



Praying for Vocations as a Family

What is prayer?

“For me, prayer is a surge of the heart; it is a simple look turned toward heaven, it is a cry of recognition and of love, embracing both trial and joy.” – St. Thérèse of Lisieux

Prayer is essentially a vital and personal relationship with God. When we pray, we have a heart-to-heart conversation with the One who loved us first. Prayer should be as simple as sharing your thoughts, dreams, fears, joys, and trials with God and asking him for your specific needs.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church states that there are 3 types or “expressions” of prayer: vocal, meditative, and contemplative.

- **Vocal** By words, mental or vocal, our prayer takes flesh. It is the spoken prayer, through which we translate our feelings externally. (e.g. The Our Father, Hail Mary, etc.)
- **Meditative** Meditation is above all a quest to understand the why and how of the Christian life, in order to adhere and respond to what the Lord is asking. Meditation engages thought, imagination, emotion, and desire.
- **Contemplative** Contemplative prayer is silence. It is a gaze of faith fixed on Jesus, an attentiveness to the Word of God, a silent love.

“Prayer is the raising of one's mind and heart to God or the requesting of good things from God.” – St. John Damascene

“Rejoice always, pray constantly, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.” (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18)

What does vocation mean?

The word “vocation” comes from the Latin “vocare,” meaning “to call”. We are all called by God to be holy, that is to make a gift of ourselves for His glory, to serve others, and to proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ. Some are called to the vocation of marriage, others to the priesthood and/or religious life, and some to life as single laypeople.

**For more resources on vocations, please visit <https://www.dsj.org/about-us/vocations/>*

What is discernment?

Discernment is prayerfully seeking God's will in our lives. It takes time, patience, a willing heart, humility, and trust that God does indeed want what is best for us. The fruits of good discernment are joy, peace, and fulfillment.

Praying for our children's vocation

I recall in my youth ministry years several teens shared with me that they heard God calling them to be a priest or a religious sister. Some parents, unfortunately, weren't supportive and that “calling” was disregarded. Some shared with me that their child wasn't mature enough, others said that their teenage son was really into dating girls, yet others stated that they were paying for their child's education and that they already had plans for him/her. Most of us parents want what's best for our children. Yet often we forget that they are not our own. They belong to God. For many parents, the thought of their child consecrating entirely to God and embracing a life of celibacy is frightening. As parents of six children, Nora and I can attest to this. It's okay to feel a little uncertain about our child's future, but we must learn to trust in God. We must pray that they may respond to God's calling in their lives. And if they express any desire to follow God through the priesthood or religious life, we must encourage and support them in any way we can.

– Joel de Loera, Director of Family Life & Spirituality

**For more resources on the family, please visit www.dsj.org/evangelization/family-life/*

Instructions on How to Pray with the Vocations Cross

1. Create a Prayer Space using the Vocations Cross.
2. Gather as a family at morning, evening, or night time.
3. Do the Sign of the Cross.
4. Together say this prayer to the Holy Spirit:

**Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful. And kindle in them the fire of your love.
Send forth your Spirit and they shall be created. And you will renew the face of the earth.
Lord, by the light of the Holy Spirit you have taught the hearts of your faithful.
In the same Spirit help us to relish what is right and always rejoice in your consolation.
We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

5. Read "Praying for Vocations as a Family" on the other side of this page. *(You don't have to read it every day)*
6. Discuss one question per day:
 - Day 1: What is a vocation and what are the four different types?
 - Day 2: What is discernment and why is praying so important to discern a vocation?
 - Day 3: What is the difference between a professional career and a vocation?
 - Day 4: For parents: How will you encourage and support your child's discernment process?
 - Day 5: For children/teens: Which of the four vocations do you think you will be called to?
 - Day 6: For children/teens: What type of prayer (vocal, meditative, or contemplative) will you implement each day to listen to God?
 - Day 7: Each family member will say a spontaneous prayer for each other.
7. Pray the **Creating a Culture of Vocation Prayer**

Heavenly Father, your divine Son taught us to pray to the Lord of the harvest to send laborers into His vineyard. We earnestly beg You to bless our parishes, our schools, and our diocese with many more priests, religious, and lay faithful who will know you intimately, love you fervently, and serve you joyfully through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. We pray that you continuously call our young people to a living encounter with your Son in the Word and Eucharist, that they might be made worthy ministers of your Holy Catholic Church.

Strengthen them with the support of their parents, teachers, and friends on earth and all the angels and saints in heaven. May the ever Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of the Church, intercede for us that we might listen to the Word and act on it. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

St. Joseph, Patron of our Diocese, pray for us!

Other Prayers That Will Enrich the Spiritual Life of Your Family

Holy Rosary + Divine Mercy Chaplet + Liturgy of the Hours + Angelus + Prayer to St. Joseph + St. Michael the Archangel Prayer + Pope Francis' Coronavirus Prayer

**To find these and more prayer resources online, please visit www.dsj.org/evangelization/family-life/resources/family-daily-schedule/*

Rev. Andrew C. Nguyen
Director of Vocations and Seminarians
(408) 983-0255



**DIOCESE OF
SAN JOSE**

Mr. Joel de Loera
Director of Family Life & Spirituality
(408) 983-0135

Sr. Rosario Munoz
Associate Director of Vocations and Seminarians
(408) 983-0155

Email: Vocations@dsj.org