

**7-Parish Vocations Committee
Notes January 24, 2024**

Present: **Holy Cross/Our Mother of Sorrows:** Rick Cammilleri, Mary Ann DeLucenay,
St. Charles Borromeo: Mark Stechschulte, **St. John the Evangelist:** Rick Paoletti,
St. Lawrence: Deacon Ed Giblin, **St. Leo the Great:** Neil Combs, **St. Mark's:**
 Lorraine Vancour, **Facilitator/Link to the Pastoral Planning Task Force:** Karen Rinefield

Purpose of this group: to develop and implement strategies for the 7 parishes to work together to encourage vocations—in general, to the priesthood/diaconate, to religious life, to lay ecclesial ministry

Opening prayer: Mk 1:21-28, faith sharing, intercessory prayers, Our Father

Welcome to our new member, Rick Cammilleri from Our Mother of Sorrows

Sharing of materials

- Lorraine brought copies of information about the following:
 - what is currently being done in the Archdiocese of Detroit to foster priestly vocations
 - the Diocese of Rochester’s website: rocpriest.org
 - results of a survey of newly ordained priests done by CARA (the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate” at Georgetown
 - a copy of the calendar of Monthly Prayer Requests for Priests
 - materials from VianneyVocations.com
- Ed shared the following after the meeting:
 - A PDF of the ages of diocesan permanent deacons (attached)
 - Priesthood Sunday 2024 (a day to honor our priests) is scheduled for September 29.
 - The website vocationministry.com which has a wealth of resources.

Discussion of brainstormed possible action steps to foster vocations to the priesthood

Possible Action Step	Comments at this meeting
1) Coordinate efforts with the existing diocesan vocations awareness team so that parish-based efforts are in synch with the broader diocesan approach. Highlight more prominently the <i>rocpriest.org</i> website on parish social media. Complement their in-progress efforts and support them at the parish level.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is not much on the website. • Fisher gatherings of those exploring a vocation are one diocesan initiative. • The website includes posters of present seminarians. <u>Action:</u> if the poster is not displayed at your church, talk with your Pastor/Pastoral Administrator. • We could offer to pilot any parish-based programs that the vocations awareness team is proposing. • If we highlight vocations in parish social media we should remember that most young people are not on Facebook.

<p>2) Have different priests preside/preach at the parishes, asking that some of our newer and older priests speak about their vocational call, the joys and challenges of priesthood, etc. Such a “pulpit exchange” would introduce parishioners to priests of differing ages and pastoral experience, and perhaps pique the interest of discerners. The downside is that if this is done at a Sunday liturgy the target audience is very small, given the general attendance rate of young men, and it is not focused toward the women in attendance. It’s the risk of a “vocation talk” at a Sunday liturgy—the benefit is exposure to a lot of folks, but the reality is that the net is being cast for a limited few in this particular instance.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If many young men are not there, we could direct this to parents and grandparents. • There is the liturgical difficulty of setting a particular theme in the homily and also having a variety of homilists across our parishes. • We might need to reshape this action step if we want to pursue it. • Perhaps something similar could be built into a Lent retreat or another program.
<p>3) Stories about how different priests reached their decisions to pursue priesthood—short videos sent through Flocknotes or social media?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The vocations videos created by the Catholic Courier last summer were well received. • We could also do something similar for permanent deacons. • Perhaps tie these into USCCB dates that emphasize vocations. • We could create short videos ourselves—they are simple to create.
<p>4) Incorporate a vocation talk into faith formation or youth ministry. Find out what kids know about priests, tell/explain what they actually do.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Would need to work closely with the catechetical leaders and youth ministers.
<p>5) invite altar boys and their parents to a special meeting.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep girls who serve at the altar in mind.
<p>6) Both Holy Cross and Our Mother of Sorrows have displays about vocations. We could replicate those at the other parishes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mary Ann brought copies of some of the resources available at those displays.
<p>7) Focus on vocations at Adoration and request the prayers of those participating for vocations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We could have a special time (e.g. the first Wednesday of the month) or a separate evening and pass out a vocation prayer card.
<p>8) talk to youth ministry leaders to build snippets about vocations into their programs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Let’s combine #4 and #8 into a single possible action item since they overlap.
<p>9) Advertise the monthly prayer requests for priests or do something similar for seminarians.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One copy is available on a table at Holy Cross—do the same at the other parishes? • Put on parish social media?
<p>10) Invite a priest to dinner (to re-normalize the priesthood to families with younger kids.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Account for both introverts and extroverts who are priests. • Could be something simple: invite a priest to join a group for pizza.

<p>11) Offer a shadow program—spend a day/afternoon with a priest.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer to any boy who is interested. • Downside: the boy couldn't be with the priest if the priest were doing something confidential. • Need to maintain safe environment practices: no one child and one adult situations.
<p>12) A “day in the life” night: explain priesthood, how cool it is to be a priest (ability to reconcile, celebrate Mass, be the conduit for changing bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Christ).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Combine #11 and #12.

New item to be added: have a traveling chalice or icon in each parish that goes monthly from family to family with a prayer for vocations.

Action: Karen will modify the spreadsheet of possible actions based on what was shared this meeting and run that draft past the committee. Then she will coordinate a process where each member will include their preferences for the items we should address first. All of this will be done before the next meeting.

Discussion of brainstormed possible action steps to foster vocations (in general, to the permanent diaconate, to religious life, and to lay ecclesial ministry) deferred to a future meeting.

Next meeting: Wednesday, March 13 at 7:00 pm, in room 7 of the Borromeo Ministry Center at St. Charles

Closing prayer: Hail Mary