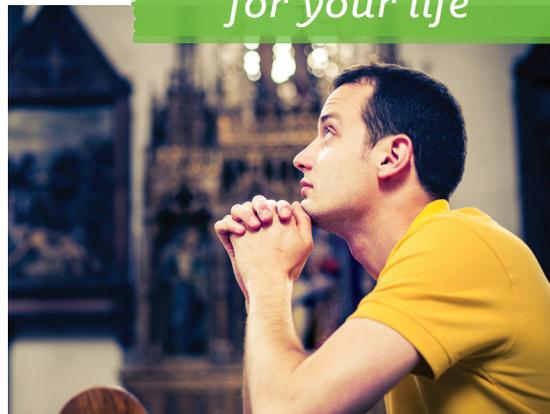


FROM THE OFFICE OF VOCATIONS IN THE DIOCESE OF LANSING



ASK
SEEK
FIND

*The will of God
for your life*





INSIDE THIS BOOK

- 4 Six point discernment process
- 7 What are vocations to discern?
- 8 Practice of prayer:
Intimacy with God
- 10 Methods of praying
- 19 Prayer exercises
- 20 Signs of a call

*“O Jesus, my Love, at last
I have found my vocation,
my vocation is Love! ...
Yes, I have found my place
in the Church, and it is you,
O my God, who have given me
this place ... in the heart of
the Church, my Mother, I will
be Love! ... Thus I shall be all
things; thus my dream shall
be realized!!!”*

WHAT IS DISCERNMENT? HOW DO I BEGIN?



Take, O Lord, and receive all my liberty, my memory, my understanding, and all my will. You have given me all that I am and all that I possess. Take and receive my body, my speaking, my hearing, my seeing, my feeling, my heart, my nuptial and life-creating faculties. You have given me all that I am and all that I possess. I restore it all to you. That you may dispose of all according to your will. Give me only your love and your grace. With these I will be rich enough and have no more to desire. Amen

— “A Prayer of Surrender to God” by Father Matt Fedewa
based on the “Suscipe” of St. Ignatius Loyola

DISCERNMENT is about prayerfully weighing the good options in your life and choosing the one God has designed for you. Everyone has a vocation. To learn God’s will for each of us with clarity and peace takes an awareness of His movement in our lives. This leads us on the path that makes us most fully alive and to the calling in which we will glorify God the most in our life. This takes time, an open and seeking heart and the work of prayer.

The path to true discernment requires continuous conversion and striving for a virtuous life. Before you start asking the bigger questions of life, you must have enough clear spiritual sense to see, hear and, in a certain way, even feel what God is calling you to be. This is true, as well, because you need to be ready to offer what God is asking of you in a vocational call. “Blessed are the pure of heart for they will see God.” (Mt 5:8)

WHAT IS DISCERNMENT? HOW DO I BEGIN?



DISCERNMENT OF A SAINT:

St. Teresa of Calcutta was 12 years old when she began to hear God calling her to be a nun. It took her until about the age of 17 to make the decision to say “yes” to God. In the meantime, she was involved in the church choir, serving the poor alongside her mother and learning to give herself away in service to God and his people.

ENTER INTO MARY’S DISPOSITION BEFORE THE LORD:*

1. Total trust in God and His love for you.
2. Faith in His plan for you.
3. Listening with an attentive heart.
4. Honest dialogue with God.
5. Readiness to do His will.
6. Love in response to His love.
7. Take action toward the next step He asks of you.

**Take these steps to prayer as you reflect upon Luke 1:26-56.*





SPIRITUAL CONSOLATION, given by the Holy Spirit, will lead you to deep peace, joy, love, clarity and confidence in a

decision. Although fear and doubt may come at times, a greater pattern of inner peace and joy will prevail more consistently regarding a specific decision. Consolation fills you with an increase in the virtues of faith, hope and love. This experience helps you discover with greater certainty what decision God may be calling you to make for your life.

SPIRITUAL DESOLATION, not given by God, will lead you to anxiety, confusion, despair and unrest about a decision. Although momentary happiness may come at times, an overall pattern of restlessness and anxiety will remain along with difficulty in living the virtues of faith, hope and love. This is called spiritual desolation.

**In times of Desolation, St. Ignatius advises us never to make a major decision in life or change a decision that we made in consolation. We are moved to action by God through love not by fear. Make decisions for your life motivated by spiritual consolation and love.*

✚ To read deeper into these spiritual movements, read the 14 rules in *St. Ignatius of Loyola's Spiritual Exercises*.

