelessly dedicated himself to the cause of the Gospel and the Church. The Apostle, with the awareness of one who has personally experienced how mysterious God's saving will is, and how the initiative of grace is the origin of every vocation, reminds the Christians of Corinth: 'You are God's field' (1 Cor 3:9). That is why wonder first arises in our hearts over the plentiful harvest which God alone can bestow; then gratitude for a love that always goes before us; and lastly, adoration for the work that he has accomplished, which requires our free consent in acting with him and for him.

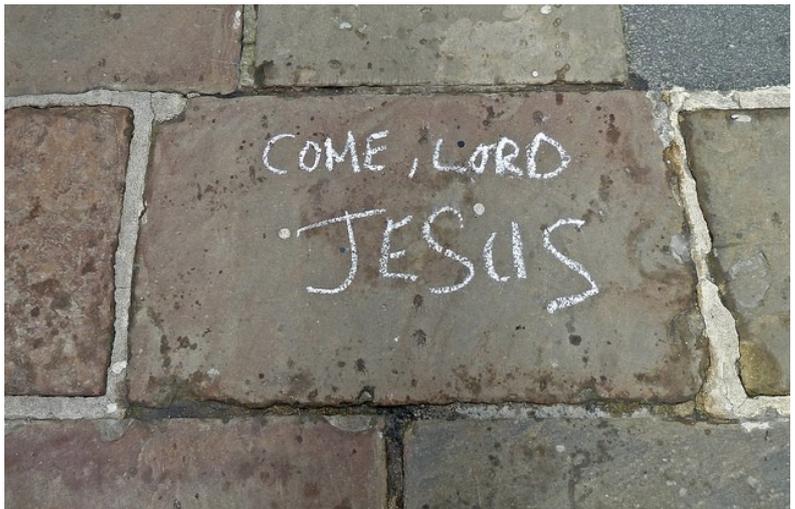
2. Many times we have prayed with the words of the Psalmist: 'It is he who made us, and we are his; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture' (Ps 100:3); or: 'The Lord has chosen Jacob for himself, Israel as his own possession' (Ps 135:4). And yet we are God's 'possession' not in the sense of a possession that renders us slaves, but rather of a strong bond that unites us to God and one another, in accord with a covenant that is eternal, 'for his steadfast love endures for ever' (Ps 136). In the account of the calling of the prophet Jeremiah, for example, God reminds us that he continually watches over each one of us in order that his word may be accomplished in us. The image is of an almond branch which is the first tree to flower, thus announcing life's rebirth in the springtime (cf Jer 1:11-12). Everything comes from him and is his gift: the world, life, death, the present, the future, but - the Apostle assures us - 'you are Christ's; and Christ is God's' (1 Cor 3:23).



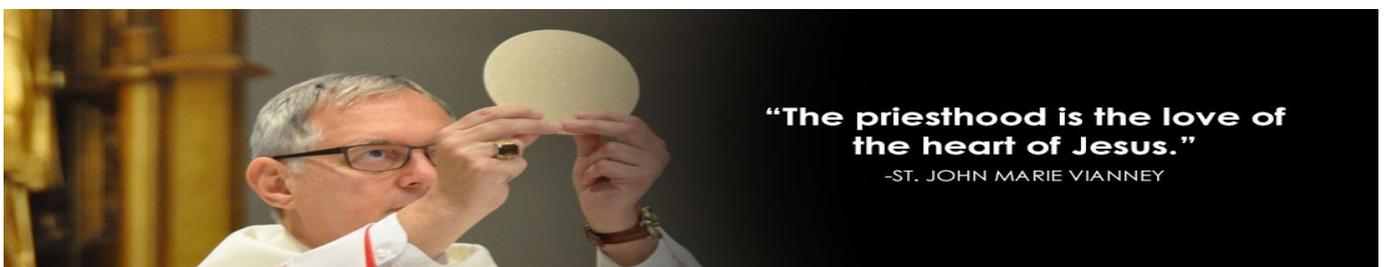
Message of Pope Francis for Vocations Sunday 2014

Hence the way of belonging to God is explained: it comes about through a unique and personal relationship with Jesus, which Baptism confers on us from the beginning of our rebirth to new life. It is Christ, therefore, who continually summons us by his word to place our trust in him, loving him 'with all the heart, with all the understanding, and with all the strength' (Mk 12:33). Therefore every vocation, even within the variety of paths, always requires an exodus from oneself in order to centre one's life on Christ and on his Gospel. Both in married life and in the forms of religious consecration, as well as in priestly life, we must surmount the ways of thinking and acting that do not conform to the will of God. It is an 'exodus that leads us on a journey of adoration of the Lord and of service to him in our brothers and sisters' ("Address to the International Union of Superiors General", 8 May 2013). Therefore, we are all called to adore Christ in our hearts (1 Pet 3:15) in order to allow ourselves to be touched by the impulse of grace contained in the seed of the word, which must grow in us and be transformed into concrete service to our neighbour. We need not be afraid: God follows the work of his hands with passion and skill in every phase of life. He never abandons us! He has the fulfilment of his plan for us at heart, and yet he wishes to achieve it with our consent and cooperation.

3. Today too, Jesus lives and walks along the paths of ordinary life in order to draw near to everyone, beginning with the least, and to heal us of our infirmities and illnesses. I turn now to those who are well disposed to listen to the voice of Christ that rings out in the Church and to understand what their own vocation is. I invite you to listen to and follow Jesus, and to allow yourselves to be transformed interiorly by his words, which 'are spirit and life' (Jn 6:62). Mary, the



Mother of Jesus and ours, also says to us: 'Do whatever he tells you' (Jn 2:5). It will help you to participate in a communal journey that is able to release the best energies in you and around you. A vocation is a fruit that ripens in a well cultivated field of mutual love that becomes mutual service, in the context of an authentic ecclesial life. No vocation is born of itself or lives for itself. A vocation flows from the heart of God and blossoms in the good soil of faithful people, in the experience of fraternal love. Did not Jesus say: 'By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another' (Jn 13:35)?



