

VOCATIONS - PRIORITY

WE PRAY AND WORK FOR VOCATIONS

Jesus said, "Pray that the Lord of the harvest will send laborers into the harvest."
We take this prayer and work for vocations very seriously.

PRAYER PRIORITY

*WE PRAY THAT
THE LORD OF
THE HARVEST
WILL SEND
LABORERS INTO
THE HARVEST.*

GOD'S PART

* One aspect of a vocation comes from the spirit of God moving within the mind and heart of young people prompting them to think about exploring a vocation to the priesthood or consecrated life.

OUR PART

*Parallel with this is the way God uses His people, the community, to call from their members young people with the qualities they would like to see in their Pastoral Leaders. The invitation not only comes from God, it also comes from His people.

VOCATION

"COME
FOLLOW
ME."

"YOU WOULD
MAKE A GOOD
PRIEST."

"HERE I AM,
LORD."

Who are the young people in your parish, who have the qualities you would like to see in priesthood, and religious life or Pastoral Leadership? Tell them so. Invite them to consider a vocation to the priesthood or a consecrated life; or a lay ministry in service to God's people as part of their other vocation. God will not be silent in the heart. We cannot be silent in doing our part to call young people to priesthood or a religious life as well. Leave to them and to others to prayerfully discern the will of God for them. By God's mysterious will, some have a vocation to priesthood and religious life and some do not. Our responsibility is to express a call to them and to pray for God's will to be done.

TASK FORCE QUESTIONS FOR PARISHES AND PARISHIONERS

Within the general focus area of Stewardship, Vocations, and specifically Vocations to the Priesthood are being given priority in Pastoral Planning of the Task Force.

STEWARDSHIP FOCUS

How does your Parish help members to discern their gifts and how God may be calling them to share those gifts?

How are people encouraged to evaluate a vocation to the married life, the consecrated life, the priesthood, diaconate or single life? What tools does your Parish give to people to discern this?

In what ways does your community help young men and older men discern the call to priesthood?

FAMILY

In what ways do parents of your Parish encourage their sons to consider vocations to the priesthood?

In what ways do parents encourage their daughters to consider vocations to consecrated life?

How are our parents assisted by the Church/Parish to do this?

PARISH SUPPORT

How is prayer a part of your Parish's support for vocations to the priesthood?

What about our culture discourages vocations to the priesthood?

What could your Parish do to address these cultural issues?

What do you see that the Parish can do to encourage more young people to consider vocations to the priesthood, vocations to consecrated life, or service in lay ministry?

PERSONAL

ACTION FOR EVERY PARISHIONER

Have you told any young person that you see in them the qualities that you value in a priest or pastoral leader, and encourage them to consider God's call in their life?

PASTORAL PLANNING TASK FORCE NEWS CEDAR RAPIDS DEANERY

SHARING AVAILABLE PASTORAL LEADERS

The Cedar Rapids Deanery Pastoral Planning Task Force (Task Force) and Parish Leaders are now developing and considering possible ways, that Catholics within the Deanery might be served with a reconfiguration of Pastoral Leaders and parishes. Because the Deanery will possibly have two fewer priests by July 2010 and four to five fewer priests by 2015, the Task Force was convened to review different ways of using priests, parish personnel, and parish facilities within the Deanery. As previously reported, the Task Force is composed of two lay representatives from each parish, two priest representatives, and two representatives of the Deacons. Two lay co-chairs and two representatives of the Archdiocese serve as resources to the Task Force. The work of the Task Force has been progressing since August of 2009.

The Task Force has reviewed various parish utilization plans, (Scenarios), for the sharing of priests, pastoral leaders and the use of worship space for all 23 parishes in the Deanery. Task Force representatives were asked to determine with their own parish/parish council whether other Scenarios could be developed and to rank Scenarios for their parish by order of preference. The results of this discussion were reported to the Task Force at its September 14th meeting. Several new Scenarios were produced following parish review.

Following the September 14th meeting, all Scenarios were studied to determine which Scenarios would achieve the actual release of one priest or more from service within the Deanery. Because of the need to serve the Deanery with fewer priests, only those Scenarios that actually reduce the need for priest personnel within the Deanery are considered viable for future planning purposes, (Options). Now that the Options for releasing priests within the Deanery have been identified, the Task Force has been asked to combine those Options into plans, (Alternatives). Of necessity, those plans must



OUR PRIESTS - MASS & MORE

Most of us experience our Priests as Celebrants of our Eucharistic Community Worship. By God's grace a priest is ordained to be the Sacramental presence of Christ with us. Priesthood, however, is that, and much more. By the grace of their Ordination, priests are given an awesome responsibility. A priest is ordained for the love of God and the spiritual welfare of the community. As Sacramental representative of Christ among us, a priest is called to be sanctifier, preacher/teacher of the Word, and a good shepherd/good leader of God's people. Of course, the priest must do what only he can do among the people, but he is never absolved from responsibility for all three of these major areas of his ministry.

enable the Deanery to operate with two less priests in 2010 and four to five fewer priests by 2015. This work is complicated because the development of Alternatives requires coordination of the Options among all parishes in the Deanery.

Some of the Options entail new arrangements for linking or clustering of parishes. The Task Force is exploring all possible sets of Options as it develops the various Alternatives for consideration and inclusion in its final report. As was done in the development of Scenarios, the Task Force Representatives are now being asked to develop planning Alternatives in conjunction with their parish/parish council. The results of this discussion will be received by the Task Force at its October 26th meeting. The Final Report of the Task Force with Scenarios, Options and Alternatives will be forwarded to the Archbishop for his prayerful discernment before any decisions are made that will change the existing operation of parishes within the Deanery.