

DIOCESE OF LIMERICK

VOCATIONS



MARCH 2020

“Vocation does not come from a voice out there calling me to be something I am not. It comes from a voice in here calling me to be the person I was born to be, to fulfill the original self hood given me at birth by God.”

-Thomas Merton

IN THIS ISSUE...

How to be more open to your vocation

Sister Mara Grace's Vocation Story

How Can a Priest Forgive Sin?

Upcoming Events

Recommended Reading



HOW CAN I BE MORE OPEN TO MY VOCATION?

Whether you are discerning your vocation or just making a decision in life, here are some great tips for discernment and growth in holiness from Father Stephen Wang in the book, "How to Discern your Vocation."

Live your Catholic faith

Give your life to God

Live a life of chastity

Deepen your prayer life

Join a Catholic group

Live a life of service

Create some space in your life for silence

Find some good spiritual reading

Grow in virtue

Talk honestly with someone you trust



DISCOVERING TRUE HAPPINESS

The Vocation Story of Sister Mara Grace Gore, OP

“God wants to give you the desires of your heart!” This line which I heard at a youth group retreat in secondary school continued to resonate in my soul as I discerned my vocation. While I cannot recall when I first learned what a vocation was, I clearly remember the first time God put it in my heart to discern my own. When I was thirteen years old, my older brother announced that he felt that God was calling him to be a priest. This was a shock to me, first of all, because I did not know people still joined the priesthood (most of the priests I knew were in their fifties or older) and secondly because it was my brother. Witnessing his first profession of vows three years later was a huge source of grace for me. Seeing my brother offer himself completely to God instilled in me a deep desire to do something radical for God, even though I did not know how or what that meant.



I wanted to find that special mission to which God was calling me. I began to pray that God would reveal His will to me and that I would have the strength to do it.

The youth group in my parish helped foster this desire to do God’s will. Through weekly meetings and occasional retreats, I was learning that each person is called by God to a specific vocation in the Church and that whatever vocation He has created us to fulfill will make us infinitely happy. My prayer slowly became, “Lord, reveal to me the vocation for which you have made me, and give me the strength to answer the call.” It was my father who introduced me to religious life when he came upon a website for the Nashville Dominican Sisters of Saint Cecilia. He mentioned the community to me and I was very intimidated by the idea. The only nuns I had experienced were from movies and they seemed to be older and unhappy, but when I met the sisters, I found there weren’t what I had imagined, but joyful, youthful sisters.

By the time graduation from secondary school rolled around, I was still very unsure about what God wanted for my life and I thought it would be good to go to college so I could continue to pray about my vocation.



I enjoyed university, but also experienced a lot of restlessness. When I came home for the summer after my second year, I decided to visit the convent again. While there, I went to the Blessed Sacrament and experienced a deep peace and a clarity that to be a sister was the deepest desire of my heart. Everything after that just fell into place. Things that I thought would be obstacles to my entrance were cleared away and just reaffirmed that I was doing what God desired. After entering thirteen years ago, I cannot imagine my life any other way!

FROM ARCHBISHOP MAURICE COUVE DE MURVILLE...

If you are wondering what to do with your life,
if you feel you want to do something really great with it,
if you don't want to fall into a conventional, self-centered
existence,
if you want to help other people in the deepest way possible,
where they most need help,
then think about the service of the Gospel in the priesthood.

