

*“Let us pray...there be greater attention to vocations...”*

*“Christian husbands and wives are cooperators in grace and witnesses of faith for each other, their children, and all others in their household. They are the first to communicate the faith to their children and to educate them by word and example for the Christian and apostolic life. They prudently help them in the choice of their vocation and carefully promote any sacred vocation which they may discern in them.” (11)*

*—Apostolicam Actuositatem, Vatican II document  
on the Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity*

## Benefits of Hosting a Family Vocation Day

Hosting a Family Vocation Day can help Catholic communities in many ways:

- ♦ May be used as a retreat for Confirmation and religious education
- ♦ Exposes dioceses and religious communities to potential vocation candidates
- ♦ Allows the priest of a parish to share his vocation story and to communicate more to his parishioners in a social setting
- ♦ Strengthens the bond of parishioners and aids in the networking of families
- ♦ Catechizes the faithful concerning topics such as the Eucharist, Confession, and the Blessed Virgin Mary
- ♦ Provides an opportunity for seminarians and religious to gain experience and evangelize
- ♦ Great precursor to a parish mission
- ♦ Increases the vitality of a parish community as a whole

## A Brief Outline of a Family Vocation Day

Begin with Prayer, Introductions, and Outline of the Day

Vocation Reflections and Spiritual Conferences are given to three groups: Parents, Young Adults, and Children. Groups will be separated to designated areas (the Church, Parish Hall, Classrooms, etc.)

Family Socializing with Priests, Religious and Seminarians.

The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass followed by a Eucharistic Thanksgiving, and Prayer to our Lady.

Lunch and Entertainment with the Priests, Religious, and Seminarians (Booths representing the Diocese and Religious communities will be open).

Vocation Talks and Spiritual Conferences to separate groups resume.

Family Holy Hour for Life (Eucharistic Adoration):

- ♦ Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament
- ♦ Homily
- ♦ Meditative Silence with Confessions Available
- ♦ Rosary and Eucharistic Hymns (while Confessions are being heard)
- ♦ Litany to St. Joseph
- ♦ Benediction of the Most Blessed Sacrament and Dismissal

After Dismissal, the booths will remain open for the Diocese and Religious communities that are present, and also for Family Vocation Ministry inquiries and registrations.

*Schedule is subject to change depending on the number of participants, parish space, and time.*

## Beyond Priestly and Religious Vocations

Although the primary purpose is to expose and catechize the faithful regarding priestly and religious vocations, other catechetical teachings are explained at our Vocation Days. The universal call to holiness is the core message preached during our Vocation Days. Parents are asked to persevere faithfully in the sacred covenant of matrimony and are asked also to be supportive, if they believe their children are called to a priestly or religious vocation. Children are told they can be saints at an early age from Priests and Religious who communicate the Gospel in a fun, loving way. Young Adults encounter the joy radiated through faithful Priests and Religious. These young adults are given the opportunity to know the happiness received by God through *sacrificial love in doing God's will*.

## Fidelity and Loyalty to the Church

Family Vocation Ministries invites religious communities and diocesan priests who are faithful to Christ and the Catholic Church. All speakers are loyal to our Holy Father, the Pope, obedient to the teachings of the Magisterium of the Catholic Church, and are joyfully motivated to serve Christ and His people.

## Contact Us

If you are interested in our Family Vocation Day apostolate, or if you would like more information about our ministry, please contact us.

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*To familiarize and expose families to Priests and Consecrated Religious, Family Vocation Ministries organizes and sponsors*

# Family Vocation Days



# “...the family...becomes the primary...seedbed of vocations to a life of consecration to the kingdom of God.”

## Our Purpose

The objective of our Family Vocation Days is two-fold: first, to pray, to familiarize, and to catechize the faithful in the topic of religious vocations to the Priesthood and the Consecrated Life; secondly, to help families answer the universal call to holiness.

One of the primary reasons regarding the shortage of vocations to the Priesthood and the Consecrated Life is the lack of catechesis about and exposure to Priests and Consecrated Religious. Our Family Vocation Days are designed to educate families in the specialty of these vocations set apart by the Catholic Church. Families will be given opportunities to meet, listen to, socialize, eat with, and have fun with Priests and Consecrated Religious.

## What to Expect at a Family Vocation Day?

- ♦ **Centered on the Holy Eucharist:** All Vocation Days will include the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass and an hour of Eucharistic Adoration.
- ♦ **The Sacrament of Reconciliation:** During the Eucharistic Holy Hour confessions will be heard. All are welcome to experience the mercy of God through the Sacrament of Reconciliation.
- ♦ **Two of the Church's greatest gifts are utilized:** Families will hear vocation stories from both Priests and Consecrated Religious. Each religious, priest, or seminarian will share their divine calling and implement an element of Catholic doctrine/saint/devotion/sacrament that helped them receive their call.
- ♦ **Pro-Life:** A Family Holy Hour of Eucharistic Adoration will be offered before the Blessed Sacrament for the end of abortion, euthanasia, and the contraception mentality. Reparations are asked to be made for those promoting a culture of death.