Example: A young lady kept feeling a restless tug inside to consider Religious life. She finally started exploring Religious Orders and made visits to different ones. At a Franciscan community, she found herself “at home” with the community and experienced great joy and peace when visiting. Eventually, she made the decision to join them. When this decision became more and more real to her, she got scared and began experiencing doubts. Misinterpreting what was happening to her in the midst of darkness, fear and doubt, she decided to cancel her entrance into the community. She felt she couldn't possibly enter a community when she was in such fear and anxiety, and that she must have made the wrong decision in the first place. She didn't realize she was experiencing spiritual desolation and she just needed to pray through it, wait it out and not make decisions while in it. Finally, she talked to some-one about what she was going through and her friend helped her see she was in a moment of spiritual desolation and she should pray and wait for this to pass. It was a test or trial for her. Eventually, it did pass. She again felt joy and peace at the thought of entering the order again. She discussed this with the community and they accepted her into the order that summer. She has been joyful ever since.

SERVICE AND MINISTRY



Discerning is something that takes doing, not just being. To do it well means moving and not standing still. There are six things everyone can and should be doing at all times in order to be able to discern not only a vocation but any decision in life. These are essential practices in living for Christ and for others on a daily basis. The six foundational ways of living a Christian life that open oneself to clarity in discernment are as follows:

1. PRAYER

We cannot presume to understand Jesus' call for our life without prayer. It will take time to get to know him, learn to hear his voice and open our heart to him with honesty. No one cares more about you and understands more about what will truly make you happy than Christ Jesus! Be assured that prayer becomes infectious — the more we pray sincerely, the more we want to and this prepares us to “do whatever he asks” (Jn 2:5) even if we are afraid.

2. SACRAMENTS

God so desires to be in total communion with us that He actually offers to commune with us through healing, hearing, speaking, and feeding us both spiritually and bodily in the sacraments. This seems too good to be true, but it is true! He wants to become one with you in body and spirit through the sacraments and particularly in the Eucharist.

3. SCRIPTURE

Reading and praying with the Scriptures (particularly the Gospels) are indispensable in coming to know the Lord and to understand His call for you. God speaks directly and individually to each of our hearts through the Scriptures.

4. MENTORS

We are not made to walk alone in this world. Being vulnerable enough to share our life and our thoughts with others in whom we can trust helps us to confirm or challenge our thoughts so we can find greater clarity in our decision-making. Parents, family and friends, as well as, priests, religious brothers and sisters, consecrated men and women, and all holy people are invaluable in helping us to navigate life and its important decisions.

5. MEDIA

There are many different ways we can learn about vocations through written, spoken and visual material. For instance, reading the lives of the saints is vital for any discerning Catholic Christian and can lead us to desire to imitate their vocational calls. Books on spirituality, prayer and discernment are very helpful in the journey to your vocation. There also are great resources on the Internet, including blogs, websites and videos highlighting marriage, diocesan priesthood, religious orders, etc.

6. MINISTRY

Becoming involved in ministries at the parish or elsewhere can help you discover a vocation. Going on mission trips or signing up for serious, extended mission work can clarify a call to a lifetime of living Christ's mission as a religious or consecrated person. All self-giving service is a valuable preparation not only for successful discernment but for a successful vocation.

WHAT ARE THE VOCATIONS TO DISCERN?



St. Thérèse of Lisieux exclaimed: “O Jesus, my Love, at last I have found my vocation, my vocation is Love! ... Yes, I have found my place in the Church, and it is you, O my God, who have given me this place ... in the heart of the Church, my Mother, I will be Love! ... Thus I shall be all things; thus my dream shall be realized!!!”



BAPTISM

We are all called to the vocation of love; however, this comes through different forms flowing from our first calling of baptism.

This vocation is the foundation of all vocations, where we are welcomed into the one family of God and called to a life of holiness, loving as God loves and living as He lives.

PERMANENT VOCATION

From the grace of baptism, we are capable of making a total gift of ourselves to God, as Jesus did on the cross for us, his bride. This self-donation or ‘spousal gift’ of ourselves to another — ultimately to God — normally takes the form of a permanent vocation: **priesthood, marriage, religious life, consecrated virginity, diaconate or other forms of consecrated life.** The defining characteristics we live through these vocations

are: **Total** (self-gift to another, directly to God or to God through another); **Free** (without coercion); **Faithful** (lifelong commitment); and **Fruitful** (open to life in marriage and in consecrated life, spiritual children).