Message of Pope Francis for Vocations Sunday 2014

4. Dear brothers and sisters, this 'high standard of ordinary Christian living' (cf John Paul II, "Apostolic Letter *Novo Millennio Ineunte*", 31) means sometimes going against the tide and also encountering obstacles, outside ourselves and within ourselves. Jesus himself warns us: the good seed of God's word is often snatched away by the Evil one, blocked by tribulation, and choked by worldly cares and temptation (cf Mt 13:19-22). All of these difficulties could discourage us, making us fall back on seemingly more comfortable paths. However, the true joy of those who are called consists in believing and experiencing that he, the Lord, is faithful, and that with him we can walk, be disciples and witnesses of God's love, open our hearts to great ideals, to great things. 'We Christians were not chosen by the Lord for small things; push onwards toward the highest principles. Stake your lives on noble ideals!' ("Homily at Holy Mass and the Conferral of the Sacrament of Confirmation", 28 April 2013). I ask you bishops, priests, religious, Christian communities and families to orient vocational pastoral planning in this direction, by accompanying young people on pathways of holiness which, because they are personal, 'call for a genuine "training in holiness" capable of being adapted to every person's need. This training must integrate the resources offered to everyone with both the traditional forms of individual and group assistance, as well as the more recent forms of support offered in associations and movements recognized by the Church'



("Novo Millennio Ineunte", 31).

Let us dispose our hearts therefore to being 'good soil', by listening, receiving and living out the word, and thus bearing fruit. The more we unite ourselves to Jesus through prayer, Sacred Scripture, the Eucharist, the Sacraments celebrated and lived in the Church and in fraternity, the more there will grow in us the joy of cooperating with God in the service of the Kingdom of mercy and truth, of justice and peace. And the harvest will be plentiful, proportionate to the grace we have meekly welcomed into our lives. With this wish, and asking you to pray for me, I cordially impart to you all my Apostolic Blessing."

Pope Francis

Sunday 11 May 2014

World Day of Prayer for Vocations

Liturgical Resources for Vocations Sunday 2014



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Music for Vocations Sunday

Shepherd Me O God - *Hosanna/Laudate/Gather*

You Are Mine - *Gather/Laudate/In Caelo*

If God Is For Us - *Glory & Praise/Laudate/Liturgical Hymns Old & New/Celebration Hymnal*

Like a Shepherd - *Glory & Praise/Laudate/Liturgical/Celebration Hymnal*

At the Lamb's High Feast We Sing - *Veritas Hymnal/Hosanna/Liturgical Hymns Old & New/Celebration Hymnal*

Take and Eat - *Hosanna/Gather/Laudate/Liturgical Hymns Old & New/Celebration Hymnal/Seinn Alleluia/In Caelo*

Sr Moira Bergin, National Centre for Liturgy

Mass for Vocations Sunday will be broadcast by RTÉ One Television on Sunday 11 May from the RTÉ studios in Donnybrook, Dublin 4. The Principal Celebrant and homilist will be Bishop Donal McKeown.

The Mass is being coordinated by Sister Moira Bergin, National Centre for Liturgy and the Council for Vocations of the Bishops' Conference.

On Vocation

“Each of you has a personal vocation which He has given you for your own joy and sanctity. When a person is conquered by the fire of His gaze, no sacrifice seems too great to follow Him and give Him the best of ourselves. This is what the saints have always done, spreading the light of the Lord ... and transforming the world into a welcoming home for everyone.”

Pope Benedict XVI

Liturgical Resources for Vocations Sunday 2014



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Message for World Day of Prayer for Vocations 2014

Homily Notes

As we celebrate World Day of Prayer for Vocations, we are reminded, as baptised Catholics and all Christians, that our central vocation is both a call to holiness and to service. "Holiness . . . is the vocation of our times, of all of us," said Pope Paul VI in at the Second Vatican Council . Pope Francis constantly calls upon young people to be evangelisers and all of us to give our lives in service as followers of Jesus Christ.

We know that all vocations flow from baptism. But what do we mean by the word "vocation?" A good understanding of the word "vocation" might well be considered within the following sequence of statements:

- Through the sacrament of baptism each person receives a "call" or vocation.
- God calls all who are baptised to holiness and service.
- This call is lived as a single, married, ordained or consecrated person.

In this last statement, we understand that "vocation" is to be lived as a life commitment. Those who are single have responded to the vocation of joyfully acknowledging that God has called them to be a prophetic witness of what it means to be a single, loving, committed Christian in today's world. Those who are married have responded to the vocation of joyfully relying upon a God who has called them to a shared witness of what it means to have a covenantal commitment of love in today's world.

Those who are married have responded to the vocation of joyfully relying upon a God who has called them to a shared witness of what it means to have a covenantal commitment of love in today's world. Those who are consecrated and ordained have responded to the vocation of joyfully journeying with God's people as priests, sisters, brothers and others who have promised and vowed to grow in faith and holiness while helping God's people to do the same. In each vocational commitment we are called to be loving and supportive of one another.

As we celebrate this World Day of Prayer for Vocations, the Gospel passage could not have been better chosen. In the story of the Good Shepherd, as recounted in John 1: 1-10, we listen to the words of Christ: "My sheep hear my voice and they follow me."

"The priesthood is the love of the heart of Jesus. When you see a priest, think of our Lord Jesus Christ." - **Saint John Marie Vianney**

Liturgical Resources for Vocations Sunday 2014



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Homily Notes (continued)

The question is posed to you and me. Do we have a familiarity with the voice of the Good Shepherd in our lives? When God calls us to a commitment of single, married, consecrated or ordained life have we prepared ourselves to respond? And are we prepared to continue that response every day of our lives?

Ultimately, a vocation is not defined by “doing” but rather by “being.” We are called to live our lives in a generous response to the One who gave us life. Being in the presence of the Father, sharing in the mission of Christ, and witnessing in the power of the Holy Spirit is what being a follower of the Good Shepherd is all about.

How do we prepare ourselves? Personal and communal prayer, frequent reception of the sacraments, the reading of scripture, educating ourselves in the faith, and being of service to one another are ways in which we can more readily discern the Good Shepherd’s beckoning voice in our daily lives.

In 2002, Pope John Paul II said: “The vocational reality of the Church calls for a deep respect for the complementarity and interdependence of all Church vocations. Because the Church is at once community and communion of vocations, all its members need to be concerned about and committed to the flowering of all vocations in the Church, and not merely their own.”

So let us pray for vocations in our Church. We need committed men and women who believe that their call to single, married, ordained or consecrated life is from God. We need to support each response of vocation and make sure each kind of vocation is an encouraged and viable option for our children.

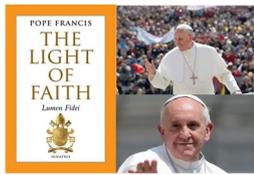
There are two powerful words that Jesus often used in relation with his disciples. Those words are “come” and “go.” Living one’s vocation is knowing how to do both.

