

Still & Sail

The Vocations Newsletter of the De La Salle Brothers of the Philippines

Message from the Vocations Ministry Office



Br. Weege

Br. Carlo

Br. Jeano

Br. Mico

Dear Fellow Lasallians,

We see the world today in great turmoil with the threats on our health and safety. We see that there have been numerous challenges that continue to present themselves in various forms: war, sickness, selfish politics, disregard for human life, and the destruction of the environment, among many others.

These realities bring with them a particular call for all to take stock of what is happening around us and within us. It calls us to study, to analyze, to pray, to deeply reflect, and to act on what God might be communicating to us.

In this month's issue of **Still & Sail**, we share with you an article from the Diocese of Westminster. It talks about God's self-communication to us through 'calls from within' and 'calls from without'. These calls, perceived to be God's way of guiding us in discovering our vocation in life, are crucial 'signs' that hopefully lead us to respond lovingly and to contribute to God's dream of making the Divine reign of love, peace, joy, and harmony, realized in our world today.

You will also find in this issue digital materials that speak about vocation, and how our Brothers and fellow Lasallians continue to live a life of faith, expressed through zealous service for others, with the hope of building a community where God's liberating love is experienced by all, especially those who need it the most.

May you find in these pages the words of Christ, "Come, Follow Me" (Mt 4:19), and may you have the courage to respond to Him who continues to call, consecrate, send, and save (Brothers' Rule, 21).

THIS ISSUE:

How can I discover my Vocation?

Page 03

Discovering one's vocation (Video)

Page 05

The Lighthouse

Page 05

MORE from the Vocations Ministry Office

Page 06

How can I discover my vocation?

from the Diocese of Westminster

SOURCE

When we understand that God has a desire for each one of us, the natural question is, "What is God's desire for my life?" The whole process of listening to God and listening to our own hearts for an answer to this question is something which we call 'discernment'. This is usually a gradual process of coming to know who God is calling us to be – it is not something we just decide to do one afternoon, like watching a film or calling up a friend. It is a journey which involves patience, honesty, perseverance, generosity, courage, and a sense of humour! It is a personal journey which will also involve trusted friends and the wider Christian community. Within all our discernment we are trying to hear the invitation of Christ to follow him in a particular way and to become the person he wants us to be.

In every individual human vocation it is God who takes the initiative – our role is to listen and respond. But how to do this? Christians talk about how God 'calls' us to do something, and perhaps we think this means that one day we will literally hear a voice telling us what to do. Sometimes God does speak to us in clear and dramatic ways, but more often he 'speaks' to us in ordinary ways. He guides us through the deepest desires of our hearts (calling us 'from within') and the events and circumstances of our lives (calling us 'from without'). Below is a list of some of the many ways that God can guide you and pull you in a certain direction – whether it concerns a small choice, a medium-sized career move, or a lifelong commitment. Beneath everything, you are trying to know God's will for you, to listen to the stirrings of the Holy Spirit deep in your heart, and trying to respond generously. It is about a personal relationship with the Lord.

You don't need to over-analyse your life, looking for conclusive signs in every mood or event. This can become an obsession, and even a superstition, like reading the tea leaves or the horoscopes. The 'signs' listed below simply point to areas of your life that it can be fruitful to pay attention to, 'listening' to what they mean. When you stand back and take a look at the bigger picture, perhaps a pattern emerges, and you sense that you are being drawn in a particular direction. Usually, you don't need more 'signs', you just need to look and listen more carefully to your own life.



**"Discernment...
a gradual
process of
coming to
know who God
is calling us to
be"**

CALLS 'FROM WITHIN'

Desire and attraction – What do you really care about? What do you love? What do you feel passionate about? What would you love to commit yourself to? What do you feel pulled towards – even if you can't explain why? When does your "heart burn", like the two disciples who met Jesus on the road to Emmaus?

Admiration – Who do you most admire? Is it because of who they are/what they do or what they stand for? What is it about them or their vocation that most attracts you? What does it stir up in your own heart? Which living person would you most like to be? Which saints/figures from the past inspire you most? Why?

Enjoyment – What do you like doing; not just for leisure or fun – but what kind of work and activities do you find most fulfilling? What brings the best out of you and gives you the deepest satisfaction?

Skills – What are you good at? What are your gifts, skills and aptitudes? Not just your qualifications (although these are often relevant) but your gifts of character and personality too. How could you best use all that God has given to you and make a difference?

How can I discover my vocation?

from the Diocese of Westminster

SOURCE

Real value – of the many projects and careers you are interested/involvement in, which of them do you think are really worthwhile? What do you actually believe in and want to promote in the world? This doesn't mean that you have to choose an overtly 'religious' or 'charitable' work – as if all the ordinary jobs that people do in the world are a second-best option for Christians, but you have to have a commitment to what you are doing, you have to believe in it. This of course means that you should avoid any choices that take you into an area that is corrupt or immoral, and above all avoid any wrong-doing yourself.

Inner conviction – You might have a clear, inner conviction that something is right for you; almost like an unshakeable knowledge of who you are and what is important for you. More than just a desire or an attraction – it is like a sense of inevitability, part of your identity. It might have been a part of you as long as you can remember; or it might have dawned slowly; or it might come upon you in a moment of inspiration. This inner conviction is not an infallible sign of your vocation – it might need interpreting or purifying – but it is certainly something that you should listen to carefully.

