



Sunday, 25th April, is the 58th World Day of Prayer for Vocations

*Listening, discerning, and living: these lie
at the heart of Pope Francis' message.*

"The Lord's call is not an intrusion of God in our freedom; it is not a "cage" or a burden to be borne. On the contrary, it is the loving initiative whereby God encounters us and invites us to be part of a great undertaking. He opens before our eyes the horizon of a greater sea and an abundant catch."

A listening heart

Pope Francis makes it clear that "God comes silently" and that, without a listening heart, His voice can be "drowned out" by the distractions of daily life.

"Nowadays listening is becoming more and more difficult, immersed as we are in a society full of noise, overstimulated and bombarded by information... This prevents us from pausing and enjoying the taste of contemplation, reflecting serenely on the events of our lives, going about our work with confidence in God's loving plan, and making a fruitful discernment."

He says that we need "to listen carefully to his word and the story of his life, but also to be attentive to the details of our own daily lives".

Discernment

Turning to spiritual discernment, Pope Francis notes that this is "a process by which a person makes fundamental choices, in dialogue with the Lord and listening to the voice of the Spirit, starting with the choice of one's state in life".

He says the Christian vocation always has a prophetic dimension since current events in a person's life and in the world must be examined "in the light of God's promise."

"Every Christian ought to grow in the ability to "read within" his or her life, and to understand where and to what he or she is being called by the Lord, in order to carry on his mission."

Living Your vocation

Pope Francis then added a note of urgency.

"Vocation is today! The Christian mission is now," he says.

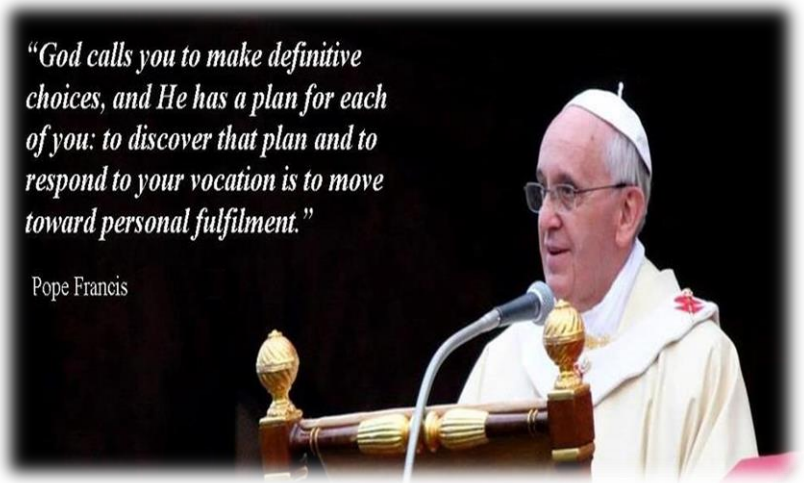
"Each one of us is called – whether to the lay life in marriage, to the priestly life in the ordained ministry, or to a life of special consecration – in order to become a witness of the Lord, here and now."

Everyone is called to live their vocation, the Pope emphasises, and there is no reason to fear God's call, even to a life consecrated to God's kingdom.

"It is beautiful – and a great grace – to be completely and forever consecrated to God and the service of our brothers and sisters."

*"God calls you to make definitive
choices, and He has a plan for each
of you: to discover that plan and to
respond to your vocation is to move
toward personal fulfilment."*

Pope Francis



*If you have any questions about priesthood, religious life or the diaconate please do not hesitate to make contact.
It takes courage to make that first step! www.dublindiocese.ie/vocations or vocations@dublindiocese.ie, 01 8087561*



Called to be YOU

Vocation Sunday set aside in the Church's calendar to encourage all of us think about our own vocation. So what is your vocation? You may think that you don't have a vocation or that vocations are the sort of thing clergy have. But if you think that, you're wrong. Each of us does have a vocation. God calls each one of us. The question, though, is to what? First and foremost, God calls us to change: to become more Christ-like. We are called to live out our lives in response to the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. That process began in our baptism, but it continues through prayer, through the reading of the scriptures and through the receiving of Holy Communion.

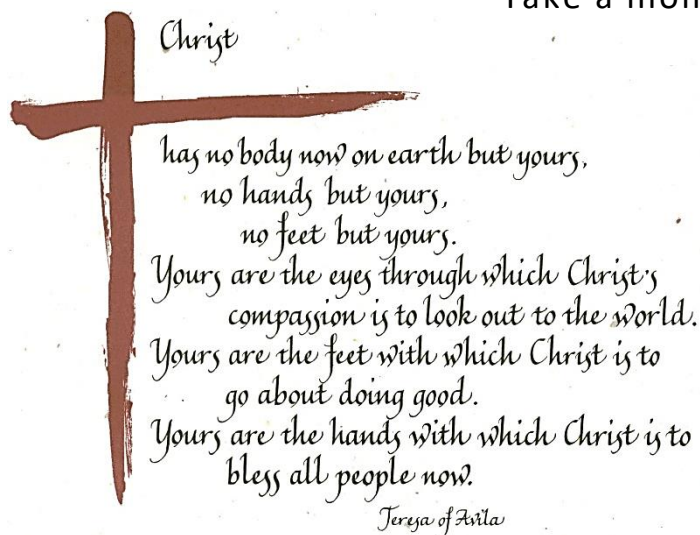
One of the constant themes in the New Testament is that lives touched by Christ were changed. What is true for the characters of the New Testament is true for us. As we encounter and respond to Christ we cannot help but be changed. But while we are called to change, we are also called to be more deeply ourselves. God never calls us to be something or someone we're not. God always calls us to what we are capable of becoming. It may be that there are parts of us which are underdeveloped or which rarely see the light of day which need to be allowed to flourish so we can be our true selves. It may be that we have hidden gifts which need to be discovered or it may be that there is something that we have secretly always wanted to do but have not had the courage or the time to try. Whatever it may be we need to find an outlet which will allow us to feel more excited about life or indeed to feel more alive.



St Irenaeus wrote that 'the glory of God is a human being fully alive'. Through the dual process of becoming more fully ourselves and of becoming more fully Christ-like, the will of God is fulfilled and the glory of God seen. That is what Vocations Sunday is about.

You have one life. For God's sake and for your own, live it.

Take a moment to Reflect



Read the Prayer

Think about one time when you've experienced God reaching out to someone through another person

Read the prayer again

Think about a time that you've experienced God reaching out to another through you.

Read the one more time –

Change the word 'Yours' to 'Mine'

Recognise the gifts you have, the difference you make to those around you, the opportunities you have been given to share the Love, Joy, Peace, Hope & Compassion of God each day and say 'Thanks'!

Keep the Prayer with you...

as an ongoing reminder of how God desires to work through you!

A Prayer for Vocations

O God, our Father, you have called us in Baptism to follow your Son Jesus through lives of loving service to you and to one another. Grant us your assistance guided by the Holy Spirit to live out our vocation in life. We pray especially for those who have answered your call as priests, brothers, sisters, deacons and lay ministers. Keep them faithful in following your Son and dedicated in serving their brothers and sisters. Grant that many more men and women will be open to the challenge of dedicating their lives in the ministry of building your Kingdom.

We ask this through Christ, our Lord. **Amen**

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