Ends

“Prayer is to our soul what rain is to the soil. Fertilize the soil ever so richly, it will remain barren unless fed by frequent rains.”

Saint John Marie Vianney

Liturgical Resources for Vocations Sunday 2014



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Prayer of the Faithful

Presider: Let us seek the loving care of our Good Shepherd as we present the needs of our Church and world.

Reader: After each prayer, please respond: Lord, graciously hear us.

- That all Church leaders will be filled with the Holy Spirit as they guide us, Lord Hear Us:
- That leaders of nations may work together to bring about greater justice and lasting peace, Lord Hear Us:
- That we, the People of God, may listen intently to the call of the Good Shepherd and have the courage to be witnesses of the Gospel as we live out our baptismal commitment, Lord Hear Us:
- That those who are suffering may find comfort and encouragement so they may know joy, Lord Hear Us:
- That our youth may find direction in their lives as they discern God's call to priesthood, consecrated life, married life, single life, or the diaconate, Lord Hear Us:
- For those who have died (especially . . .) may they be filled with the joy of everlasting life, Lord Hear Us:

Presider: Loving God, we know of your gentle care for us. We trust that you will give us what we need. Shepherd us to follow in your ways now and forever. Amen.

On Vocation

“Many people mistake our work for our vocation. Our vocation is the love of Jesus.”

Mother Teresa

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Reflection for Vocations Sunday

Every single person has a vocation, a calling, a dream held for us by God as to who God would have us be and what God would have us do with our lives. When we speak of “praying for vocations” it is somewhat inaccurate. Vocations are freely given by God. What we are really praying for is God’s help to find and follow our own particular call.

At this time in our part of the world, the call to a life of service and ministry in the Church is not very popular, for a variety of reasons. It’s not so much that God is not calling, so much as people might not be tuned in too well to listening! Another element is that whilst God does the calling, it is up to us to do the informing and inviting; that is telling people about religious life and priesthood – the fulfillment and joy it can bring – and actively inviting/encouraging them to think about it as a possible choice.

Imagine if, in every parish and faith community, people were encouraged to spend a few minutes discerning who in their midst might be a possible candidate for religious life/priesthood? Then, if they gently and sensitively shared the fruit of their reflection with that person, saying what they saw in the person and then left it for him/her to think and pray about it? What would happen? Only God knows!

As well as full time ministry, every community has a need for willing people to serve as readers, ministers of the Eucharist, Mass servers, catechists or members of various committees. God’s Kingdom needs people willing to say yes and give their hands, feet and hearts.

God is saying, “Whom shall I send?”

What are you saying in reply?

On Vocation

“The world looks to the priest, because it looks to Jesus! No one can see Christ; but everyone sees the priest, and through him they wish to catch a glimpse of the Lord! Immense is the grandeur of the Lord! Immense is the grandeur and dignity of the priest!”
(Rome, Italy, October 13, 1979)

Pope John Paul II

Liturgical Resources for Vocations Sunday 2014



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Prayer Service

Call to Prayer

Leader: We gather

All: “In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.”

Leader: God calls each of us by name. As a sign of our willingness to listen to God's call let us each respond “Here I am, Lord!” when you hear your name called. (Leader says each person's name aloud and the person responds.)

Prayer: Jesus, we want to follow you. Help us to listen to your Word and to hear your voice in our hearts and in each other. We want to be near you forever. Amen.

Reading: *A Reading from the Gospel of John* (John 10 1-10)

Jesus said: “My sheep hear my voice; I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and no one can ever take them from me or the Father. The Father and I are one.” *The Gospel of the Lord.*

All: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ!

Sharing: *Take time to share about the ways Jesus talks to us and how we listen. What helps us follow Jesus more closely?*

Prayers: *(Offer personal intentions)*

Continued on next page

On Vocation

“If we had faith, we would see God hidden in the priest like a light behind glass, like wine mixed with water.”

Saint John Marie Vianney

Liturgical Resources for Vocations Sunday 2014



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Prayer Service (continued)

The Lord's Prayer

Sign of Peace: *Share a sign of peace with each person.*

Closing Prayer: Dear God, You made everyone special in their own way. Please help us to find our vocation in life. Guide us to choose the right path in serving you. Amen.

(Taken from Dear God, Open My Heart - A collection of children's vocation prayers, page 29 Available from NCCV)

Closing Song: “He's Got the Whole World in His Hands” or “The Summons”



On Vocation

“The Christian must be a luminous person, who brings light, who always gives light! ... A light that is not his or hers, but rather a gift from God, and a gift from Jesus. And we bring this light. If the Christian allows this light to be extinguished, his life no longer has meaning; he is a Christian by name only. It is God himself who gives us this light, and we offer it to others. Shining lamps! This is the Christian vocation”.

Pope Francis

A day in the life of a not so typical life



- **Seminarian:** Robert Smyth
- **Diocesan Priest:** Father John Coughlan
- **Religious Sister:** Sister Maria Sidorova
- **Religious Brother:** Brother Martin Bennett Ofm Cap
- **Missionary Brother:** An Br Mícheál (Brother Michael O'Donoghue)

Council for Vocations of the
Irish Catholic Bishops' Conference

www.vocations.ie | www.catholicbishops.ie

A Day in the Life of a Seminarian

Robert Smyth

06:15 My alarm sounds. I'm on sacristy duty this week, which means that I have to head to the oratory a little earlier than normal to prepare for Morning Prayer and Mass. **07:00** 'O God, come to our aid...' is intoned on the other side of the oratory as the seminary community comes to life for another day. Each day begins with prayer, thanking God for the many opportunities He gives us and asking His help and direction for the day ahead. **07:15** 'The Lord bless us, and keep us from all evil and bring us to everlasting life. Amen.' Morning prayer leads us to twenty minutes of silent meditation. I let myself be distracted for a minute, looking around the oratory at the other men pursuing God's call to Holy Priesthood. I thank Him for the community he has gathered to share this journey together... and so begins my mediation. **07:35** An efficient process follows which sees the choir for the day rehearse the hymns for Mass, the clergy vest and the final preparations in the oratory complete. The organ sounds the first note of the Entrance Hymn at 07:45 – we are blessed to have an exceptionally gifted organist in our midst. The standard of liturgical music in Maynooth is very high – those who sing well pray twice!

