



2018
WORLD DAY
of PRAYER
for
VOCATIONS

The sheep follow the Good Shepherd, because they hear and recognize his voice. (cf John 10:4)

Highlights from the Pope's Letter for 2018 World Day of Prayer for Vocations

Pope Francis, in his letter for today, points out that when Jesus returned after his time of prayer and struggle in the desert, he did three things before he began his mission. He *listened* to the word, *discerned* the content of the mission entrusted to him by the Father, and proclaimed that he came to accomplish it *today* (Lk 4:16-21).

This model—listen, discern, live—can be followed by all of us as we try live out our vocation. Here are some insights from the Holy Father:

LISTEN | God comes silently and discretely, without imposing on our freedom. Thus it can happen that his voice is drowned out by the many worries and concerns that fill our minds and hearts. We need to learn to silence the noise around us to listen.

DISCERN | We have to resist the temptations of ideology and negativity, and to discover, in our relationship with the Lord, the places, the means, and situations through which he calls us. Discernment requires attentiveness, not distraction!

LIVE | Our vocation is lived *today*! The Christian mission is now! 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.

Photo above: Fr. Chris Martin processes with the Eucharist at a Steubenville Youth Conference. Fr. Martin is the president of the National Conference of Diocesan Vocation Directors.



Prayed to the Priesthood



About seven years ago in upstate New York, Sue O'Neal met a young man in her parish named Francis Vivacqua.

Seeing something in him, she asked him if he had ever considered the priesthood. It was a "wow" moment for the young man, setting him on a long path to figuring out his true call in life.

Remarkably, every single day since their encounter, Sue prayed a Divine Mercy Chaplet for Francis. Years after she began praying, he entered the seminary. In 2016, Francis was ordained a priest of the Diocese of Albany. Sue continues to pray for him daily.

Photo: Sue, Fr. Francis, and Sue's husband, Norman