

National Office for Vocation Vocation Assembly Script

Sign of the Cross

SLIDE 1

Introduction to the Assembly

This week we are focusing our assemblies on praying for Vocations, we will take time to look at what vocation is and how we can be called. Everyone is called by God, all God's people are called to holiness, and that holiness is available to all, in and through their particular vocations.

SLIDE 2

Pope Francis this year has themed our day of prayer for Vocation, St Joseph: The Dream of Vocation. He urges each of us to look at St Joseph as a model of God's invitation to service within the Church.

As a part of Pope Francis' message he says 'God makes our greatest dreams come true', today let's think about where we might be called to, what is God's plan for us? And how can we serve Him, through the different states of life he can call us to.

SLIDE 3

Read the Gospel Reading for Sunday:

John: 10:11-18

Jesus said: 'I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd is one who lays down his life for his sheep. The hired man, since he is not the shepherd and the sheep do not belong to him, abandons the sheep and runs away as soon as he sees a wolf coming, and then the wolf attacks and scatters the sheep; this is because he is only a hired man and has no concern for the sheep.

'I am the good shepherd; I know my own and my own know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for my sheep. And there are other sheep I have that are not of this fold, and these I have to lead as well. They too will listen to my voice, and there will be only one flock, and one shepherd.

'The Father loves me, because I lay down my life in order to take it up again. No one takes it from me; I lay it down of my own free will, and as it is in my power to lay it down, so it is in my power to take it up again; and this is the command I have been given by my Father.'

Short Reflection: The good shepherd knows each of his sheep by name and they all recognise his voice. The Shepherd calls them, they listen to him and follow him.

Jesus is our good shepherd; He calls each of us in his family to listen to his voice and to follow Him.

SLIDE 4

Our VOCATION or CALLING is an invitation from God that begins from our Baptismal Vocation.

When we are baptised, we become sons and daughters of God, and as family, we share in the vocation of Jesus... to make God known and loved in this world, and to build up God's Kingdom here on earth.

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As we grow in life, we are called to live out our vocation in different ways:

Single Life, Married Life, Ordination, Religious or Consecrated.

Let's take a look at each one of these beautiful states of life.

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Single Life: It is commonly from within the single state that we discover the first dimension of our vocation, our call to holiness as a baptised person. The other dimensions are our state of life and our work. The natural desire to marry and have a family leads most Christians to marriage as their chosen state of life. But marriage is only confirmed as your vocation when you meet your spouse and exchange your vows. Similarly, the vocation to the priesthood or religious life is confirmed by a bishop ordaining you or a superior receiving your vows. So for these three states of life there is external confirmation by the Church that this is your vocation.

Married Life: All God's people are called to holiness, and that holiness is available to all in and through their particular vocations. The Church teaches that married couples and Christian parents should follow their own proper path to holiness by faithful love, sustaining one another in grace throughout the entire length of their lives. The call to love is central to marriage as a sacrament and is also the heart of marriage as a vocation.

The Church teaches us that marriage is a natural vocation as it corresponds to human nature as created by God. God created us with a natural longing to be loved by another and to raise a family. Pope Francis in his letter for Vocations Sunday expresses that 'It is love that gives meaning to life', through the joy of marriage there is a deeper call of joy to follow Christ and to totally give one's life in love to spouse and children.

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Religious life: is the form of consecrated life that Catholics are most familiar with. There are hundreds of different religious orders or congregations, each of which contributes a particular gift to the life of the Church. Within religious life the main distinction is between monks and nuns who live in an enclosed convent or monastery and religious who work outside the cloister, for example in education, health-care or evangelisation.

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Ordained: The ordained ministry will remain the living sign and instrument of Christ the Good Shepherd this which is reflected on in our Gospel read today. The pastoral love of Jesus our High Priest is made present in the pastoral work of bishops, priests and deacons, the three ordained ministries of the Catholic Church. Vocations Sunday is traditionally a day where we pray for vocations to the Priesthood and Religious Life.

Consecrated Life: To be "Consecrated" means "Set apart" in this case - for God. There are many ways to be consecrated... all these consecrations in our tradition, are rooted in our baptismal consecration.

Besides ordination, and consecrated religious (sisters, brothers, monks, nuns etc), you can be set apart for God by being a consecrated virgin or hermit for example. There are also many new forms of consecration life that are coming to life in the church too. Lots of information can be found on this way of life at the National Office for Vocation Website which will be given to you at the end of this assembly.

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Watch the video

SLIDE 10

God calls each of us and if you need help there are lots of people to support you. This is only a snap shot, there is so much more to each state of life God can call you to. You can get advice from your local Parish Priest, A Religious Brother or Sister, School or University Chaplain, an RE Teacher and the National office for Vocation who will help and guide you.

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You can also download the free GodCalls App which will help you find out more information on vocation, guidance through prayer, quizzes and facts on the Saints.

SLIDE 11

Let us take a moment of prayer now and in silence lets ask God what His dream for us is. Lets be open to what he is calling us to.

We now pray the prayer on the screen together:

Prayer to St Joseph

Blessed St Joseph,
You listened in the depth of your heart to the call of God for you
to participate in his plan for the salvation of the world,
you responded with faith to that invitation.
Help me listen for the call of God in my life,
help me understand what the Holy Spirit is asking of me,
and help me be open to follow that invitation,
with courage and a trusting heart.
May your fatherly hand guide me and keep me safe.
Through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

End in the Sign of the Cross.