

RESOURCE TO CELEBRATE CATECHISTS

“WHAT DO YOU SEEK?”

FAITH



PRAYER



O God,
protector of the poor and defender of the just,
in your kingdom the last become first,
the gentle are strong,
and the lowly exalted.

Give us wisdom from above,
that we may find in your servant Jesus
the pattern of true discipleship
and the grace to persevere in following him,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
God for ever and ever.

Amen.



FAITH

“If the vocation to the joy of love is the fundamental call that God has placed in the heart of every young person so that each one’s existence will bear fruit, faith is both a gift from on high and a response to feeling oneself chosen and loved.”

(Preparatory Document of the XV Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops on
“Young People, the Faith and Vocational Discernment,” p. 9)

Image: The University of Prince Edward Island



Libby Osgood worked for NASA as an engineer. In the course of time she has discerned that she is called to serve God as a member of the Congregation of Notre Dame. Read Libby’s story [here](#).

Faith “is no refuge for the fainthearted, but something which enhances our lives. It makes us aware of a magnificent calling, the vocation of love. It assures us that this love is trustworthy and worth embracing, for it is based on God’s faithfulness which is stronger than our every weakness”

(Lumen fidei, no. 53)

Image: Ramon FVelasquez

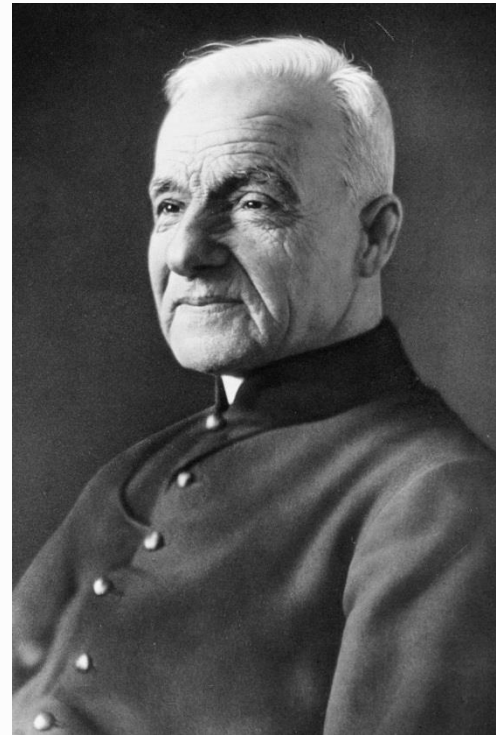


In this short video clip, Cardinal Luis Antonio Tagle defines faith as a “relationship with Jesus Christ which is a gift.” Click **here** to learn more.

“Faith is seeing things as Jesus does.”

(Lumen fidei, no. 18)

The founder of Saint Joseph’s Oratory of Mount Royal, the world’s largest shrine dedicated to the Spouse of Mary, Brother André (Saint André Bessette) was above all a man of prayer. Click **here** to learn more about Brother André’s story.



FOR REFLECTION...

- Q What do these stories suggest to you about your faith? Reflect on your own experience of faith.
- Q What feelings do you associate with these stories? Do the stories resonate in some way with your own journey of faith?
- Q What images or symbols come to mind as you reflect on your own faith journey?
- Q What insights have come to you from this reflection?
- Q How might these reflections about Libby Osgood, Cardinal Tagle and Brother André assist young people along their journeys of faith?

“The Bible has numerous accounts of young people receiving a vocational call and their making a response. In the light of faith, they gradually become aware of the God’s plan of profound love for each person.”

READINGS OF THE DAY

FIRST READING: EZEKIEL 18:25-28

A reading from the book of Wisdom.

The godless say,
“Let us lie in wait for the righteous one,
who makes life inconvenient to us and opposes our actions;
who reproaches us for sins against the law,
and accuses us of sins against our training.
Let us see if his words are true,
and let us test what will happen at the end of his life;
for if the righteous one is God’s son, God will help him,
and will deliver him from the hand of his adversaries.
Let us test him with insult and torture,
so that we may find out how gentle he is,
and make trial of his forbearance.
Let us condemn him to a shameful death,
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The word of the Lord.

