



Pastor's Column

Vocations ~ November 5, 2017

This coming week, the Catholic Church in the United States hosts National Vocations Awareness Week, during which particular attention is directed toward the Christian vocations to priesthood and religious life. All kinds of prayers and promotional activities are available to help parishes in raising awareness for religious vocations, and St. Peter parish and All Saints school are engaging in many activities this week, and we invite everyone to participate. At the very least, all parishioners certainly can pray for more vocations to the priesthood and religious life, that parish youth, young adults, and the children in our school will pray and discern God's will for them and their lives, and that those among them who are called to religious vocations would respond with faith, generosity, and courage.

During National Vocations Awareness Week, this week, the All Saints students in both of our campuses, Kindergarten through 8th grade, will have vocations lessons offered to them. Also during the week, there is going to be vocations talk given at the middle-school campus. And both on Wednesday and on Thursday, Fr. Dan Barnett, the Vocations Director for the diocese and the rector of Bishop White Seminary, will be visiting our students.

Vocations lessons will also be given at our Family Faith Formation night on Wednesday of this week. And next week, I myself will preach on the Gospel (the Lord's parable of the ten virgins, which is a lesson of preparedness), and in this homily, I will promote religious vocations.

It is the Vocations Ministry team of St. Peter parish that is coordinating these promotional efforts for religious vocations, and we are excited to do our part in creating a culture of vocations and discernment here at St. Peter. All of us has a crucial role to play in this culture; again, as I say, we can at the very least pray for more vocations to the priesthood and religious life. Furthermore, we can take care to notice the youth in our parish. Who among them might have a vocation to be a priest, to be a religious sister? We all know that *some* children have a religious vocation; could it be in fact *your* child that has this vocation? Pray for them, and ask them if they have ever given thought to serving Christ and His Church, the people of God, as a priest or a religious?

I propose the following as a simple prayer for more vocations, and I encourage each of us to pray this prayer each day this week in celebration of National Vocations Awareness Week:

*O God, Father of all Mercies,
Provider of a bountiful Harvest,
send Your Graces upon those
whom You have called to gather the fruits of Your labor;
preserve and strengthen them in their lifelong service to You.*

*Open the hearts of Your children
that they may discern Your most holy will;
inspire in them a love and desire to surrender
themselves to serving others in the Name of Your Son, Jesus Christ.*

*Teach all of Your faithful to follow their respective paths
in life guided by Your Divine Word and Truth.
Through the intercession of the Most Blessed Virgin Mary,
and all of the Angels and Saints,
humbly hear our prayers
and grant Your Church's needs,
through Christ, our Lord. Amen.*

~ Fr. Lewis