

Vocation Awareness Curriculum

DIOCESE OF MANCHESTER OFFICE FOR VOCATIONS

PRAYERS FOR DISCERNMENT

Please choose one or more of these prayers to pray daily with your students throughout Vocation Awareness Week and the rest of the year. Many saintly men and women are represented below and the wisdom in their words should be praised and pronounced every day of our lives. May you be empowered by their words.

A Prayer for Discernment (Vasily Drosdov Philaret)

O Lord,
I do not know what to ask You.
You alone know my real needs,
and You love me more
than I even know how to love.
Enable me to discern my true needs
which are hidden from me.
I ask for neither cross nor consolation;
I wait in patience for You.
My heart is open to You.
For Your great mercy's sake,
come to me and help me.
Put Your mark on me and heal me,
cast me down and raise me up.
Silently I adore Your holy will
and Your inscrutable ways.
I offer myself in sacrifice to You
and put all my trust in You.
I desire only to do Your will.
Teach me how to pray
and pray in me, Yourself.

Discernment Prayer (Sisters of Notre Dame)

Walk with me, good and loving God, as I journey through life.
May I take Your hand and be led by Your Holy Spirit.
Fill me, inspire me, free me to respond generously to Your call.
For I believe You desire my deepest joy,
And it is only in Your company
That my soul will be satisfied
And my life will find its meaning and purpose. Amen

Prayer of Discernment said Before the Crucifix (St. Francis)

Most High, glorious God,
Enlighten the darkness of my heart,
And give me right faith,
Certain hope,
And perfect charity,
Wisdom and understanding,
Lord, that I may carry out
Your holy and true command. Amen.

Prayer for Abandonment (Ven. Charles de Foucauld)

Father,
I abandon myself into Your hands;
Do with me what You will.
Whatever You do may I thank You:
I am ready for all, I accept all.
Let only Your will be done in me,
And in all Your creatures.
I wish no more than this, O Lord.
Into Your hands I commend my soul:
I offer it to You with all the love of my heart,
For I love You, Lord,
And so need to give myself to You,
To surrender myself into Your hands,
Without reserve and without boundless confidence,
For You are my Father. Amen.

Prayer to Know One's Vocation (Carmelite Sisters of the Divine Heart of Jesus)

Lord, my God and my loving Father
You have made me to know You, to love You, to serve You,
And thereby to find and fulfill myself.
I know that You are in all things,
And that every path can lead me to You
But of them all, there is one especially
By which You want me to come to You.
Since I will do what You want of me,
I pray You, send Your Holy Spirit to me: into my mind,
To show me what You want of me; into my heart,
To give me the determination to do it,
And to do it with all my love, with all my mind,
And with all my strength right to the end. Amen.

Prayer for Vocations (Pope John Paul II)

Holy Father, look upon this humanity of ours,
that is taking its first steps along the path of the Third Millennium.
Its life is still deeply marked
by hatred, violence and oppression,
but the thirst for justice, truth and grace
still finds a space in the hearts of many people,
who are waiting for someone to bring salvation,
enacted by You through Your Son Jesus.
There is the need for courageous heralds of the Gospel,
for generous servants of suffering humanity.
Send holy priests to Your Church, we pray,
who may sanctify Your people
with the tools of Your grace.
Send numerous consecrated men and women,
that they may show Your holiness in the midst of the world.
Send holy labourers into Your vineyard,
that they may labour with the fervour of charity
and, moved by Your Holy Spirit,
may bring the salvation of Christ
to the farthest ends of the Earth. Amen.

Prayer to Do God's Will (Thomas Merton)

My Lord God,
I have no idea where I am going.
I do not see the road ahead of me
Nor do I really know myself,
And the fact that I think I am following Your will
Does not mean that I am actually doing so.
But I believe that the desire to please You
Does in fact please You.
And I hope that I will never do anything apart from that desire.
And I know that if I do this,
You will lead me by the right road
Though I may know nothing about it.
Therefore will I trust You always though,
I may seem to be lost and in the shadow of death.
I will not fear, for You are ever with me,
And You will never leave me to face my struggles alone. Amen.

Prayer for Discernment (Carmelite Sisters of the Divine Heart of Jesus)

God our Father,
You have a plan for each one of us,
You hold out to us a future full of hope.
Give us the wisdom of Your Spirit
So that we can see the shape of Your plan
In the gifts You have given us,
And in the circumstances of our daily lives.
Give us the freedom of Your Spirit,
To seek You with all our hearts,
And to choose Your will above all else.
We make this prayer through Christ Our Lord. Amen.