FOR REFLECTION...

Q. In what ways do you test God? Bargain with God?

Q. Is your faith in God contingent upon material proof?

Q. Where does your faith reside?

“YOU DID NOT CHOOSE ME, BUT I CHOSE YOU AND APPOINTED YOU THAT YOU SHOULD GO AND BEAR FRUIT AND THAT YOUR FRUIT SHOULD ABIDE; SO THAT WHATEVER YOU ASK THE FATHER IN MY NAME, HE MAY GIVE IT TO YOU. THIS I COMMAND YOU, TO LOVE ONE ANOTHER.”

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

RESPONSORIAL PSALM: PSALM 54:1-2, 3, 4+6 (R.4B)

R. The Lord upholds my life.

Save me, O God, by your name,
and vindicate me by your might.
Hear my prayer, O God;
give ear to the words of my mouth. R.

For the insolent have risen against me,
the ruthless seek my life;
they do not set God before them. R.

But surely, God is my helper;
the Lord is the upholder of my life.
With a freewill offering I will sacrifice to you;
I will give thanks to your name, for it is good. R.

SECOND READING: JAMES 3:16 – 4:3

A reading from the Letter of Saint James.

Beloved:

Where there is envy and selfish ambition,
there will also be disorder and wickedness of every kind.

But the wisdom from above is first pure,
then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield,
full of mercy and good fruits,

without a trace of partiality or hypocrisy.

And a harvest of righteousness is sown in peace
for those who make peace.

Those conflicts and disputes among you,
where do they come from?

Do they not come from your cravings that are at war within you?

You want something and do not have it;
so you commit murder.

And you covet something and cannot obtain it;
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You do not have, because you do not ask.

You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly,
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“The Son of Man is to be betrayed into the hands of men,
and they will kill him,
and three days after being killed, he will rise again.”
But they did not understand what he was saying
and were afraid to ask him.
Then they came to Capernaum;
and when he was in the house Jesus asked them,
“What were you arguing about on the way?”
But they were silent,
for on the way they had argued with one another
who was the greatest.
Jesus sat down, called the twelve, and said to them,
“Whoever wants to be first
must be last of all and servant of all.”
Then he took a little child and put it among them;
and taking it in his arms, he said to them,
“Whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me,
and whoever welcomes me
welcomes not me but the one who sent me.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

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Q. How does this differ from striving for your personal best?

Q. What did the disciples seek as they walked to Capernaum?

Q. What did Jesus seek for the disciples?

Q. What does this reading say to you about hospitality?

Q. What does it say to you about Jesus' relationship with children?

CLOSING

FOR REFLECTION...

As a catechist, I am called to give witness to my faith as I help others discern where God is calling them. How can I give witness as I live more intentionally the universal call to holiness in the day-to-day activities of my life?

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RESOURCE TO CELEBRATE CATECHISTS

“WHAT DO YOU SEEK?”



DISCERNMENT

PRAYER



O God,

You tell me that you have plans for me, “plans for welfare not for woe, plans for a future full of hope” (Jeremiah 29:11). Give me the wisdom of your Spirit so that I can see the shape of your plans in the gifts you have given me and in the circumstances of my daily life. Give me the freedom of your Spirit, to seek you with all my heart and to choose your will above all else.

Amen.



DISCERNMENT

How can we know if something comes from the Holy Spirit or if it stems from the spirit of the world or the spirit of the devil? The only way is through discernment, which calls for something more than intelligence or common sense. It is a gift which we must implore. If we ask with confidence that the Holy Spirit grant us this gift, and then seek to develop it through prayer, reflection, reading and good counsel, then surely we will grow in this spiritual endowment.

Pope Francis, *Gaudete et Exsultate: On the Call to Holiness in Today's World* (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2018).

“What do you seek?” Jesus asks this question of the apostles, and if we listen closely, we can hear him asking us the same question “What do you seek?”