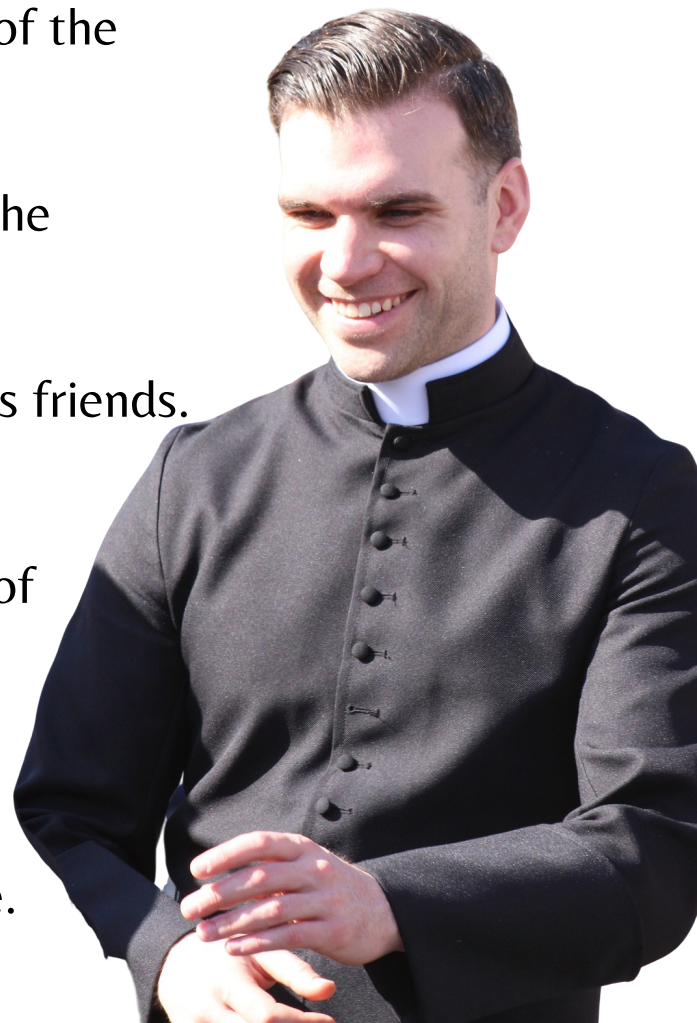
If you become a priest, you will never be rich,
you will have to give up the love of a spouse
for the love of everyone you meet;
you will have to give up your family commitments;
you will often be on the move;
you will never have a mortgage;
you will be under obedience to the leader of the Church
just as Jesus was obedient to the will of the
Father.

But if you are faithful to the ideal of the
priesthood,
you will have the deep happiness
which Jesus gives to those who are His friends.

One last thing:
you don't have to be perfect to think of
being a priest.

Jesus chooses ordinary people, not
moral heroes.

You just have to want to serve Him;
He will give you the rest in due course.





HOW CAN A PRIEST FORGIVE SIN?

Every priest has been ordained by a successor of the apostles. Before Jesus ascended to the Father, He gave the apostles (and their successors) a twofold power: to forgive sins or to hold them bound, which means to retain them unforgiven. Several things follow from this. First, the apostles could not know which sins to forgive and which not to forgive unless they were first told the sins by the sinner. This implies confession. Second, their authority was not merely to proclaim that God had already forgiven sins or that he would forgive sins if there were proper repentance. If God has already forgiven all of a man's sins, or will forgive them all (past and future) upon a single act of repentance, then it makes little sense to tell the apostles they have been given the power to "retain" sins, since forgiveness would be all-or-nothing and nothing could be "retained." Furthermore, if at conversion we were forgiven all sins, past, present, and future, it would make no sense for Christ to require us to pray, "And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors," which he explained is required because "if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father also will forgive you; but if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses" (Matt. 6:12–15). If forgiveness really can be partial—not a once-for-all thing—how is one to tell which sins have been forgiven, which not, in the absence of a priestly decision? No, the biblical passages make sense only if the apostles and their successors were given a real authority.

Jesus is telling the apostles that they have been empowered to do something. He does not say, "When God forgives men's sins, they are forgiven." He uses the second person plural: "you." And he talks about the apostles forgiving, not preaching. When he refers to retaining sins, he uses the same form: "When you hold them bound, they are held bound."

Is the Catholic who confesses his sins to a priest any better off than the non-Catholic who confesses directly to God? Yes. First, he seeks forgiveness the way Christ intended. Second, by confessing to a priest, the Catholic learns a lesson in humility, which is avoided when one confesses only through private prayer. Third, the Catholic receives sacramental graces the non-Catholic doesn't get; through the sacrament of penance sins are forgiven and graces are obtained. Fourth, the Catholic is assured that his sins are forgiven; he does not have to rely on a subjective "feeling." Lastly, the Catholic can also obtain sound advice on avoiding sin in the future. Just before Christ left this world, he gave the apostles special authority to make God's forgiveness present to all people, and the whole Christian world accepted this, until just a few centuries ago. If there is an "invention" here, it is not the sacrament of penance, but the notion that the sacramental forgiveness of sins is not to be found in the Bible or in early Christian history.

UPCOMING EVENTS

DIocese OF LIMERICK
YOUNG ADULTS

THEOLOGY ON TAP

8PM AT BOBBY BYRNES

10 MAR

FIGHTING THIS PRESENT DARKNESS
IS THERE HOPE?

