

**Vocation
Box
Instructions
& Daily
Prayers**

Thank you for praying for vocations this week!

“Vocation” means calling. God is calling us. All of us! Everyone has a vocation; in fact, we all have several vocations.

First, the fundamental vocation for every person is the universal vocation to holiness. God created us to be happy with Him now and later in heaven. In other words, we are all called to be saints.

Next, everyone has a vocation to a state in life: either to be single, married, or a consecrated religious priest, brother, or sister.

Finally, within our state of life, we are all called to serve God and each other through our work. It may be in a career, in volunteer work, in raising children, and many other ways.

Please pray that everyone, both inside and outside your family, will listen to God and discern their vocation. By doing what God has called us to, we are most fully human and most happy! Please also pray especially that those whom God is calling to a religious vocation will recognize God’s call and follow it with courage and determination.

To guide you in prayer this week, we invite you to use this booklet with daily reflections and activities meant to facilitate family discussion or, as an alternative, to use the small accordion-style card with a short vocation prayer for each day. There are also rosaries and rosary instruction guides. Use as much or as little works for your family, but please do make a point to pray each day. We invite you to keep one of the white copies of the vocation prayer and continue praying for vocations beyond this week.

You may display the enclosed paten and chalice in a prominent place in your home to remind you to pray and to be a conversation starter with family and friends.

The enclosed holy water may be used to bless your family each day, perhaps before school or at bedtime.

Visit www.idahovocations.com/ to learn more about vocations in our diocese and to find videos and links to helpful vocation-discerning sites.

Remember to encourage our young people to listen for God’s call!

God bless your family,

Carina Van Pelt
Principal, Holy Rosary School

How to Use the Vocation Box

Instructional Booklet: This prayer booklet is designed to be used at meal time. For example, the opening prayer may be used as “grace” before eating, the discussion questions can be dinner conversation, and the vocation prayer on the back cover can end the meal. Select the time that works best for your family, but please pray daily. An accordion-style card with a short daily prayer is enclosed in the box as an alternative.

Each day’s theme in this booklet gives attention to different ways God calls us to grow in relationship with Him. Our vocation is not typically one huge call from God, but rather a series of mini-calls to which God invites us to respond. Each day’s prayers include the following parts:

Opening Prayer: A short scripture passage and reflection carries out the theme for the day. Feel free to use your family Bible to read additional verses.

Discussion Questions: These questions are intended to start dinnertime conversation about vocations. You may adapt them for the needs of your family. Don’t feel like you need to discuss them all at once. You can save some for the next time your family has the vocation box.

Family Activity Ideas: Pick an activity or two to encourage vocational growth and understanding as a family. Don’t have time now? Jot them down to do later!

Vocation Prayer: A closing prayer is found on the back cover of this booklet. Please pray it each night. We invite you to keep a copy of this vocation prayer from the enclosed baggie to continue praying for vocations.

Chalice and Paten: Place the chalice and paten (the cup and plate) in a prominent place in your home, such as the center of your dining table. A chalice and paten are used to hold the Body and Blood of Christ during the Eucharist at Mass. They are used here as a reminder of Christ being the center of all prayer.

Holy Water: The plastic bottle contains holy water. You are invited to use it to bless your family every day, perhaps before leaving for school or at bedtime.

Listing of Seminarians and Religious Brothers/Sisters: Included in the box is a listing of our current seminarians (the men from our diocese who are studying to become priests) and a listing of Idaho natives who are serving God as religious brothers and sisters in other parts of the country. Please include these specific men and women in your prayers.

Rosaries & Instructional Pamphlets: On day five, families are invited to pray a decade or more of the Rosary. Feel free to keep a rosary and pamphlet for your home.

Additional Resources: These extra prayers and resources are included in the box to guide you in learning even more about vocations.