When you truly love someone, you desire to make that love concrete and forever committed through a vow. We want to be a total gift of self in love and not take ourselves back from God.

“Man cannot live without love. He remains a being that is incomprehensible for himself, his life is senseless if love is not revealed to him, if he does not encounter love, if he does not experience it and make it his own, if he does not participate intimately in it.”

- *Redemptor Hominis*, Pope St. John Paul II



SACRAMENTAL MARRIAGE

“By virtue of the sacramentality of their marriage, spouses are bound to one another in the most profoundly

indissoluble manner. Their belonging to each other is the real representation, by means of the sacramental sign, of the very relationship of Christ with the church.”

- *Familiaris Consortio*, Pope St. John Paul II



CONSECRATED LIFE

“... is one way of experiencing a more ‘intimate consecration,’ rooted in baptism and dedicated totally to God.

In the consecrated life, Christ’s faithful, moved by the Holy Spirit, propose to follow Christ more nearly, to give themselves to God who is loved above all and,

pursuing the perfection of charity in the service of the Kingdom, to signify and proclaim in the Church to the glory of the world to come.”

- *Catechism of the Catholic Church* 916

WHAT CALLING IS BEST?

The “higher calling” *objectively* speaking is to consecrated life since it is the anticipation of the life we will all live in heaven, union with God. **However, subjectively speaking, the “higher calling” for you is the one God is calling you to live.** If God’s call for you is to marriage, then that is the higher vocation for your life in which you will find the most joy and fulfillment. The deepest consistent desires of our heart should lead us to the vocation for which God made us.

“... the complementarity of marriage and celibacy for ‘the kingdom of heaven’ ... complete each other and in some sense interpenetrate.”

- *Theology of the Body*, Pope St. John Paul II

Take time to learn about sacramental marriage and the different forms of consecrated life:

- Diocesan priesthood
- Religious priesthood
- Religious brother/sister
- Consecrated virginity
- Secular institutes
- Private vows
- Hermits
- Societies of apostolic life
- Other new forms of consecrated life

PRACTICE OF PRAYER: INTIMACY WITH GOD



Prayer is living intimacy with God, sharing the depths of one's heart and life. Be honest with Him. As you would with a good friend who knows you and is going to love you no matter what, hold nothing back. Do you know the way God speaks to your heart and you to His?

SOME HELPFUL WAYS TO PRAY

- **Eucharistic Adoration**
- **Be silent and still** with God in your room or out in nature.
- **Pray** verbally or mentally with God about all things, as with a friend.
- **Journal or write** to God.
- **Fast, give alms, praise Him**, be open to Him through music and other forms of art.
- **Pray** Scripture by mediation and contemplation.
- **Pray** with the aid of spiritual books, *Liturgy of the Hours*, writings of the saints and the rosary.
- **Pray** with the saints; ask a special saint for intercession for your vocation.
- **Go on retreats**, or use *St. Ignatius of Loyola's Spiritual Exercises*.
- **Attend Mass** daily or Sundays; Mass is vital for a good prayer-life and discernment. The highest prayer we can enter into is the Mass.
- **Go to confession** frequently; the sacrament of confession is essential to prayer as it draws you closer to the Lord though repentance from sin and renews your sense of God's love for you.

GREAT SAINTS TELL US ABOUT PRAYER:



“WE NEED TO FIND GOD, AND HE CANNOT BE FOUND IN NOISE AND RESTLESSNESS. GOD IS THE FRIEND OF SILENCE. SEE HOW NATURE - TREES, FLOWERS, GRASS - GROWS IN SILENCE; SEE THE STARS, THE MOON AND THE SUN, HOW THEY MOVE IN SILENCE . . . WE NEED SILENCE TO BE ABLE TO TOUCH SOULS.” -**MOTHER TERESA**



“WHEN WE GO BEFORE THE BLESSED SACRAMENT, LET US OPEN OUR HEART; OUR GOOD GOD WILL OPEN HIS. WE SHALL GO TO HIM; HE WILL COME TO US; THE ONE TO ASK, THE OTHER TO RECEIVE. IT WILL BE LIKE A BREATH FROM ONE TO THE OTHER.”
- **ST. JOHN VIANNEY**