After breakfast in Pugin Hall, I begin lectures at **09.00**. I'm in my second year, studying philosophy in the neighbouring NUI, Maynooth. I'm blessed in many ways, but particularly in that I love studying philosophy. Far from a removed and purely hypothetical subject, it trains you to think for yourself that is a life-skill in itself. From 9am to 6pm, a seminarian's day is similar to that of any third-level student. Lectures, tutorials, reading, essay-writing, study in the library – all form part of a standard day. Academic formation is but a quarter of the plan that the Church has for the formation of her priests however. There are four 'pillars' of formation – human, spiritual, academic and pastoral. With these in mind, additional activities fill our days. Spiritual direction (one-on-one meetings with a spiritual direction, often by a warm fireplace), formation meetings (one-on-one meetings with a director of formation), pastoral work (for me, working with people with mental health difficulties in a HSE facility), singing lessons, organ lessons, choir practice all add to the day's workload, not to mention laundry! The formation is broad and gives a breadth of experience that few walks of life can rival.

18:00 The community gather in the oratory again to pray the Angelus, followed by Evening Prayer at 18:10. After the Rosary, I pay my third visit of the day to Pugin Hall – for supper. Following supper, there is time for reading, prayer, recreation, choir practice or even pastoral work. **21:00** Several evenings per week, the community gather for Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament - a time of intimate prayer with Jesus. Night prayer follows at **21:45** – a time to examine my conscience to ask God's mercy for my failings of the day and to thank him for his many blessings. Once the Blessed Sacrament has been reserved and the Marian hymn sung, the day formally draws to a close. I say formally as it's not uncommon for friends to gather for a good chat over tea, snooker, table tennis and other distractions. A healthy balance between prayer, work and recreation is important. The patterns we establish now as seminarians will sustain us in our priesthood. So too will the friends we make. Another day begins after a good night's sleep. *Robert Smyth*



A Day in the Life of a Diocesan Priest

Father John Coughlan

When I was in my teens, if someone had said to me that I would be a priest, I wouldn't have believed them! However, I was ordained priest in 2008 after seven years formation. My current full-time ministry is further study at St Patrick's College, Maynooth, having previously ministered in parish and third-level chaplaincy.

A typical day for me begins at about 6:45am when the radio comes on. Following the morning rituals of washing and dressing, I pray *Morning Prayer* before joining the seminary community for Mass at 7:45am. After Mass, I have breakfast in Pugin Hall, usually with the seminarians. 'Pugin' as it's known, is a large dining-room in Maynooth.

I start my daily work sometime around 8:45am. The area of study that I am focusing on is 'Faith and Culture', particularly the question of secularisation. What does 'secular' mean? Are we now a secular country? Are we secularising? These are some of the questions that interest me. They are also important questions for the Church to discuss, explore and enter into conversation with others about.

Just before 11am, I break for coffee. Usually I pray the *Office of Readings* around this time.

Come 12:30pm, I take a break from my work and join with friends and colleagues for lunch. After lunch I try to take some quiet time. Sometimes I take a walk in the grounds to the rear of the College, at other times I will take a moment in one or other of the Chapels that dot the campus. I carry the Divine Office (prayers that a priest recites each day) in an app on my phone. I pray *Prayer During the Day* around this time. Around 2pm I am back at the desk.

The seminary community meets at 6:10pm for *Evening Prayer*. Sometimes I join them; at other times I recite the *office* in my room, before the evening meal at 6:30pm. Depending on my workload, I may do some more work after supper, or relax with some friends. I enjoy going to the cinema and to the odd live show at Dublin's Vicar Street.

I am currently reading *Not in Your Lifetime: The Assassination of JFK* by Anthony Summers. A friend of mine gave it to me for Christmas. For spiritual reading, I am reading *Meeting Jesus Again for the First Time* by Marcus J. Borg.

Being a night owl, I have to force myself to be in bed about 11:30pm. I pray *Night Prayer* and put out the light, thankful to the Lord for the day that has been and the life that he has called me to live.

Fr John Coughlan



A Day in the Life of a Religious Sister

Sr Maria Sidorova

I live in a contemplative community and though my days might look to an outsider pretty much the same and perhaps even dull or wasted, there is more than enough of variety, surprises and opportunities to learn and experience something new in the most ordinary days. Every morning my alarm clock tries hard to wake me up. Well, most of the times it does wake me up but it is not the alarm clock that makes me get up. I start my day with gratitude to God for the gift of a new day.

The community gathers in the chapel for the first common prayer at 7am. We start with a hymn to the Holy Spirit, entrusting ourselves, all that is ahead of us as well as the whole world to his guidance. What follows is one of the most precious moments of my day. We have thirty minutes of silent meditation which I love to spend with the Gospel reading for the day. I try to listen to God's word as it shapes my way of thinking and being in the concrete situations of my life. Then we proceed with praying the *Liturgy of the Hours*, namely the invitatory and the morning prayer. During the day we come back at different hours to pray the other parts of the *Office* around which our whole life is centered. Nevertheless, it's not just about saying the prayers in the chapel. Whether I am working, eating, doing my studies, reading a book, playing the piano, walking in the garden, spending time in solitude or with the sisters, I know that every minute of the day, every breath I take is an expression of prayer.



What I like about “the Redemptoristine way” of spending the day is that every hour, prayer or activity is in memory of some aspect of Jesus' life. For example, the three hours of silence in the afternoon are in memory of Jesus' suffering on the cross. Our work time is in memory of the hidden life of Jesus in Nazareth. However, our “remembering” is not only about the past, it's rather a call to enter the mystery of redemption very much at work in our own times. It means that I am called not only to be united to Christ but also to every human being as they go through all kinds of situations in their day.



As a consecrated person I have given my entire life to God. My time, my talents and my limitations are at his service and at the service of others. Please God I will make my Solemn Profession in July. I am looking forward to that day very much, but I am also looking forward to tomorrow, to another ordinary day, a gift from God.



www.rednuns.com

Sr Maria Sidorova

A Day in the Life of a Religious Brother

Brother Martin Bennett OfmCap

A typical day for me usually begins with a short, yet fervent, prayer - 'Dear Lord, just five more minutes' – prompted by the sound of my alarm at 6.15am. I join the rest of the Friars, and members of the public who join us, for meditation at 6.30am, followed by Mass and Morning Prayer at 7am. I am in my 6th year with the Capuchin Franciscans and currently studying Theology & Philosophy in All Hallows College, Drumcondra. I live in community, or Fraternity as we call it, with 7 other Friars in Raheny. Fraternity, meaning Brotherhood, is at the core of our lives as Friars. We strive to live this out with each other, and with those we minister too, through our lives of prayer and service to the poor.

