

May 19, 2019 - DISCERNING GOD'S WILL

DISCERNING GOD'S WILL is a challenge for each of us. It is particularly true for someone discerning God's call to the priesthood. Our parishioner, Leon Gilmore, who has just completed four years at St John Paul II Seminary, has asked me to convey to all of you the letter below regarding his vocation discernment:

Dear OLHOC,

I would like to inform all of you that I have discerned The Lord's will to leave seminary formation at this time. Please know that I do this with freedom and peace, having prayed a great deal over this decision and consulted with the faculty of the seminary; this is The Lord's will for my life at this time. Thank you all for your prayers and support over these years of seminary! You all have walked this part of my life with me as family and I am very blessed to have served you all. Your willingness to let me into your lives has helped me become more the man Jesus wants me to be and for this, I am indebted to you. Please keep me in your prayers moving forward and know that I do the same for all of you as well.

In Christ,

Leon Gilmore

Just before writing this column, I had shared Leon's discernment letter at our weekly staff meeting. I commended Leon for choosing to write a personal message to all OLHOC parishioners. His message is clear and I know you will respond generously to his request for your prayers and be grateful for his prayers for all of us. I would like simply to use this opportunity to express once again my gratitude to all of you for your loving support to all seminarians that have served our parish whether on an assignment from our Archbishop (summer, part of a Pastoral Year) or on a voluntary basis like Leon did selflessly over the last four years, including serving at all Masses during the recent Holy Week.

This is also an opportunity for all of us to be reminded of the importance of continuing to pray for vocations to the priesthood. As you know, we are keeping our tradition to have a HOLY HOUR FOR VOCATIONS on the First Saturday of the month of June. I hope many of you can join us from 10 am to 11 am on Saturday, June 1st this

year. It will be preceded by our 9 am Mass (also part of the First Saturday Devotion recommended by Our Lady of Fatima: receiving the Eucharist on Five Consecutive First Saturdays, going to Confession, praying the Rosary, meditating on one of the Mysteries of the Rosary for 15 minutes, and doing all this in reparation for our sins and those of the world). This year, it will be also followed at 11 am by the presentation/discussion of SCOTT HAHN's *FOURTH CUP* in the Father Martin Hall (pick up a flyer in the Narthex), as a follow-up to the GIFT OF THE MASS, and giving us a deeper understanding of the Mass and the Eucharist. Dr. Scott Hahn unveils the Mystery of the Last Supper and the Cross. Through these three events on Saturday morning, June 1st, we will be reminded of the links between the Eucharist and the Priesthood. As I have said many times: if we did not have priests, we could not have the Eucharist; and if Jesus had not instituted the Eucharist at the Last Supper, "*Do this in memory of me*", we would not need priests.

In this month of Mary, we can all ask the intercession of our Blessed Mother to assist young men throughout the whole world, including our Archdiocese of Washington, to be open to the call to the priesthood and respond generously. May we also ask Mary's intercession in assisting young women discerning the call to the religious life. We can do so this coming weekend as we celebrate our Patroness Saint, Our Lady Help of Christians (the weekend preceding the actual Feast Day of May 24) and we will have our traditional crowning of Mary at 11:10 am, Sunday, May 19 with participation of our CCD children.

May Mary continue to protect our parish and all our parishioners. May she always lead us to Jesus, her son and our Savior. May she, with her spouse the Holy Spirit, keep guiding all of us in our discernment of God's will in our daily life. May she help us to say "Yes" to God the Father. Let us pray together as we say in the prayer Jesus taught us: "*Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven*".

One in Christ,
Father Alain