“FOR ME PRAYER IS A SURGE OF THE HEART, IT IS A SIMPLE LOOK TOWARDS HEAVEN, IT IS A CRY OF RECOGNITION AND OF LOVE, EMBRACING BOTH TRIAL AND JOY.” - **ST. THÉRÈSE OF LISIEUX**



“YOU DON'T KNOW HOW TO PRAY? PUT YOURSELF IN THE PRESENCE OF GOD, AND AS SOON AS YOU HAVE SAID, 'LORD, I DON'T KNOW HOW TO PRAY!' YOU CAN BE SURE YOU'VE ALREADY BEGUN.”
- **ST. JOSEMARÍA ESCRIVÁ**



“MENTAL PRAYER IS NOTHING ELSE THAN AN INTIMATE FRIENDSHIP, A FREQUENT HEART-TO-HEART CONVERSATION WITH HIM BY WHOM WE KNOW OURSELVES TO BE LOVED.” - **ST. TERESA OF AVILA**

“MY GOD, I GIVE YOU MY HEART; PLEASE ACCEPT IT THAT NO CREATURE, BUT YOU ALONE, MY GOOD JESUS, MAY POSSESS IT.” -**ST. ZELIE MARTIN**



“OUR HEARTS WERE MADE FOR YOU, O LORD, AND THEY ARE RESTLESS UNTIL THEY REST IN YOU.”
-**ST. AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO**

A METHOD OF PRAYING



Lectio Divina –

The prayerful meditation of Scripture

(15 minutes to an hour)

- Find a quiet place and restful position.
- Take a moment to become aware of God's presence with you.
- Invite the Holy Spirit to move your heart and mind in your prayer time.
- Read a Scripture passage of your choice and sit in silence for a few minutes to take it in.
- If you are struck by a word or phrase, stay there and receive what God wants to reveal to you.
- Read the passage again (one or two more times)
- Continue to stop where God is moving your heart and stay there until you feel ready to continue.
- Speak freely to God about the thoughts, feelings, desires, and emotions that come to you.
- If you are reading a Gospel story, you may find yourself imagining you are in the scene. Describe it. What person do you feel drawn to and why? Imagine yourself there. What moves you?
- At the end of your prayer time, journal any significant insights and feelings you experienced.
- You may find you are to pray more or act on a specific thing that came up during the prayer.
- End with a prayer of Thanksgiving to God for the time of prayer.

HERE ARE SOME OTHER SCRIPTURE PASSAGES TO GET YOU STARTED:

- **Ps 139** — God knows you
- **Ps 37:3-6** — Trust in God
- **Jer 29:11-16** — God knows the plan he has for you
- **Lk 1:26-56** — The call of Mary
- **Lk 5:8-10** — Depart from me, Lord, for I am a sinful man
- **Mt 14:22-33** — Jesus calls Peter to walk on water
- **Tb 8:4-7** — Marriage prayer of Tobias
- **1 Sm 3:1-10** — The call of Samuel
- **Mt 19:25-30** — Give up possessions for God and inherit eternal life
- **Jer 1:4-9** — Call of Jeremiah
- **Mt 19: 16-30** — Calling of the rich young man
- **Lk 10: 1-9** — Harvest is abundant but laborers are few
- **Mt 19:4-6** — Call to marriage
- Or Reflect on the Gospel of the day from Mass



A METHOD OF PRAYING



REFLECTIONS FROM AROUND THE DIOCESE



Reflection from
Rich Budd,
Office of Marriage
and Family Life

Mk 5:18-20

“And as he was getting into the boat, the man who had been possessed with demons begged him that he might be with him. But he refused, and said to him, ‘Go home to your friends, and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and how he had mercy on you.’ And he went away and began to proclaim in the Decapolis how much Jesus had done for him; and all men marveled.”

When I was in the midst of discerning leaving the seminary, I was beset with feelings that I was somehow abandoning God and not giving Him all of my life, that was due to Him. I stumbled upon this passage one afternoon and it shattered the dark cloud that had been hanging over me. In the passage, the young man wants to get into the boat, he wants to give his life in the same way Simon Peter did. But this time, the Lord refuses. It's odd, Christ telling someone “No” when he wants to follow Him. The Lord instead tells him to go home and witness to his friends what God had done in his life. Then the passage makes an interesting turn and explains that the young man went to the Decapolis (“Ten Cities”) and proclaimed how much Jesus had done. What happens here? Not only is the man able to supersede what Christ asked him to do, he recognizes that Jesus is God. The man is fruitful beyond what was asked and recognized who Jesus was more quickly than some of the Apostles. I knew that Christ led me to this reading to tell me that I could still give my life to Him and still be very fruitful even if I wasn't in the “inner circle.” A flood of peace took over my heart that has only deepened now that I'm married.