No day is the same here. As a student, during term, a lot of my time is taken up with lectures, reading and essays. Apart from this, there is always something to be done around the Friary, from grocery shopping to solving various computer problems, being the youngest, it is assumed that I am the computer expert!! Our Friaries are open, warm and welcoming places for all who visit. Raheny, in particular, is a place of prayer and stillness for the many people



who come here each day. Our chapel is open from 6am each morning until 9pm at night, with Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament all day. Our prayer is open to the public and, as well as in the morning, we are joined by local people for meditation, rosary and evening prayer from 5pm – 6pm each day and, in turn, they form part of our extended Fraternity.

As part of our service to the poor, under the leadership of Brother Kevin Crowley, we run the Capuchin Day Centre for Homeless People in Bow Street, serving over 700 meals each day and 1600 food parcels each Wednesday to those most in need. This is a very tangible expression of our Fraternity and follows closely in the footsteps of our founder, Saint Francis of Assisi. The Centre has been running for over 40 years and now provides, in addition to food, a Doctor, Nurse, Dentist and Chiropodist.

Since joining I have had the opportunity to live in Oxford and Zambia, working in varied apostolates with young people, drug addicts, psychiatric patients and the homeless. I am part of our Provincial Vocations Team, which promotes our way of life, and have worked to develop our on-line presence through our Vocations Blog, Facebook and Twitter. Our life is a life of Fraternity, prayer and service, lived in the midst of the world, offering a 'welcome' to all we encounter.



Brother Martin Bennett OfmCap

Capuchin Franciscan

A Day in the Life of a Missionary Brother

Brother Michael O'Donoghue

My name is Br Michael O'Donoghue, known here as Br Michael, a Christian Brother from Tipperary. I spent most of my life teaching in Ireland – in Dublin, Monasterevin, Tralee, Kilkenny and Thurles. I have been here in Zambia for 12 years and am based in Mufulira. Teaching Maths and Science in Mufulira High School has occupied me for seven years. It is a large Government school of some 1,500 pupils. I was then appointed as Mission Development Officer for Zambia. This involves coordinating requests and applications for funds and then monitoring the work and the expenditure and reporting. In recent weeks I have had the pleasant task of overseeing work on a new library in Mazabuka, a new classroom block in Maz, a new bakery operating in Lukulu, a new computer room in Livingstone (Ngwenya C. S.), teachers houses refurbished in Mongu, a new maternity unit in Mokambo, new diesel injector bench in Kaoma and new roofing for the AV and practical subjects block at St Edmunds in Mazabuka.



It is wonderful to see so much infrastructure being put in place for poor people and we are very grateful to *Misean Cara*, to *Edmund Rice Development*, to *Gorta* and to the many schools and other donors in Ireland whose support is so essential in our efforts to empower so many poor and marginalized people. As can be seen, with so much monitoring and other support work to be done, I spend a lot of time moving around. But when I am at home in Mufulira with my two Zambian companions, Br Lubasi Simasiku and Br Egidious Chalo, my day would be something like this – but it varies quite a lot:

06.15 Morning Prayer **06.40** Breakfast usually Porridge **07.15** Out on my bike for a spin before it gets hot – good for my heart ! **08.15** Work in the office - applications, emails, phone calls, reports, finances etc etc. Just now I am working on some twelve applications and some thirty reports. There is a lot happening. **10.30** A cup of coffee to rejuvenate myself. The other two Brothers are away teaching in Chibolya C.S. **13.15** Lunch/Dinner with the Brothers who have returned from school. **14.00** A short siesta to avoid the heat of the day. **15.30** Back in the office to continue to deal with correspondence, do planning, research etc. **17.30** Mass and evening prayer either here or at the local Dominican Convent. **18.30** Evening meal - leisurely and chatty. 19.45 Some quiet time - reading, reflecting, relaxing. **21.00** Watching TV - often soccer - my two companions are mad Man Utd supporters. **11.00** Lock up and then off to bed.

At home also and in between times, I check on progress at Chibolya community school (for poor Children c. 360), help out in Murundu Development centre with computers (some afternoons), check on the upgrading of WaSH facilities (Water, Sanitation and Hygiene in eight schools), provide support for feeding/nutrition programmes for elderly poor, orphans and vulnerable mothers/babies and presently just now buying electrical and plumbing items to equip our new maternity block in Mokambo.

Life is very interesting and sometimes challenging. We are very grateful to our friends and supporters in Ireland without whose assistance we could not function. We pray God's Blessing on all those who help us. Beannacht Dé go Fial oraibh uile.

An Br Micheál

10 Things That Promote Vocations

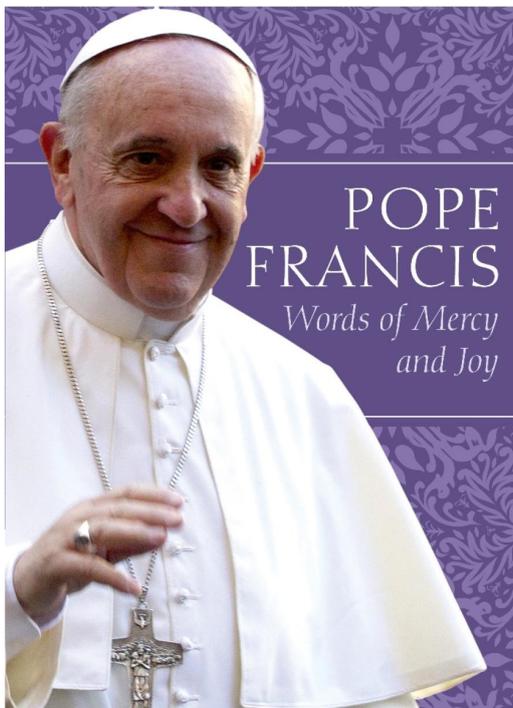
Father David Toups

For all Catholics:

1. Pray for an increase in vocations to the priesthood and consecrated life. Jesus says in Matthew 9:38 “to beg the master of the harvest to send laborers into the vineyard.” If we want more priests, sisters and brothers, we all need to ask.

2. Teach young people how to pray. Pope Benedict XVI said that unless we teach our youth how to pray, they will never hear God calling them into a deeper relationship with Him and into the discipleship of the Church.