- ♦ **To Jesus through Mary!** Vocation Days will also include the recitation of the most Holy Rosary, the “*Sub Tuum*” (an ancient prayer to our lady), and will usually be held on Saturdays – the day traditionally dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary.
- ♦ **St. Joseph, our Patron:** All Vocation Days will be under the patronage of St. Joseph. The Litany of St. Joseph will be prayed, seeking his help and protection.
- ♦ **For the Families and with the Families:** Attendees will have the opportunity to meet, socialize and eat with the Priests, Religious, and Seminarians and also to participate in an activity with them (talent show, question and answer session, etc.).

Booths will be available for the Priests, Seminarians, and Religious to represent their diocese and/or religious communities. This will also provide an opportunity for families to learn more about a variety of vocations.

## Powerful Evangelization: Witnesses of Love

Pope Paul VI, in his encyclical on Evangelization in the Modern World, *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, said, “Modern man listens more willingly to witnesses than to teachers, and if he does listen to teachers, it is because they are witnesses.” In our Family Vocation Days, the laity are evangelized by faithful witnesses, namely Priests and Consecrated Religious. Their lives are powerful testimonies of Christ and His Gospel, and will help others realize the important message of Christ.

Some of the topics that will be shared by Priests and Consecrated Religious during our Vocation Days include: the joy God grants to those serving as a priest and/or a religious, the difference between the diocesan priesthood and the religious priesthood, and the evangelical counsels (the vows of poverty, chastity and obedience).

## We Work For You!

Family Vocation Ministries serves the Church both in an active and a contemplative approach.

The *active* aspect of our ministry is to sponsor and coordinate Family Vocation Days.

Our goal is to make our Family Vocation Days FREE. We do not want any obstacles hindering each family's ability to learn more about vocations and experience the excitement of our Vocation Days.

The following are the expenses funded by the ministry, which includes the cost of (but not limited to):

- ♦ The Family Vocation Day speakers: Priests, Religious, and Seminarians
- ♦ Flyers and Posters: Designed, Printed, and Distributed
- ♦ Digital Recordings of the Vocation Talks and Spiritual Conferences
- ♦ Registration for Family Vocation Days via the Internet or postal mail
- ♦ Lunch for participants, if not provided by the host parish
- ♦ Entertainment during lunch (presented primarily by priests and religious)
- ♦ Catholic Materials for the Family: *A Magnificat*® (daily Mass readings and prayers), Rosaries, Scapulars, Catechetical CDs, Catholic Pamphlets (on the Eucharist, Adoration, Confession, The Rosary, etc).

The *contemplative* aspect of our ministry is to pray daily for an increase of vocations and specifically for our Family Vocation Days. By doing this, the Priests, Consecrated Religious, and families who participate in our Vocation Days are aided spiritually by many prayers and sacrifices, and thus help to bear fruit in our apostolate.

To aid us in this part of our ministry, local monasteries and convents will be charitably asked to pray for our Vocation Days.

## Why Promote Vocations to Families?

As the Second Vatican Council document, *Lumen Gentium*, states, the family is “the domestic church.” The family, the vital cell of society, instills Christian virtue in men and women to serve Christ and the Church. It is primarily from the family, the true “seedbed of vocations,” we hope and pray many vocations develop for the Church.

Many popes, saints and church documents have expressed the importance of families in promoting vocations:

*“Let us not forget that Christian marriage is a vocation to holiness in the full sense of the word, and that the example of holy parents is the first condition favorable for the flowering of priestly and religious vocations.”*

– Pope Benedict XVI, World Day of Prayer for Vocations, May 7, 2006

*“The family must educate the children for life in such a way that each one may fully perform his or her role according to the vocation received from God. Indeed, the family that is open to transcendent values, that serves its brothers and sisters with joy, that fulfills its duties with generous fidelity, and is aware of its daily sharing in the mystery of the glorious Cross of Christ, becomes the primary and most excellent seedbed of vocations to a life of consecration to the kingdom of God.” (53)*

– *Familiaris Consortio*; Apostolic Exhortation by Pope John Paul II

*“I would like to speak into the ear of so many men and women: giving up one's children to the service of God is not a sacrifice: it is an honor and a joy.”*

– St. Josemaria Escriva, Founder of Opus Dei