**Reflection from
Dawn Hausmann,**
Office of
Consecrated
Vocations

1S 62:3-5

“You shall be a glorious crown in the hand of the Lord, a royal diadem held by your God. No more shall men call you ‘Forsaken,’ or your land ‘Desolate,’ but you shall be called ‘My Delight,’ and your land ‘Espoused.’ For the Lord delights in you, and makes your land his spouse. As a young man marries a virgin, your Builder shall marry you; and as a bridegroom rejoices in his bride so shall your God rejoice in you.”

While prayerfully reading and reflecting on this particular Scripture passage, the words “as a young man marries a virgin, your Builder shall marry you” jumped off the page as if God was speaking directly to my heart, as if I was the one woman on earth in whom He was delighting! I found myself resting in these words, filled with joy and excitement as a woman in love. I felt a particular call from God in this, inviting me to say ‘yes’ to His marriage proposal. This passage still strikes me in similar ways every time I read it.



**Reflection from
Rev. John Linden,**
Department
Chair/Director
of Vocations and
Seminarians

JN 6:66-69

“As a result of this, many [of] his disciples returned to their former way of life and no longer accompanied him. Jesus then said to the Twelve, ‘Do you also want to leave?’ Simon Peter answered him, ‘Master, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. We have come to believe and are convinced that you are the Holy One of God.’”

When God first began revealing His “call” to me — when I was finally ready to listen — all I could think of was what it was going to cost me. I so wanted him to stop asking me what I knew he was asking. I desired to remain in the comfort of my “former way of life” in which I didn’t ask anyone but myself what I wanted for my life. Then, as I gradually opened up to God, I realized that through grace my fear was being gently replaced by faith, and that my focus on myself was being gently replaced by my focus on Him and on others. Sometimes at the beginning of a discernment process, all of the things that appear daunting are at the forefront. Therefore, for discernment to be truly helpful, one must gradually see that their desire for God is growing stronger than their desire for worldly comfort or their fear of losing it. Only when I realized this did I realize that “He is my comfort and my strength.”

EXAMEN

The “examen” based on St. Ignatius is a technique of prayerful reflection on the events of the day in order to detect God’s presence and to discern His direction for us.

■ **Become aware of God’s presence** and His deep love for you

■ **Review the day with gratitude** for the good and difficult events of the day

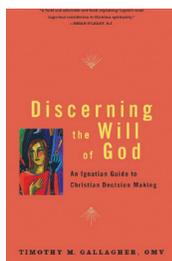
■ **Pray for the grace** to understand God’s action in your day

■ **Review your day’s** specific spiritual moments, emotions, feelings and desires

■ **Reflect** on what you did, said, thought — What drew you closer to God or away from God during your day? What disturbed you? What energized you?

■ **Look forward** to tomorrow and **ask forgiveness** for any sins of today and make resolutions according to God’s desire for tomorrow

■ In your own way **give God thanks and praise** for the insights and end with an ‘Our Father’



READ MORE ABOUT DISCERNMENT

Discerning the Will of God: An Ignatian Guide to Christian Decision Making by Timothy M. Gallagher



PRAYER EXERCISES

SOME PRACTICAL EXERCISES IN PRAYER-TIME (KNOW YOURSELF)

1. Being truly honest with your heart, prayerfully write a list of the advantages of consecrated life/religious life or priesthood and any disadvantages or challenges of the call to these.
2. Do the same exercise with the calling to marriage and family life.