What do I seek? What do I desire? What are my deepest desires? Discernment is learning to identify and acknowledge my desires and discover what those desires are moving me towards. Practising discernment can bring us to deeper freedom to respond to God’s invitation to receive love and give love in the concrete opportunities of daily life.

Check out **this article** for more information and a guide to learning to discern.

“The Spirit speaks and acts through the happenings in the life of each person, which in themselves are inexplicit or ambiguous, insofar as they are open to different interpretations. Discernment is required to reveal their meaning and to make a decision.”

(Preparatory Document of the XV Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops on
“Young People, the Faith and Vocational Discernment,” n. 2.)

.....

Taking time for silence and prayer is necessary so we can discover what God is saying to us in the happenings of our lives. In silence we can discern the paths of holiness to which the Lord is calling us.

Prayer is a key element of discernment. The **brief vocation stories found here** all speak of the importance of prayer in the process of discernment.

“... how does a person live the good news of the Gospel and respond to the call which the Lord addresses to all those he encounters, whether through marriage, the ordained ministry or the consecrated life?”

(Preparatory Document of the XV Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops on
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The call common to all human beings is the call to be holy. The universal expression of holiness is love of God and love of neighbour. This universal call plays out in the particulars of each person's life and the concrete path of our journey. Responding to God's particular calling for us involves trusting in God's goodness, interior freedom from our attachments, and courage to take a step forward.

Here you can discover five concrete places where we can find God and live out the good news of the Gospel – loving God and loving our neighbour.

FOR REFLECTION...

- Q What do these reflections suggest to you about your idea and practice of discernment? Think about your own experience and understanding of discernment.
- Q When you reflect on your experience of discernment, what feelings arise?
- Q What insights have come to you from this reflection?
- Q How might you use the guides for discernment to assist a young person?

FOR THE BELIEVER, THE QUESTION BECOMES EVEN MORE INTENSE AND PROFOUND, NAMELY, HOW DOES A PERSON LIVE THE GOOD NEWS OF THE GOSPEL AND RESPOND TO THE CALL WHICH THE LORD ADDRESSES TO ALL THOSE HE ENCOUNTERS, WHETHER THROUGH MARRIAGE, THE ORDAINED MINISTRY OR THE CONSECRATED LIFE?

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“THE STAGE OF “RECOGNIZING” FOCUSES ON THE ABILITY TO LISTEN AND ON ONE’S FEELINGS AND EMOTIONS, WITHOUT AVOIDING THE ARDUOUS EFFORT OF SILENCE, A CRITICAL STEP IN PERSONAL GROWTH...”

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

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“...TRULY FREE AND RESPONSIBLE CHOICES...”

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**“RECOGNIZING’ REQUIRES MAKING THIS EMOTIONAL RICHNESS EMERGE AND
ASCERTAINING THESE FEELINGS WITHOUT MAKING A JUDGMENT.”**

CLOSING

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RESOURCE TO CELEBRATE CATECHISTS

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VOCATION

PRAYER

Lord, Make Me an Instrument of Your Peace

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace.

Where there is hatred, let me sow love;

where there is injury, pardon;

where there is doubt, faith;

where there is despair, hope;

where there is darkness, light;

where there is sadness, joy.

O Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek

to be consoled as to console;

to be understood as to understand;

to be loved as to love.

For it is in giving that we receive;

it is in pardoning that we are pardoned;

and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.

Amen.

St. Francis of Assisi

VOCATION

It is difficult not to be inspired when a young person goes above and beyond to do their part in creating a more just world. **Malala Yousafzai** is an example of a young person who understood herself within a much greater context and courageously spoke out against injustice.



Photo: Ryan's Well Foundation

While still in the first grade, Ryan Hreljac decided to raise enough money to drill one well to give clean water to a school in Uganda. He ended up raising \$45,000, which led to the establishment of Ryan's Well Foundation. Check out his story [**here.**](#)

“The Bible has numerous accounts of young people receiving a vocational call and their making a response. In the light of faith, they gradually become aware of God’s plan of profound love for each person. This is God’s intention in every one of his actions...”