3. Invite active young adults and teens to consider a vocation to the priesthood or consecrated life. A simple, sincere comment should not be underestimated. An easy way to do this can be remembered by four letters: ICNU. “John, I see in you (ICNU) the qualities that would make a good priest, and I want to encourage you to pray about it.” It is a non-invasive way to encourage openness to a religious vocation.



4. Make it attractive. Show the priesthood for what it truly is – a call to be a spiritual father to the whole family of faith. Similarly, the consecrated life for a young woman is a call to be united to Christ in a unique way, and to be a spiritual mother to those she encounters in her life and service. The challenge for priests and religious is to be joyful models of their vocations.

5. Preach it, brother! Vocations must be talked about regularly if a “vocation culture” is to take root in parishes and homes. This means, first and foremost, the people need to hear about vocations from priests through

homilies, prayers of the faithful, and discussions in the classroom. Vocations kept out of sight are out of mind.



(continued on next page)

On Contemplative Life

Bishop Philip Boyce

They may well be separated from the busy world, with all its interests and pleasures, but contemplative monasteries remain very near to us with their prayers. They pray for us but we are normally unaware of the graces we receive through their lives of quiet dedication to the Lord. Although they are hidden from society, people of faith have trust in the prayers of nuns and monks and friars. It is sufficient to visit any contemplative monastery to become aware of the constant stream of people who come with prayer intentions, trusting in the intercession of those who have completely dedicated their lives to God in continuous prayer and penance.



The busy world often passes by our contemplative monasteries, heedlessly unaware of their existence or of the spiritual influence they exert on society. Parishes, especially those who have such communities near at hand, could draw attention to their presence by placing a notice in their parish bulletins and on their online and digital platforms. Catechists could mention this way of life, to which some young girls or boys might be called, and even take a school class to visit them and spend an hour with some of the enclosed women or men whose life always fascinates young people. Although not a very common vocation in life, the Lord does call some, and will continue to do so, to this type of dedicated life on behalf of the Church.

The Church is well aware of the importance of the contemplative life. The Second Vatican Council (1962 – 1965) acknowledged the important role of contemplative communities in the Church. It said they were “a fount of heavenly blessings” and that they “lend lustre to God’s people with abundant fruits of holiness, sway them by their example and enlarge the Church by their hidden apostolic fruitfulness” (*Perfectae Caritatis*, 7).

All popes in recent times have expressed their appreciation for this way of life. Perhaps the most striking witness to the whole world on the value of a hidden life of prayer was given by Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI, who, on account of advanced age and diminished physical strength, retired from the Petrine ministry on 11 February 2013 and chose “to devote himself even more to prayer and meditation” in a secluded monastery in the Vatican gardens. This is an important reminder to us all of the apostolic value of a life completely dedicated to God.



Contemplative communities are power houses of prayer, drawing down many graces on our troubled world. In their own silent but effective way they contribute enormously to the work of re-evangelisation of our secularised world.



Bishop Philip Boyce OCD (Order of Discalced Carmelites) is Bishop of Raphoe and Chairman of the Council for Clergy of the Irish Catholic Bishops’ Conference. This article was prepared originally for *Pro Orantibus Day* 2013.

The Work of a Vocations Director

Father Willie Purcell

In Canon 385 we are told that the bishop is required to foster all vocations to ministry and religious life though with “a special care for priestly and missionary vocations”. Importantly the task of fostering vocations is not just the responsibility of the bishop but of the whole Christian community (Canon 233). In these two canons we see that the office of Vocations Director is a reflection of the bishop’s commitment to encouraging the growth of all vocations.

The 1997 document *In Verbo Tuo* which came out of The Congress on Vocations to the Priesthood and to Consecrated Life in Europe reinforces the need for the community to foster a culture of vocations. This document encourages the support by dioceses of all vocations whether ordained or lay, but that this should include a particular support for priesthood and consecrated life.



So what does a vocations director do? It is the responsibility of the Vocations Director to recruit the next generation of priests for his diocese. Easier said than done. Some of the key areas are going around different parishes, youth groups, ecclesial youth movements and schools, talking to young people about vocations and the possibility that God indeed might be calling one of them to a vocation to the priesthood.

If a man expresses an interest in the priesthood, the vocations director meets with him personally to help him discern whether or not God may be calling him to the priesthood. In my diocese we have a monthly discernment group meeting where young men gather who have thought about the priesthood. The group meets at 7pm on the first Friday of each month for a Holy Hour with the diocesan community and then meets to reflect on different areas of priesthood and discernment.

Careers fairs in both secondary and third level colleges are also an opportunity to distribute literature and prayer cards for discernment. The vocations director also plans different diocesan events throughout the year to motivate young people to think about vocations.

Once a man decides to apply for seminary, it is the job of the vocations director to guide him through the application process, which includes an application form, a biography and an interview with the vocations board. If he’s accepted by the bishop to be a seminarian, then the process of formation begins and the journey towards priesthood gets underway. On ordination day, it is the role of the vocations director to formally present the candidate(s), in the name of God’s people, to the bishop for ordination to the priesthood.

The vocations director needs the help and prayers of all to pray for vocations and for our seminarians so that God may send us good and holy priests. For every vocations director it is a privilege to witness the formation of the future priests of our dioceses.

Father Willie Purcell, National Coordinator for Diocesan Vocations

Social Media and Vocations Sunday



“I invite you to listen to and follow Jesus, and to allow yourselves to be transformed interiorly by his words, which 'are spirit and life' (Jn 6:62).”

“Let us dispose our hearts therefore to being 'good soil', by listening, receiving and living out the word, and thus bearing fruit.”

“Today too, Jesus lives and walks along the paths of ordinary life in order to draw near to everyone..... I turn now to those who are well disposed to listen to the voice of Christ that rings out in the Church and to understand what their own vocation is.”

**- Pope Francis
Message for World
Day of Prayer for
Vocations 2014**

Suggested Tweets

Follow us on Twitter @NVocations

We have prepared a series of tweets which can be used for Vocations Sunday 2014 and we are suggesting the hashtag #vocations2014

Tweet 1:

Message for Vocations Sunday 2014 on the theme: Vocations as a sign of hope founded in faith (paste link to Papal message) #vocations2014

Tweet 2:

The harvest indeed is great but the labourers are

few - pray the Lord of the harvest to send more labourers to his field.

#vocations2014

Tweet 3:

We are praying for our Holy Father Pope Francis and that young people will be inspired by him to say yes to God!

