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Message for BBNeighbourhoods 5 May 2020

My dear people, my particular prayer intention this week is for vocations to the priesthood and the consecrated life, because in our community of the Church, this week is dedicated to the discernment of vocations. I invite you to join me in prayer for this intention because we have a need for generous people to serve the community of the Church.

The Church needs more priests and consecrated women and men if its ministry is to have the fullness that its apostolate to the world demands. As well as prayer, the Church needs action. We need to encourage all baptised people to discover their personal vocation in life. Most people will find their vocation in the world as laity. However, many will consider the Church's need for priests to shepherd the flock of Christ, and for consecrated women and men to give witness to Kingdom values by a life of service to others. Living out our Christian vocation each day demands that we commit ourselves to becoming holy.

As each man and woman, boy and girl responds to their vocation in life, they take up the special role:

1. of preaching the Word of God to the world,
2. of the enrichment of the Christian family and
3. ultimately of the building up of the Kingdom of God.

This week, I would like to invite you to listen to what God is asking you to do with your life. I encourage you to step up and to meet the challenge of living your faith! To that end, I offer you some guidance from the Sacred Scripture. I hope that you might find inspiration and direction as you say "yes" to God in your life and in the Church.

In the greeting from the letter to the Galatians, Paul boldly attributes his *vocation* unconditionally to the will of God: *Paul an apostle – sent neither by human commission nor from human authorities, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father, who raised him from the dead* (Galatians 1:1). There are many examples in Sacred Scripture of people who, like Paul, have received a personal call from God. This call always has a similar pattern.

- God's call is always personal, made to men or women in a given place and time.
- While the call is to an individual, it is always in response to the needs of the People of God (e.g. Moses [Ex 3:7-12](#)).
- In this regard, God forever looks to the community, calling people to leadership and service within it.
- The reaction is not always placid; in fact, the initial response is one of shock to the one who is called (e.g. [Jeremiah 1:4-6](#)).



- More often than not the one called will not reject the proposal, but will question, *how can this come about?* (e.g. Mary in [Lk 1:34](#)).
- After grappling with God's call for some time, the individual often discovers his or her life is changed.
- The initial shock shakes the entire foundation of life to the point where the response is one of freedom (e.g. Paul [Acts 9:1-20](#)), and the one called is prepared to leave behind family, friends, in sum, the familiar life (e.g. Abraham [Gen 12:1-4](#)).
- God's call is charged with a task.
- The person is called to do something, to lead, to guide, to teach, to go on a *mission* (e.g. [Isaiah 6:6-9](#)).
- But, they are never sent alone. God promises to be with them (e.g. David [1Sam 16:13](#)).
- God pledges fidelity, and the one called is often surprised that with God, all things are possible.

With these words of encouragement, I hope that the Holy Spirit will animate everyone throughout our diocese to live the Christian faith joyfully.

If God is calling you to be a priest, a deacon, or a consecrated woman or man, then know that you are not alone. Don't be afraid because when God asks us to do something, the Holy Spirit gives us the gifts necessary to do it.

Please visit our vocations team www.bbcatholic.org.au/our-faith/vocations

Every blessing in the Lord,

+ Anthony