Paul César Abou Diab

FINGER FOOD PROVIDED

Contact vocations@limerickdiocese.org for more information

INSPIRATIONAL SPEAKERS MASS WORKSHOPS WORSHIP



March 7th 2020
@ Knock Shrine



Follow me...

LIMERICK DIOCESE
VOCATIONS

TUES 24 MARCH 2020
ANDREW DINNER
FOR SINGLE MEN AGES 18-35
INTERESTED IN THE
PRIESTHOOD

Join Priests of the Diocese for
an evening at the Cathedral House
to learn more about the priesthood

and I
will make
you fishers of men.
Matthew 4:19

To Book email
vocations@limerickdiocese.org

Monastic Day Retreat

Saturday 21st March

9am-5pm

Talks:

Donation only

Monasticism

All Welcome!

Monastic Saints

Life in a Contemporary Monastery

Participate in the Divine Office and Adoration
Lunch Provided

Monastic Experience

16th - 18th April

Opportunity for Women discerning Religious Life to
experience life in our monastery.

Contact: Mother Prioress

St. Benedict's Priory, The Mount, Cobh, Co. Cork Tel 021 4811354
cobhtyburnconvent@gmail.com

Booking essential for both events as places are limited

UPWARD CALL

Retreat

Ennismore Retreat Centre, Cork

St. Paul: a Man for our Times

13-15 March 2020

for young adults 18-35

cost
€60

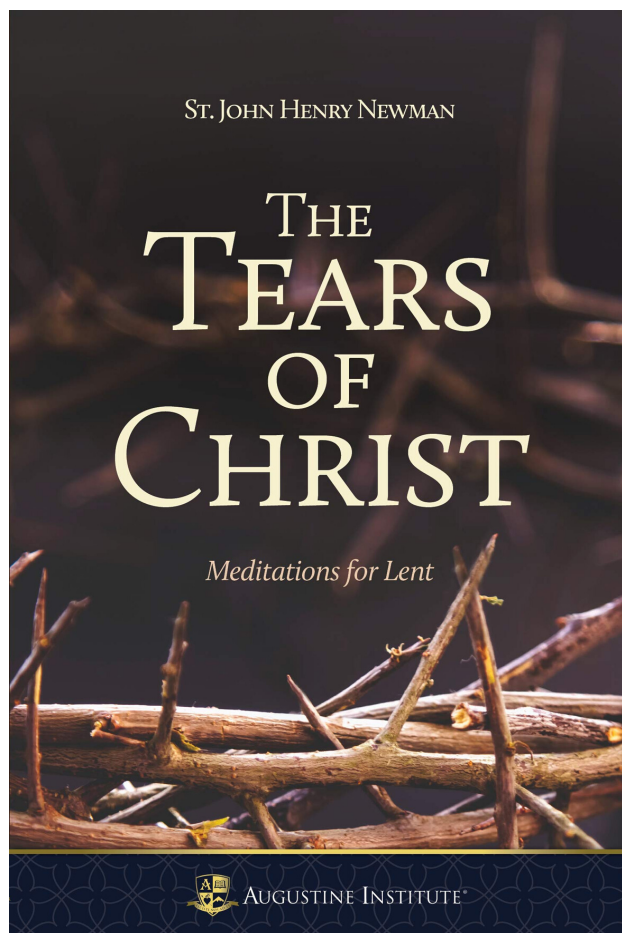
Weekend includes Mass,
conferences, meals, prayer
time, socials, and much more!

Reserve your spot by 1 March:

LIMERICK@OP-TN.ORG



RECOMMENDED READING



The Tears of Christ Meditations for Lent

by Saint John Henry Newman

This collection of meditations takes us to the heart of the interior life of St. John Henry Newman who was recently canonized by the Catholic Church. They offer a beautiful devotional aid for the season of Lent. Drawn chiefly from his sermons and gently modernized, these meditations offer a share in the fruit of his contemplation, that we might the better enjoy with him the "one thing which is all in all to us," which is "to live in Christ's presence, to hear his voice, to see his countenance."

-adapted from the back cover of the book

"Jesus wept, not merely from the deep thoughts of his understanding but from spontaneous tenderness, from the goodness and mercy, the encompassing loving-kindness and exuberant affection of the Son of God for his own work, the race of man."

- St. John Henry Newman

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VOCATION OFFICE

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