#vocations2014

Tweet 4:

Today is the 51st World Day of Prayer for Vocations on the

theme: Vocations, Witness to the Truth [#vocations2014](#)

Tweet 5:

Jesus continues to call people today. He continues to say "Come, follow me" (Mk 10:21) #vocations2014

Tweet 6:

"Vocations to the priesthood and the consecrated life are born out of a personal encounter with Christ.." - BXV1 #vocations2014

On Vocation

“We need young men too, especially young men who will have the courage to say ‘yes’ to the call of Christ, and follow him as priests.”

Archbishop Charles J Brown,
Papal Nuncio to Ireland

Prayers for Vocations



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- **Pope Francis**
Message for World Day of Prayer for Vocations 2014

Prayer for Vocations

God, Our Father,

Thank you for your son, Jesus, our Good Shepherd, who leads us to fullness of life.

By our baptism, we are called by name to continue the mission of Jesus.

Give us the grace to listen with an open heart to the voice of Jesus and to respond generously with a joyful spirit.

Strengthen the men and women you called to serve through marriage, the single life, the diaconate, priesthood, and consecrated life.

Guide all who are discerning their Christian vocation.

In gratitude we offer this prayer through Jesus and the Holy Spirit, united with you forever.

Amen.

Christ Has No Body

Christ has no body but yours,
No hands, no feet on earth but yours,
Yours are the eyes with which he looks

Compassion on this world,
Yours are the feet with which he walks to do good,
Yours are the hands, with which he blesses all the world.

Yours are the hands, yours are the feet,

Yours are the eyes, you are his body.

Christ has no body now but yours,

No hands, no feet on earth but yours,

Yours are the eyes with which he looks

compassion on this world.

Christ has no body now on earth but yours.

Saint Teresa of Avila

(1515-1582)

On Vocation

“It is not a time to be lamenting; it is a time to be rising to the challenge with courage and Christian enthusiasm.”

Archbishop Diarmuid Martin

Prayers for Vocations



“I invite you to listen to and follow Jesus, and to allow yourselves to be transformed interiorly by his words, which 'are spirit and life' (Jn 6:62).”

“Let us dispose our hearts therefore to being 'good soil', by listening, receiving and living out the word, and thus bearing fruit.”

“Today too, Jesus lives and walks along the paths of ordinary life in order to draw near to everyone..... I turn now to those who are well disposed to listen to the voice of Christ that rings out in the Church and to understand what their own vocation is.”

- **Pope Francis**
Message for World
Day of Prayer for
Vocations 2014

Prayer for Guidance for young people

Lord, I know you love me and have great plans for me.

But sometimes I am overwhelmed by the thought of my future.

Show me how to walk forward one day at a time.

May I hear your call to a life which will allow me to love as only I can, and allow me to serve others with the special gifts you have given me.

Amen



Prayer for a generous heart

Father in Heaven, you have blessed us with many gifts.

You chose us before the world began,

To be your adopted sons and daughters,

And to live through love in your presence.

Give us wisdom and insight to know your purpose;

Give us courage to follow where your Spirit leads us,

Give us generosity to serve you in our brothers and sisters.

We make this prayer through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Based on Ephesians 1:3 ff.

On Vocation

“Wherever there is life, fervour and a desire to bring Christ to others, genuine vocations will arise.” (*Evangelii Gaudium* 107)

Pope Francis

Prayers for Vocations



“I invite you to listen to and follow Jesus, and to allow yourselves to be transformed interiorly by his words, which 'are spirit and life' (Jn 6:62).”

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**- Pope Francis
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Vocations 2014**

Meileann muilté Dé go mall ach

Meileann siad go mion.

Mílaois is mílaois aríst a mheil muilté Dé

Teachtairí groíúla le hanamacha spreagúla.

Casadh an rotha is scaipeadh scéil Chríost

Creideamh a Ghaois i gcéin is i gcóngar.

Tá meitheal de dhíth do rothaí an mhuilinn,

Tríú mílaois, maidí an rotha ceal chúnaimh.

Sín chugam Do lámha is glac leis an uain

Muilté Dé a chasadh is d'anam a shásamh.

Meileann muidne na muilté go mall ach go mion

Meil linn, a chara cléibh.

Éamonn Ó Loingsigh

Feachtas Árd-deoise Thuama – Gairmeacha

www.tuamarchdiocese.org

On Vocation

“We should never lose faith in God’s power to raise up women and men in every age who are living and courageous witnesses to his love. Our challenge is to have the courage and the faith to invite those we believe and who may have received that call to come forward and to discern with the Church what the Lord asks of them.”

Cardinal Seán Brady

Pope Francis

Evangelii Gaudium - The Joy of the Gospel

What *Evangelii Gaudium* says about the Church

- The Church is a community of missionary disciples... we... seek those who have fallen away, stand at the crossroads and welcome the outcast (24)
- Throughout the world, let us be permanently in a state of mission (25)
- All renewal in the Church must have mission as its goal if it not to fall prey to a kind of ecclesial introversion (27)
- The deposit of faith is one thing.... The way it is expressed is another (41)
- Our church door should always be open The Eucharist is not a prize for the perfect but a powerful medicine and nourishment for the weak (47)
- I prefer a Church which is bruised, hurting and dirty because it has been out on the streets, rather than a Church which is unhealthy from being confined and clinging to its own security (49)
- The Church is called to be at the service of a difficult dialogue (74)
- In some people we see an ostentatious preoccupation for the liturgy, for doctrine and for the Church's prestige... In this way, the life of the Church turns into a museum piece or something, which is the property of a select few. (95)
- God save us from a worldly Church with superficial spiritual and pastoral trappings (97)
- The Church is first and foremost a people advancing on its pilgrim way towards God (111)
- Salvation... is for everyone.... Jesus did not tell the apostles to form an exclusive and elite group (113)
- The Church must be a place of mercy freely given, where everyone can feel welcomed, loved, forgiven and encouraged to live the good life of the Gospel (114)

Pope Francis Tweets:

- The world makes us look towards ourselves, our possessions, our desires. The Gospel invites us to be open to others, to share with the poor.
- No one saves oneself. The community is essential.
- I cannot imagine a Christian who does not know how to smile. May we joyfully witness to our faith.
- Dear young people, let us not be satisfied with a mediocre life. Be amazed by what is true and beautiful, what is of God!
- We are called to live our baptism every day, as new creatures, clothed in Christ.
- How powerful prayer is! May we never lose the courage to say: Lord, give us your peace.
- This is Christian hope: that the future is in God's hands.