Day One

The Universal Call to Holiness

Opening Prayer

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

God said: “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. God created man in his image, in the divine image He created him; male and female, He created them. (Genesis 1:26a, 27)

God, you created me to be holy. You placed me here on earth so that I might know you, love you, and serve you in this world, so I can achieve my number one purpose, which is to live with you in heaven someday.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Discussion Questions

Vocation means ‘call.’ God calls every single person on Earth to friendship with Him. He calls humans to be special from the other things He created. He made each of us unique so we could love Him and do good on Earth for Him in various ways. He wants all of us to be holy (which means dedicated to God) and to become saints. Saints are human souls who live with God in heaven.

- 1. What does it mean to be holy?**
- 2. What does it mean to be made in God’s image? How are humans different from animals?**
Refer to Catechism of Catholic Church paragraphs 355-361 for guidance. An online version is available by searching the United States Council of Catholic Bishops website: www.usccb.org/
- 3. What saints can you name? What do you remember about their lives? Were they always perfect? What made them saints?**

Family Activity Ideas

- 1. Baptism is a way we answer God’s universal call to holiness. Baptism is like a visa or passport that acknowledges our forever home is with God in heaven. Share pictures and talk about your family’s baptisms. Add these dates to your calendar and celebrate them each year. This can be as simple as displaying a white balloon or baptismal candle on each baptism anniversary to renew the promise to follow Jesus.**
- 2. Read a story about your favorite saint. Visit www.catholic.org/saints/popular.php for short biographies of some of the most popular saints.**

Closing Prayer for Vocations

Pray together the vocation prayer found at the back of the booklet.

Day Two

The Call to a State in Life

Opening Prayer

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

**As a body is one though it has many parts,
and all the parts of the body, though many, are one body, so also Christ.
If an ear should say, "Because I am not an eye I do not belong to the body," it does not for
this reason belong any less to the body. If the whole body were an eye, where would the
hearing be? If the whole body were hearing, where would the sense of smell be? But as it is,
God placed the parts, each one of them, in the body as he intended. (1 Cor 12:12-18)**

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Discussion Questions

Each of us is called by God to grow in holiness through our relationships and vows with others. This is called our state in life. Some are called to grow in relationship with God through the state of marriage and family life. Others are called to be priests or consecrated religious brothers or sisters. Still others are called to a life of holiness through the single life. Each state is important to carry out God's mission and each comes with special commitments, gifts, and responsibilities.

1. How do marriage and parenthood bring couples/families closer to God?

2. What do you think it would be like to be a priest, brother or nun?

Visit www.idahovocations.com/religious-life/ to read about the difference in these vocations.

3. How can a single person serve the church in special ways?

Family Activity Ideas

1. Tell your children about the journey to your current state in life. What was/is it like to be single? To be married?
2. Invite the parish priest(s) to dinner and/or visit the nuns at the Franciscan Sisters of the Eucharist Family Life Center in Pocatello (<https://fsecommunity.org/joy-in-mission/our-centers/#pocatello>). Ask them about what it is like to be a priest or nun and how God called them to their vocation.
3. Read through the listing of our current seminarians (men from our diocese studying to become priests) and religious brothers and sisters from Idaho. Pray for their ministry.
4. Read the newspaper article about Sister Michaela Serpa enclosed in the vocation box.

Closing Prayer for Vocations

Pray together the vocation prayer found at the back of the booklet.

Day Three

The Call to Your Personal Vocation

Opening Prayer

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

We have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us. Let us exercise them: If prophecy, in proportion to the faith; if ministry, in ministering; if one is a teacher, in teaching; if one exhorts, in exhortation; if one contributes, in generosity; if one is a leader, with diligence; if one does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness. (Romans 12:6-8)

Lord, I thank you for the gifts and talents you have given me. Help me to use them to serve you as I become the person you created me to be.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Discussion Questions

Within our state of life, we are all called to serve God and each other through our work. It may be in a career, in volunteer work, in raising children, and many other ways. Our personal vocation may be more than one calling and it often changes throughout life. God has given each of us unique gifts and talents. These can help us discern our personal vocation.