Prayer – When you are praying – talking to God, asking his help, or just sitting in silence – do certain ideas keep coming back to you? When you let go of your distractions for a moment, and open your heart to God in prayer, it can allow your deepest concerns to come to the surface, and allow God to 'speak' to you. Sometimes an idea comes to mind in prayer, or a memory, or a concern, or a task. It nags. It seems important, it seems especially meaningful. And when you reflect on it later on, it still seems important for you. This might be an 'inspiration' from the Holy Spirit – not in the sense of an infallible divine command, but a nudge in your heart or mind to look into something more deeply.

CALLS 'FROM WITHOUT'

Holy Scripture – In a similar way to your prayer life, when you are reading the Bible on your own, or listening to the Scripture readings at Mass, a phrase can strike you with unexpected force. A passage that you have heard many times before can suddenly seem clear and powerful. It moves you or challenges you or almost impels you to do something.

You feel as though God is speaking to you personally and directly through the words of the Bible, or through a sermon or talk. You might, for example, suddenly identify with the experience of a particular person in the Bible and see your own pathway illuminated by theirs. All of this is another way that the Holy Spirit can inspire and guide you – pointing you, through these words and the response they evoke, to something that is important for you.

Other people – If people encourage you in a particular decision or way of life, if they 'believe in you', this can be a sign that you are going in the right direction. Sometimes other people can see your own potential more clearly than you can yourself. You might be afraid or lacking confidence, but they can see the possibilities, and encourage you to go in one direction or perhaps discourage you from going in another direction. It's good to talk to people that know you well, people you trust – friends, family, teachers, priests – and see what they think about your ideas for the future. They might have another perspective that helps you. But other people can also get things wrong or have their own agendas, and become over-enthusiastic about your vocation, or project their own ideals onto your life – so you need to be cautious and not follow the advice someone gives you uncritically.



"You can trust that God is guiding all these circumstances and leading you to where you are meant to be."

How can I discover my vocation?

from the Diocese of Westminster

SOURCE

Events and circumstances – Sometimes an opportunity opens up unexpectedly and you want to make the most of it. It wasn't planned, and you are not quite sure how it fits into the rest of your life, but you feel an instinctive enthusiasm, and you want to 'seize the day'. Or you are waiting for an event to unfold that is now beyond your control: exam results, feedback from a job interview, a medical report. You may have a passionate desire to follow one path, but circumstances make it impossible. The Lord opens doors, and closes them, through the ordinary events of your life, through the decisions that others make, and through the concrete situations you are in. You can trust that God is guiding all these circumstances and leading you to where you are meant to be. He is more powerful than all the other forces that seem to be shaping your life.

Extraordinary experiences – Not often, but sometimes, God steps into our life in a quite extraordinary and unexpected way. You 'hear' a voice in prayer, or 'see' a vision, or witness a miracle – and you are quite convinced that this is God's direct work, and that he is speaking to you personally in this way, and guiding you in a certain direction or requesting something of you. You have to be very careful here: you can deceive yourself, and harmful spiritual forces can trick you into believing what is not true. You should never just trust these experiences uncritically – you should talk about them with a wise priest/spiritual director, and try to make sense of them in the light of all the other ways that God is guiding you. Many people do not have such experiences. We should not expect them. And there is no need to ask or pray for them. God usually prefers to guide us in ordinary ways. But sometimes it does happen!

SUMMARY

God 'speaks' to us in all these different ways. Life is not like a crossword or a Sudoku puzzle, where we have to analyse every clue and complete every answer in order to come to the end and reach a tidy conclusion. We simply get on with life, doing the best we can – 'listening' to God, paying attention to all these different ways listed above, seeing if there is a pattern, stopping to reflect when something strikes us with a new force or clarity. Usually, gradually, we find that we are being pulled in a certain direction, or we have enough to help us make a decision. And then, with trust and faith in God, we take the next step.

Discovering one's vocation

WATCH VIDEO



FOR ASPIRANTS:

- Kindly send a PDF copy of your reflections on 'The Lighthouse' to vocations@delasalle.ph, to your local coordinator, and to your Brother-Mentor within the month.
- Remember to schedule your monthly conversation with your mentor and participate in the activities of your Aspirancy Community.

THE LIGHTHOUSE

Looking at our experiences

- What are the calls 'FROM WITHIN' that you have already experienced? If none, which among them would you like to reflect on?
- What are the call 'FROM WITHOUT' that you have already experienced? If none, which among them would you like to reflect on?
- How do you these 'calls' inspire you in your vocation journey?

MORE from the Vocations Ministry Office



BROTHERS' BREAD Sunday Reflections

Join our Brothers from the 1911 Manila Community for our Sunday reflections from February - March 2022.

[CLICK HERE](#)

WHAT'S UP, BRO? (Season 2) - Episode 2

Discover the ins and outs of being a Brother with Br. Miggy and Br. Richie alongside DJs Cora and Miggy in our 2nd Episode!

[CLICK HERE](#)



WHAT'S UP, BRO? (Season 2) - Episode 3

Learn how faith-life-ministry all come together in the Brothers' life with Br. Alex and Br. Kenneth alongside DJs Cora and Miggy. Catch our 3rd episode this March 2022 on our official Youtube channel!

[CLICK HERE](#)



MORE from the Vocations Ministry Office

THE BRO DIARIES

Day to day life of the Brothers

In partnership with De La Salle University's Archers' Network, join us in looking at how Br. Henry continues to find meaning in his day to day life and ministry with our Lasallian Family in La Salle Academy, Iligan.

[CLICK HERE](#)



LIVE, LA SALLE! (Episode 5)

Lasallian as Catalysts of Change

Br. Dodo, Ms. Glaiza, and Dale share with us how Lasallians can continue to become positive change-makers in society in this 5th episode of Live, La Salle!

[CLICK HERE](#)

