

Part III: Stewards of Vocation

We all have a vocation. It is often easy to get caught up in a singular focus to the conversation of vocations. We tend to focus on our *own* vocation. We focus on how our vocations may affect our families and friends. We focus on finding a vocation for ourselves that we enjoy and find comfortable. However, how much time is spent reflecting on the vocations of others? How much time do we spend as a Parish community sharing and acknowledging each other's vocations and how those might be shared within the Parish community? How often do we acknowledge our Pastor's vocation or others in religious life in our Parish? Taking a look at not just our own vocation, but those vocations around us helps create stewardship opportunities throughout the Parish.

How we celebrate and care for those in religious life is another best practice in good stewardship. Think about this, how often do you celebrate a spouse or family member's birthday? Sounds like an odd question, right? How about a wedding anniversary? Many Priest and others in religious life who have taken a vow of celibacy see their church as spouse. Many Pastors see their Parish community as family. If that is the case, how do we treat them as family? It is often clear how they see us as family, by ministering to us and being available at our beck and call in times of need. However, do we acknowledge their call? Do we celebrate their accomplishments; share in their joys and worries? Many in religious life have assignments that take them away from close family and friends, we the church become their close family and friends. When we can share in each of our vocations as a collective, we build stronger communities that feed the needs of many. Remember, promoting religious life is just as important as sustaining religious life.

Stewardship Recommendation:

Take time as a Parish community to recall those in our ministries with unique vocational gifts. These gifts are often expressed in their work life. As we learn about those individuals in our communities who have a particular vocation that can be of service to the Parish community, it is important to invite them into prayerfully considering ways in which they can share their vocation with the Parish community.

Also, find time during the year to acknowledge and support those who have answered the call to religious life. Consider creating a "Celebration of Religious Life" day, in which each Mass is celebrating the life of religious in your community- religious professed and Deacons. Encourage your community to engage with their religious in the community, to share in their vocation. The vocation to religious life is an abundant gift, and we are all invited to share in that great gift as a Parish family.