Prayer of St. Ignatius

Dearest Jesus teach me to be generous
Teach me to love and serve You as You deserve,
To give and not to count the cost,
To fight and not to heed the wounds,
To toil and not to seek for rest
To labour and to look for no reward,
Except that of knowing that I do Your Holy Will. Amen

Prayer of St. Therese of Lisieux

May today there be peace within.
May you trust God that you are exactly where you are meant to be
May you not forget the infinite possibilities that are born of faith.
May you use those gifts that you have received,
and pass on the love that has been given to you.
May you be content knowing you are a child of God.
Let this presence settle into your bones,
and allow your soul the freedom to sing, dance, praise and love.
It is there for each and every one of us.

Prayer for Discernment

Lord I know that You love me and that You have great plans for me. But sometimes I am overwhelmed by the thought of my future. Show me how to walk forward one day at a time. As I explore the various options which lie before me, help me to listen openly to others, and to pay attention to what is in the depth of my own heart. In this way, may I hear Your call to a way of life which will allow me to love as only I can, and allow me to serve others with the special gifts You have given me. Amen.

Prayer to Follow the Call of Christ (St. Columban's Mission Society)

Lord, I thank You for the gifts You have given me,
Especially for life, love, family and friends.
Help me to know myself better and to know my talents,
As I pray, study and decide on my life's work.
Help me to see and understand the path You open for me.
Help me choose a life's work which will develop all my potential
And enable me to respond fully to Your love for me.
In whatever way You are inviting me to follow You
Give me a generous heart to respond to Your challenging call
And the strength to follow You wherever You lead me. Amen.

Prayer to Know One's Vocation (St. Columban's Mission Society)

Loving God, You have called me to life
And gifted me in many ways.
Help me to become all You desire of me.
Lead me to choose the path of life You have planned for me.
Open my heart to listen to Your call
And guide me with Your Holy Spirit
That I may have the courage to respond to You.
Enkindle in my heart and the hearts of others
The desire to make the world a better place. Amen.

A Rosary for Vocations

1st Joyful Mystery: The Annunciation

Mary answers "Yes" to God's call. Even though it was unexpected and the Archangel gives her only the details she needs to know at the present moment, she responds generously. Let us offer this decade for those who are being called to the priesthood or religious life that they, like Mary, may have the grace to respond whole-heartedly.

2nd Joyful Mystery: The Visitation

Mary wastes no time in acting upon the grace of her vocation. Through her cooperation the plan of salvation is already unfolding. Let us offer this decade for those who have been called but are hesitating. May God's grace hurry them forward to answer the call and thus begin to labor for the harvest.

3rd Joyful Mystery: The Nativity

Our Savior comes to us in the midst of a family. How crucial is the role of the family! Let us offer this decade for all parents that they may provide an atmosphere of love and faith in the home. May parents thus help foster their children's vocations.

4th Joyful Mystery: The Presentation

Joseph and Mary presented Jesus in the Temple and dedicated Him to Almighty God. They knew their Son was a gift from God to be given back to Him. Let us offer this decade for the grace parents need to recognize the gift of their children and thus offer them to the divine plan of God. May His will determine every moment of their lives.

5th Joyful Mystery: The Finding of Jesus in the Temple

This mystery tells of a very unplanned event in the life of Joseph and Mary. For days their hearts ached with sorrow until they found their Son. Let us offer this decade for those parents who find it difficult to understand and thus support their child's vocation as a priest or religious. May they be graced with the faith to support God's will for their children and, like Joseph and Mary, to hold the mysterious ways of God in their hearts.

1st Luminous Mystery: The Baptism of Jesus

The mystery of our Lord's Baptism is the mystery of Jesus taking upon Himself the mission of the Messiah. Thus begins His public ministry. Let us offer this decade for those called to the priesthood and religious life but are afraid to answer because of what others may say or think. Grant them courage, O Lord, to accept the mission You are giving them.

2nd Luminous Mystery: The Wedding Feast of Cana

Through the intercession of Mary, Jesus transforms ordinary water into extraordinary wine. What incredible things God's grace can do in our lives! Let us offer this decade for those who are being called but doubt that they have much to offer. May they trust in the power of God to bring all things into completion and say "Yes" to His call.

3rd Luminous Mystery: The Proclamation of the Kingdom

Our Lord begins His public ministry by announcing the arrival of the Kingdom of God. What joyous news this is for all humanity to hear! Let us offer this decade for an increase in vocations that there might be many more priests and religious who will proclaim this truth and bear witness to it with their lives.