Pope Francis

Evangelii Gaudium - The Joy of the Gospel

What *Evangelii Gaudium* says about a Spirituality of Joy

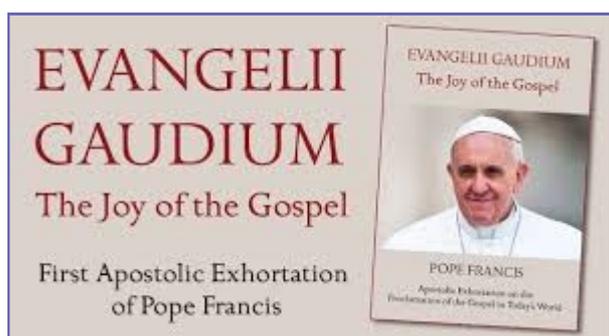
- There are Christians whose lives seem like Lent without Easter (6)
- An evangelizer must never look like someone who has just come back from a funeral (10)
- Evangelization with joy becomes beauty in the liturgy as part of our daily concern to spread goodness (24)
- A missionary heart Never closes itself off, never retreats into its own security, never opts for rigidity or defensiveness (45)
- Practical relativism consists in acting as if God did not exist, making decisions as if the poor did not exist, setting goals as if others did not exist, working as if people who have not received the Gospel did not exist. (80)
- The biggest threat ... a grey pragmatism of the daily life of the Church, in which all appears to proceed normally, while I reality faith is wearing down and degenerating into small-mindedness (83)
- Our challenge is not so much atheism as the need to respond adequately to many people's thirst for God, lest they try to satisfy it with alienating solutions or a disembodied Jesus who demands nothing of us with regards to others. (89)
- We should appear as joyful messengers of challenging proposals, guardians of the goodness and beauty which shine forth in a life of fidelity to the Gospel (168)
- An authentic faith – which is never comfortable or completely personal – always involves a deep desire to change to change the world (182)
- (faith) involves working to eliminate the structural causes of poverty and to promote the integral development of the poor, as well as small daily acts of solidarity (188)
- This is why I want a Church which is poor and for the poor. They have much to teach us (198)
- The dignity of the human person and the common good rank higher than the comfort of those who refuse to renounce their privileges (218)
- Without prolonged moments of adoration, of prayerful encounter with the word, of sincere conversation with the Lord, our work easily becomes meaningless... The Church needs the deep breath of prayer.... The prayerful reading of God's word and the perpetual adoration of the Eucharist are growing at every level in ecclesial life (262)
- Let us not say that things are harder today; they are simply different (263)
- The best incentive for sharing the Gospel comes from contemplating it with love, lingering over its pages and reading it with the heart (264)
- Sometimes we are tempted to be that kind of Christian who keeps the Lord's wounds at arm's length (270)
- There is no greater freedom than that of allowing oneself to be guided by the Holy Spirit, renouncing the attempt to plan and control everything to the last details, and instead letting him enlighten, guide and direct us, leading us wherever he wills (280)
- (In Mary) we see that humility and tenderness are not virtues of the weak but of the strong who need not treat others poorly in order to feel important themselves (288)

Pope Francis

Evangelii Gaudium - The Joy of the Gospel

What *Evangelii Gaudium* says about Ministry

- Obey his call to go forth from our own comfort zones (20)
- God's word is unpredictable in its power... The Church has to accept this 'unruly freedom of the word' (22)
- The parish is not an outdated institution... it really is in contact with the homes and lives of its people, and does not become a useless structure out of touch with people or a self-absorbed group made up of the chosen few. (28)
- Pastoral ministry is not obsessed with the disjointed transmission of a multitude of doctrines to be insistently imposed..... concentrate on the essentials, on what is most beautiful, most grand, most appealing and at the same time most necessary.(35)
- (danger) speak more about law than about grace, more about the Church than about Christ, more about the Pope than about God's word (38)
- Go above all to.... The poor and the sick, those who are usually despised and overlooked, those who cannot repay you (48)
- Priests who are obsessed with protecting their free time (81)
- Wherever there is life, fervour and a desire to bring Christ to others, genuine vocations will arise (107)
- The homily
 - Cannot be a form of entertainment;
 - Should avoid the semblance of a speech or a lecture;
 - The Lord, more than his minister, will be the centre of attention (138)



To read *the full text of Evangelii Gaudium* (The Joy of the Gospel) please scan this QR code with your smartphone or see www.vatican.va.

Hard copies of *Evangelii Gaudium* are available from Veritas bookshops or from www.veritas.ie.

Pope Francis:

“Dear young people, do not bury your talents, the gifts that God has given you! Do not be afraid to dream of great things!”



Books on Priesthood and Religious Life



“I invite you to listen to and follow Jesus, and to allow yourselves to be transformed interiorly by his words, which 'are spirit and life' (Jn 6:62).”

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Veritas Publications

Priesthood Today: Ministry in a Changing Church - Edited by Eamonn Conway

Deacons: Ministers of Christ and of God's Mysteries - Gearóid Dullea

Ministry Now: New Approaches for a Changing Church - Martin Kennedy

I Will Come Myself - Kevin Scallon

Heaven Sent: My Life Through the Rosary - Gabriel Harty

A Fire in the Forest: Religious Life in Ireland - Edited by Michael J. Breen

VERITAS

Other Publishers

On Shepherding: Reflections on the Priesthood - Edited by Gearóid Dullea (Columba Press)

Led by a Thread: Following God's Call to Priesthood - David Forrester

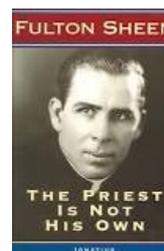
(Redemptorist Publications)

Vocation: Singing the Lord's Song - Stephen Platten

(SPCK Publishing)

The Priest is not his Own - Fulton Sheen

(Ignatius Press)



On Vocation

“Vocations are born in prayer and prayer, and only in prayer can they persevere and bear fruit....”

Pope Francis

Contact Information



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Diocesan Vocations

Father Willie Purcell
National Vocations
Coordinator
National Vocations Office
St. Kieran's College
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Resource Credits

These resources have been compiled and edited by Father Willie Purcell, National Coordinator for Diocesan Vocations and Ms Brenda Drumm, Communications Officer with the Catholic Communications Office on behalf of the Bishops' Council for Vocations. Additional audio and video resources for Vocations Sunday are available on www.vocations.ie and also on www.catholicbishops.ie.

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