



What is a vocation?

A vocation is, essentially, an occupation. In a religious context, a vocation implies someone has had a divine call to live a religious life.

Through the Sacrament of Baptism, we all have one calling in our lives: holiness. This means following Jesus to the best of our abilities. However, holiness will look different depending on one's specific vocation. It's important to listen and recognize the signs that determine how one answers and finds a place in life. There are four distinct types of vocations in the Church.

- **Religious Life** — Commitment in life to live as Christ lived through vows of poverty, chastity and obedience.
- **Priesthood** — Conformed to Jesus Christ through the Sacrament of Holy Orders, priests are called to be chosen instruments in the world.
- **Married Life** — Faithful commitment to each other consecrated by the Sacrament of Holy Matrimony, they strive to please God through their devotion to each other and building a faith driven family.
- **Single Life** — Commit their lives to serve others in their work and prayer.

What is the difference between diocesan and religious priests?

Both are ordained, but are distinguished by the vows they take and the community where they serve.

- **Diocesan Priest:** A diocesan priest serves parishioners within a diocese and reports to the Bishop. They most likely will be assigned to a parish and live in that community. His main focus is serving the parish by preaching the Gospel, administering the Sacraments, and shepherding the flock entrusted to him by Jesus. ***If you feel called to be a priest, contact our Diocesan Vocation Director, Fr. Daniele Muscolino at 705-495-1501.***
- **Religious Priest:** A religious priest is a specialist in serving the needs of a larger community that is not necessary based in a parish. His roles may change if he is doing missionary work, teaching or evangelizing in a community.

Sometimes our vocation is not always obvious to us, and it's important to seek opportunities to recognize what our life's mission is to be. That's where discernment comes in. Discernment is being aware and reflective of your heart, to see how God is moving and leading you. When one takes time to discern, one takes specific actions to reflect and determine one's calling.

- ⇒ Critically assessing oneself to determine where one's passions and loves truly lie.
- ⇒ Praying for the ability to understand the answer, and turning to Scripture for guidance.
- ⇒ Speaking candidly with one's pastor, ministers, vocation directors and spiritual directors — people who have experienced this same period of discernment and who may ask important questions that help steer your journey.
- ⇒ Taking time to experience the daily life of a missionary, seminarian or other role that is of interest.

It's important to acknowledge that discernment does not happen overnight. Indeed, it can take years. Be patient, the answer will come.