Consecrated Life

ADVANTAGES	CHALLENGES
UNDIVIDED HEART FOR GOD	NO PARTICULAR HUMAN COMPANION
MISSION LIFE PRIORITY	SOMETIMES STRICT LIFE
FLEXIBILITY TO GO WHEREVER GOD WANTS	POTENTIAL LONELINESS
FOCUS ON THE MANY INSTEAD OF PARTICULAR NUCLEAR FAMILY	YOUR LIFE IS NO LONGER YOUR OWN

Married Life

ADVANTAGES	CHALLENGES
SHARING LIFE AND INTIMACY WITH A SPOUSE	FEEL FAMILY LIFE COULD DIVIDE MY TIME
HAVING THE EXPERIENCE OF BEARING CHILDREN	WORRY I WOULD NOT HAVE THE MISSION LIFE I WANT
SEEK AND SERVE GOD THROUGH A SPOUSE	YOUR LIFE IS NO LONGER YOUR OWN

3. Write a list of the qualities that you would value in a man or woman you would want to marry. Also list the qualities that you don't value in a person.
4. Think of yourself on your deathbed reflecting on the life you lived. What does your life look like? How do you see yourself experiencing fulfillment and purpose? What vocation has brought you the greatest joy and brought the most glory to God? Describe this.
5. Write a list of qualities you would be attracted to in a religious order or other forms of consecrated life or in the priesthood. What is the charism and prayer life of the order? What apostolate or mission are you passionate about? Contemplative or active life? etc.
6. Write a list of the desires or passions of your heart from greatest to the least. Include things that you like to do, such as cooking, hiking, etc. Then pray and journal about how you see these desires of your heart lived in the different vocations.
7. Have you had any enlightening signs of a vocation or something that you know was from God? If so, reflect on them and make sure to journal and pray about them.
8. What do people say about you? Have you had people tell you that you would be a good religious sister/brother, consecrated virgin, priest or wife/husband ... etc.? Vocation is not discerned by you alone, but through community.

FOR
EXAMPLE:

QUALITIES IN A PARTNER I HOPE TO MARRY

- Supportive
- Respects him/herself and others
- Generous
- Attractive
- Catholic and faith-filled
- Selfless
- Good sense of humor
- Enjoys the outdoors
- Easy going
- Has no addictions to drugs or shopping
- Good parenting qualities
- Joyful
- Optimistic
- Healthy habits
- Has high morals

PRAYER EXERCISES

9. Are there any unhealthy attachments in your life that God may want you to do something about or get rid of and replace with virtue in your life?
10. Write a historical timeline of your life. What are the significant events and people of your life? By reflecting on your history, do you see any patterns of how God has been working, leading and calling you?
11. What are your fears, doubts and uncertainties in being called to marriage, priesthood, religious life or consecrated life? These

can be huge obstacles preventing movement toward your vocation. Pray with the Scripture: Mt 14:22-33 and surrender your worries to the Lord's hands.

12. Explain the lists to a friend, expressing the beauty of each vocation and the challenges as if you were called to one. Which one brings you the most joy and intrigues you to search deeper into its mystery? (If you don't speak to someone for this exercise, journal about it instead.)
13. Do these exercises again throughout your journey in life.

FOR
EXAMPLE:

journey of my life

Happy Catholic family upbringing

Dated a guy — unsettled heart

Questioned the meaning of life

College — campus minister and student leader

Attraction to daily Mass and Bible studies





OTHER HELPFUL ELEMENTS TO DISCERNMENT: GET OUT THERE!

1. Service, ministry or a missionary year to the Church and to those in need. Example: soup kitchens, shelters, missionary programs.



2. Getting to know priests, religious, married people, etc., to better understand and see how these vocations live.
3. Contact a vocation director for discernment advice.
4. Go to lots of “Come and See” visits to explore in person!
5. “God can’t steer a parked car” — Don’t discern in your head forever; **act!**
 - a. Attend seminary for a year
 - b. Live with sisters on mission
 - c. Date if you feel your call could be to marriage