Preparatory Document of the XV Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops on “Young People, the Faith and Vocational Discernment,” n. 1.

FOR REFLECTION...

- Q What justice do you seek? Thirst for? What ignites your passion for a more just world?
- Q What lessons can we glean from the stories of young people responding to a vocational call?
- Q What response does God call you to make?
- Q What do you need to do to respond to this call?

PRAYER

Teach me your ways, O Lord;
make them known to me.
Teach me to live according to your truth,
for you are my God, who saves me.
I always trust in you.

Amen.

Psalm 25.4

VOCATION

The Irish band U2's "I Still Haven't Found What I'm Looking For" has been cited as one of the greatest rock songs of all time, but have you paid close attention to the lyrics? Listen to the song [here](#).

No one said following God's call would be easy, and it may involve some missteps!

U2 (music) and Bono (lyrics), "I Still Haven't Found What I'm Looking For" (from the album The Joshua Tree, 1987).

"The Lord asked Abraham and Sarah to leave their country, but only in a gradual process -not without mistaken steps -which clarified what was initially a mysterious 'land that I will show you.'"

Preparatory Document of the XV Ordinary General Assembly of Synod of Bishops on "Young People, the Faith and Vocational Discernment" n. 3.



It is comforting to know that as far back in time as Abraham and Sarah, people didn't always get it 100% right the first, or maybe even second, or third time.

FOR REFLECTION...

- Q Can you think of a time when you made a choice (or choices) that led you away from your true purpose? How did you know?
- Q Were you able to forgive yourself for making errant choices?
- Q Did making this choice help you to understand your true calling in a different way?
- Q What response does God call you to make?
- Q In what ways could you assist a young person who still hasn't found what he or she is looking for?

PRAYER

.....

Lord Jesus, in journeying towards the Synod, your Church turns her attention to all the young people of the world. We pray that they might boldly take charge of their lives, aim for the most beautiful and profound things of life and always keep their hearts unencumbered. Accompanied by wise and generous guides, help them respond to the call you make to each of them, to realize a proper plan of life and achieve happiness.

Keep their hearts open to dreaming great dreams and make them concerned for the good of others. Like the Beloved Disciple, may they stand at the foot of the Cross, to receive your Mother as a gift from you. May they be witnesses to your Resurrection and be aware that you are at their side as they joyously proclaim you as Lord.⁵

Amen.

=====

VOCATION

The Lord's call – let it be said at the outset – is not as clear-cut as any of those things we can hear, see or touch in our daily experience. God comes silently and discreetly, 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, then, to learn how 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, in order to learn how to view things with the eyes of faith, and to keep ourselves open to the surprises of the Spirit.

Message of His Holiness Pope Francis for the 2018 World Day of Vocations

“...as for all important things in life, vocational discernment is a long process unfolding over time, during which one continues to monitor the signs used by the Lord to indicate and specify a vocation that is very personal and unique.”

Preparatory Document of the XV Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops on “Young People, the Faith and Vocational Discernment,” n. 3.

Fr. Michael Schmitz speaks of vocation on three levels: the **universal call to holiness**, the **primary relationship** by which we become the persons we are called to be, and the **mission** that we are called to respond to each day. Click **here** to learn more.



Photo: Ascension Presents, YouTube Channel

FOR REFLECTION...

- Q Where does your heart reside?
- Q How would you like to express your purpose in a way that makes the world a better place? Are you already doing this?
- Q What feelings arise when you think about this?
- Q Do any images or symbols come to mind when you think of yourself expressing your purpose in this way?
- Q Do you gain any new insights?
- Q How do you imagine integrating your insights into your life?
- Q How could you assist a young adult to know the relationship by which he/she will become the person he/she is called to be?

“TIME IS FUNDAMENTAL IN VERIFYING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF A DECISION MADE. AS TAUGHT IN EVERY PAGE OF THE BIBLE, EVERY VOCATION IS DIRECTED TOWARDS A MISSION UNDERTAKEN WITH RELUCTANCE OR ENTHUSIASM.”

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“...VOCATIONAL DISCERNMENT, THAT IS, THE 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.”

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