4th Luminous Mystery: The Transfiguration

Jesus strengthened the faith of His Apostles by allowing His divinity to be momentarily perceived. He wished them to gain a supernatural perspective on His forthcoming Passion and Death. Let us offer this decade for all those who are being called as priests and religious that they may have the grace to recognize God's call in the midst of life and courageously accept carrying the Cross.

5th Luminous Mystery: The Institution of the Holy Eucharist

The gift of the Most Holy Eucharist is a mystery going beyond our ability to fully comprehend. Our Lord's abiding Presence in the Blessed Sacrament, the saving mystery of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass -- the world would suffer a great loss without these miracles. Jesus gives Himself in the Holy Eucharist through the ministry of His priests. Let us offer this decade for more priests for our Archdiocese. May God call many more men to share in the Priesthood and may they respond generously.

1st Sorrowful Mystery: The Agony in the Garden

Jesus asked His Apostles to pray so that they "might not enter into temptation." Our Lord knew they needed to pray in order to endure what would soon happen. Let us offer this decade for those men and women whom God is calling to be priests and religious, that they might have a deep and abiding life of prayer. Through the strength given to them through their spiritual life may they respond courageously to God's call.

2nd Sorrowful Mystery: The Scourging at the Pillar

Our Lord's suffering during the scourging was excruciating. For our sake Jesus offered Himself to obtain our salvation. Let us offer this decade for the grace that many young people might feel the desire in their hearts to offer themselves to God as priests and religious.

3rd Sorrowful Mystery: The Crowning with Thorns

Jesus endured the terrible ridicule and mockery of the soldiers even to the point of accepting the painful crown of thorns. Let us offer this decade for those who have a calling to the priesthood or religious life but find it difficult to say "yes" because of painful obstacles in their lives. May concern for human respect never stand in their way of following God's will.

4th Sorrowful Mystery: The Carrying of the Cross

On the way to Calvary, our Lord found comfort and assistance from a number of people: Simon of Cyrene, the women of Jerusalem, His Mother, and Veronica. How much those acts of love must have meant to Jesus! Let us offer this decade for the grace to always

support, with our prayers and sacrifices, those whom God is calling to become priests and religious. May God find us seriously engaged in this very important apostolate!

5th Sorrowful Mystery: The Crucifixion and Death of Jesus

At the foot of the Cross, there came into existence a new type of family. Before Jesus died He entrusted to the maternal care of Mary all of humanity, represented in the person of the “beloved disciple.” Through the New Covenant the notion of family is greatly enlarged, it takes on a different dimension. Let us offer this decade for those who are being called but are hesitant because of fears of not being able to have a family and living a lonely life. Help them, O Lord, to see that in serving You as a priest or religious, their desires for family will indeed be completely fulfilled.

1st Glorious Mystery: The Resurrection

Our Lord’s Resurrection brought tremendous joy to His sorrowful followers. Never were their lives to be the same again. Let us offer this decade for an increase in grace in the hearts of those who are being called to be priests and religious. May they experience the immense joy of giving God their entire lives and saying “yes” to His call. Help them to realize that their unselfish response to God will change their lives forever.

2nd Glorious Mystery: The Ascension

Jesus ascended into Heaven, not to abandon us, but to be our hope. He continually intercedes for us before the throne of the Father and prepares a place for His faithful followers in the heavenly Kingdom. Let us offer this decade for an increase in the number of priests and religious to help us strive faithfully to attain heavenly homeland. May these men and women always recognize the irreplaceable mission they have in the plan of our salvation.

3rd Glorious Mystery: The Descent of the Holy Spirit

The coming of the Holy Spirit transformed the timid Apostles into bold witnesses for the Gospel. The Church was sent forth with courage and zeal! Let us offer this decade for the power of the Holy Spirit to come upon all He has chosen to labor as priests and religious. May they respond boldly to the invitation to lay down their lives for Christ and His Church.

4th Glorious Mystery: The Assumption of Mary

The Second Vatican Council reminded us that Mary’s role in salvation history did not end with her Assumption into Heaven. She continually intercedes for all of us, her children, as we journey through life. Let us offer this decade asking Mary’s intercession. Through her prayers may the Church be granted an abundance of vocations to the priesthood and religious life.

5th Glorious Mystery: The Coronation of Mary

This mystery brings before us the beauty of the faithfulness of Mary, the first disciple of the Lord. She who referred to herself as the “handmaid of the Lord” is now exalted far above even the Angels. The one who said “yes” to God in all things is now the Queen of heaven and earth. Let us offer this decade for those who have been called that they may always have the grace to understand that to serve God is to reign with Him. Whatever sacrifices need to be made in order to live the mission God gives us will pale in comparison to the glory He has reserved for His faithful servants.