- 1. Identify each other's gifts in your family. How can you use this gift to serve God and others at this time in your life?**
- 2. What do you want to be when you grow up? What is your dream? How might the gifts God has given you help in your personal vocation(s)?**
- 3. How are you being called to serve God at this time in your life?**

Family Activity Ideas

- 1. Share with your children why you chose the profession you chose and how you felt called to your personal vocation.**
- 2. Our vocations are like a three-tiered cake: The base layer is God's universal call to holiness, the middle layer is to our state in life, and the top layer is to our personal profession. Make a three-tiered cake with your family as you review these three vocational layers that you discussed the past three days. (This can be as simple as stacking three Oreo cookies.)**
- 3. Our bodies are a gift from God. Make a family pact to each find a ministry where you can use your body as a way to give back to God and our parish family. If your child is in the 4th grade or older, encourage him/her to altar serve at weekend Mass.**

Closing Prayer for Vocations

Pray together the vocation prayer found at the back of the booklet.

Day Four

The Call to Listen

Opening Prayer

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

At that time Samuel was not familiar with the Lord, because the Lord had not revealed anything to him as yet. The Lord called Samuel yet a third time. Getting up, Samuel went to Eli, and said, "Here I am. You called me." Eli suddenly realized that the Lord was calling the boy. So he said to Samuel, "Go to sleep, and if you are called, reply, 'Speak Lord, for your servant is listening.'" (1 Samuel 3:7-10)

Lord, I must learn to listen. Let me be open to hearing you in the voices of my family when they are teaching me. Let me be open to hearing your voice when someone needs help. Let me be open to hearing your voice through Scripture, prayer, and hymns. Only then will I learn what you are saying to me.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Discussion Questions

Vocations are not typically revealed in one monumental message from God telling you exactly what He wants you to do with your life. It is rare to hear God's actual voice like Samuel did in his dreams. More often, God invites us into our vocation through a series of mini-calls. He frequently uses other people and our conscience to speak to us.

- 1. When have you heard God speaking to you? In Scripture? Through people? Events in your life? In prayer? Other ways?**
- 2. How could your life be affected if you refused to listen to God?**
- 3. How do you know if what you hear is from God?**

Family Activity Ideas

- 1. Set up a home altar or prayer area with your family so you have a quiet place to pray together and listen for God's voice. It doesn't have to be big and complicated. Here's a good resource: www.catholicicing.com/how-to-set-up-a-home-altar-catholic-home-altar-ideas/**
- 2. Take your family to Adoration which is held every Thursday from 9am to 6:45pm in Holy Rosary Church.**

Closing Prayer for Vocations

Pray together the vocation prayer found at the back of the booklet.

Day Five

The Call to Say “Yes” to God

Opening Prayer

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

The angel Gabriel appeared to Mary, a virgin betrothed to a man named Joseph. The angel said to her, “Do not fear, Mary. You shall conceive and bear a son and give Him the name Jesus.” Mary said, “How can that be?” The angel answered her, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you.” Mary answered, “I am the servant of the Lord. Let it be done to me as you say.”
(Luke 1:26-38, paraphrased)

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Discussion Questions

Mary was just a young girl, perhaps only 14 or 15 years old. She was asked to do something that was very difficult, especially in her culture. At first she was puzzled by the angel’s message. Perhaps she didn’t understand all the details of the request. However, she believed that God would not ask her to do anything that she and He could not handle together. So in faith she said, “Yes.”

- 1. Why did Mary say “Yes” to God when she knew what He asked would be very difficult?**
- 2. What qualities did Mary have that would make her a good mother?**
- 3. What qualities did Jesus, Mary, and Joseph have to be called the Holy Family? Consider some difficulties they had to face as a family. How did they ask God for help?**
- 4. Marriage and family life are very special vocations. How does your family use this vocation to become closer to God?**

Family Activity Ideas

- 1. After dinner tonight, pray the Joyful Mysteries of the Rosary (even just one decade) from the “A Rosary for Priests” pamphlet enclosed in the vocation box. Extra rosaries can also be found in the vocation box. Feel free to keep a rosary and a “How to Pray the Rosary” pamphlet from the baggie for future use with your family.**

Closing Prayer for Vocations

Pray together the vocation prayer found at the back of the booklet.