Met a joyful religious sister

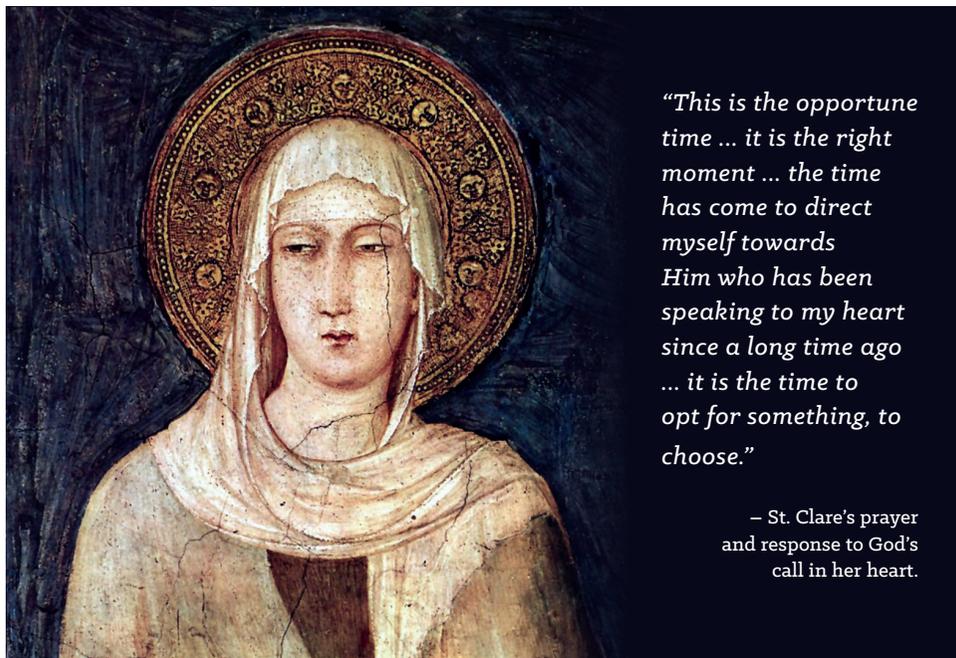
Mission year with Missionaries of Charity — religious order

Entered Missionaries of Charity community after one year of college

Went on a mission year after college

Back to college to study theology

Took final vows — finally settled heart — joyful and peaceful



“This is the opportune time ... it is the right moment ... the time has come to direct myself towards Him who has been speaking to my heart since a long time ago ... it is the time to opt for something, to choose.”

– St. Clare's prayer and response to God's call in her heart.

SOME SIGNS OF A CALL TO CONSECRATED LIFE OR TO THE PRIESTHOOD

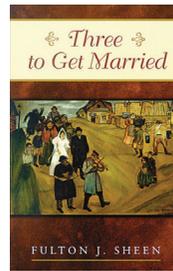
This is not an exhaustive list but some thoughts to meditate on in prayer.

1. Strong attraction or desire to give your life more fully to God and His Church.
2. Strong attraction to and desire for a deeper prayer life.
3. A sense that a 'normal life' seems insufficient; you feel drawn to something more.
4. A persistent prompting from the Holy Spirit to offer an 'undivided heart' to the Lord.
5. Feeling that there is something more you seek beyond the call of marriage, as though it wouldn't be enough for you. Desire to give yourself to many people and not exclusively to one.
6. A strong feeling of being called to the mission of God in service to His people.
7. An attraction to the celibate vocations and a draw to associate with people in the priesthood, religious life and other forms of consecrated life.
8. A growing awareness of the gift and capacity from God to live celibacy/virginity for the kingdom.
9. Thoughts of the priesthood or religious/consecrated life may come to mind again and again.
10. There is something intriguing about consecrated life or priesthood that invites you to deeper exploration of its mystery.

SOME SIGNS OF A CALL TO MARRIED LIFE



1. A desire for specificity rather than the universal. For example, I wish to give everything I have, am, and will be to a specific person.
2. A desire to be a parent so you can train your children in the Lord.
3. Attraction to the beauty of family life. The mutual giving and receiving of love, the sanctification of “ordinary life.” This could include building a home, teaching your child how to pray or coaching soccer.
4. A sense that something essential would be missing in your life if you were not married and did not have a family.
5. Is there already a specific person with whom you feel a deep peace about spending the rest of your life?



READ MORE ABOUT CATHOLIC MARRIAGE

Three to Get Married
by Fulton J. Sheen

REFLECTION

Do you feel a sense of joy and peace when thinking of these things? Although fears may come at times, a greater pattern of peace will eventually prevail with the desire to be a priest, religious, married man or woman, or consecrated person if it is your calling if the Lord is calling you, listen to Him say, “Do not be afraid!”



Our prayer for you

“... We do not cease praying for you and asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will through all spiritual wisdom and understanding to live in a manner worthy of the Lord, so as to be fully pleasing, in every good work bearing fruit and growing in the knowledge of God, strengthened with every power, in accord with his glorious might, for all endurance and patience, with joy giving thanks to the Father, who has made you fit to share in the inheritance of the holy ones in light.” - Col 1:9b-13

HAVE QUESTIONS? NEED MORE INFORMATION?

Please visit dioceseoflansing.org/vocations
or contact the Department of Vocations:

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CONSECRATED/RELIGIOUS VOCATIONS

517.342.2506

DIACONATE

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