Day Six

The Call to Detachment

Opening Prayer

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

The young man said to Jesus, "I have kept all the laws; what do I need to do to possess eternal life?" Jesus told him, "If you seek perfection, sell your possessions, and give to the poor. You will then have treasure in heaven." (Matthew 19:20-21)

Lord, help me to give unselfishly of my time and talents so that serving and loving You more fully is my primary goal. I desire to be a good example of what it means to be Christian.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Discussion Questions

We are the Church, the People of God, the Body of Christ—the people for whom Christ gave His life! He calls us to do the same, to give our lives for others by witnessing to our faith and carrying on the mission of Christ. This can bring great joy to our lives, but it can also be a challenge.

- 1. What do you cling onto that keeps you from putting God first in your life? Possessions? Bad habits? Lack of prayer? Selfish thinking? Use of time?**
- 2. When is it a joy and when is it a challenge to carry out the four-fold mission of the Church: 1) to worship? 2) to do service? 3) to build community? 4) to witness to your faith?**
- 3. What would you have to give up to become a priest? To become married? Consecrated religious? Single lay person?**
- 4. How would your life be enriched by becoming a priest? Married? Consecrated religious? Single lay person?**

Family Activity Ideas

- 1. Help build the community of God by inviting a friend/family to join you at Mass and share a meal afterward.**
- 2. Be a witness to your faith by confidently praying before meals at restaurants, before sports games or practices and before doing service projects.**
- 3. Guide your family in deeper worship by setting a time to pre-read and discuss the Sunday scripture readings before Mass and challenge everyone to join in all the responses at Mass.**

Closing Prayer for Vocations

Pray together the vocation prayer found at the back of the booklet.

Day Seven

The Call to Continual Prayer

Opening Prayer

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

I beg you not be disheartened by the trials I endure for you; they are your glory. That is why I kneel before the Father from whom every family in heaven and on earth takes its name; I pray that He will bestow on you gifts in keeping with the riches of his glory. May He strengthen you inwardly through the working of His Spirit. May Christ dwell in your hearts through faith, and may charity be the root and foundation of your life. Thus, you will be able to grasp fully, with all the holy ones, the breadth and length, and height and depth of Christ's love, and experience this love which surpasses all knowledge, so that you may attain to the fullness of God himself. (Ephesians 3:13-19)

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Discussion Questions

Prayer is simply talking with God. Through prayer we deepen our friendship with Jesus. Through prayer we deepen our understanding of God's plan for our life. Through prayer we deepen our appreciation of how much God loves us. Through prayer we strengthen our spiritual lives so that we, through the grace of God, change ourselves. In seeking God's call for our lives, prayer helps us to choose and live our vocation.

- 1. Why is it important to pray to know your vocation?**
- 2. How will you know how God wants you to live?**
- 3. How did your parents know their vocation?**
- 4. When do you pray each day? How can you make every moment of your day a prayer?**
- 5. What is your vocation right now? How did you live that vocation today?**

Family Activity Ideas

- 1. If you haven't already, invite a priest, nun, brother, or permanent deacon to your house for dinner. Ask them how they knew God was calling them to the life of a consecrated religious.**
- 2. Browse through the practical ways that parents can encourage vocations offered on the diocesan vocations website: <https://www.idahovocations.com/resources/for-parents/>**

Closing Prayer for Vocations

Pray together the vocation prayer found at the back of the booklet.

Thank you for praying for vocations this week!

Please continue to look for additional and different ways that God calls you into a deeper relationship with Him and continue to pray as a family for vocations.

Please return the chalice, paten, booklet, and all other materials to the vocation box.

Return the vocation box to the church by 8:05 Wednesday morning. Please place the box in front of the ambo (where the readers stand) on the altar. Your family will be called forward at the end of Mass to present the box to the next family who has signed up to pray for vocations.

May God bless your family!

Vocation Prayer

Our Father in heaven, in the example of the Holy Family, you teach us to live as a loving family. From Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, we learn that you have given each of us a special place in your plans for the world. Each of us has a call—a vocation—to be holy as married, a single lay person, or as a priest, permanent deacon, or a religious brother or sister. Make us a kind and understanding family, so that we will help one another discover his or her vocation and follow it faithfully. With Mary and Joseph, we ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.