

Sacred Heart Catholic Church

*FIDE*

Heart & Soul

Monthly Catechetical Resource

*Vocations*

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# Introduction

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Welcome to the 6th issue of this year's *Heart & Soul: Monthly Catechetical Resource*! In this month we will be learning about the Sacrament of Holy Orders as well supernatural vocations to religious life. It is good that children at least become aware of the different vocations within the Catholic Church so that they can truly be open to God's call. Additionally, even if your child is not called to Ordination or religious life, it is good for them to know the beauty and goodness of that life so they can respect, honor, and utilize those who have embraced this life in order provide the Sacraments and spiritual direction to the Church.

In discussing Ordination and religious life, we will look at what each of these vocations are, what the saints have to say about these vocations, what these vocations require, and much more. As always, there will be a resource section that will go deeper into what Ordination and religious life is and how one ought to discern it. New to this issue is a lesson plan template to help you as the parent talk to your children about this topic. Events for the month of December on page 15 and upcoming events for the month of January on page 16. Finally, as always, your SAP and I, the Director of Evangelization (EJ), are at your service. Feel free to contact me at [ecerdeiras@shcatholic.org](mailto:ecerdeiras@shcatholic.org) if you have any questions about Ordination or religious life.



# What is Ordination

Ordination, or Holy Orders, is one of the seven Sacraments of the Catholic Church that elevates a man to a supernatural ministry of deacon, priest, or bishop. In this Sacrament, a man obtains sacred power to serve the Church in the name and authority of Jesus Christ through the Holy Spirit ([go here for more details](#)). Below we will go through the three different types of Ordination.

## **Deacon:**

In regards to the Diaconate, the Catechism of the Catholic Church states that, “The sacrament of Holy Orders marks them [deacon] with an imprint [“character”] which cannot be removed and which configures them to Christ, who made himself the ‘deacon’ or servant of all” (CCC 1570). Therefore, A deacon takes on the servant ministry of Christ. Among the services that belongs to the ministry of a deacon is assisting the bishop and priest in administering the Sacraments (though he can only perform Baptisms and witness Marriage). He is also called to proclaim and preach the Gospel and dedicate himself to a life of charity.

## **Priest:**

In regard to the priesthood, the Catechism of the Catholic Church states that, “Because it is joined with the episcopal order the office of priests shares in the authority by which Christ himself builds up and sanctifies and rules his Body. Hence the priesthood of priests, while presupposing the sacraments of initiation, is nevertheless conferred by its own particular sacrament. Through that sacrament priests by the anointing of the Holy Spirit are signed with a special character and so are configured to Christ

the priest in such a way that they are able to act in the person of Christ the head” (CCC 1563). In this statement we see that the priest is the extension of the bishop (episcopal order). Therefore, the priest is able to act in place of the bishop at the local level within parishes and communities. Since the bishop acts in Person of Christ (*Persona Christi*) when performing the Sacraments, the priest also has privilege to act in the Person of Christ when performing the Sacraments (except the Sacrament of Confirmation and Holy Orders). For this reason, the priesthood is a supernatural calling as it calls a man act in the Person of Christ and continue Christ’s ministry in a Sacramental way.

## **Bishop:**

A bishop is the highest form of Ordination. Unlike a priest, a bishop is not an extension of the pope, but an a Vicar of Christ in his diocese. By being Ordained a bishop, a man becomes a successor of an Apostle. The Catechism of the Catholic Church tells us that the bishop is given the gift to teach and rule within the Church (CCC 1558).

Jesus gave the Apostles the authority to bind and loose (Matt. 18:18), therefore, bishops too have the authority to bind and loose. This means that when all the bishops are united under the pope, they possess a magisterial authority that is guided by the Holy Spirit in order to lead the Church in the way God wants Her to go. Likewise, when all the Bishops gather together in a council, the Holy Spirit grants them an infallible charism that allows them to not err in matters of faith and morals.

# What is Religious Life

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Religious life is when one vows to live a life of poverty, chastity, and obedience in order to devote their life entirely to God and His work. One who vows themselves to religious life can either live in isolation (as a hermit) or in community. Both the isolated and communal life are dedicated to serve and draw closer to the Lord. The Catechism of the Catholic Church states that, "From the God-given seed of the counsels (poverty, chastity, and obedience ) a wonderful and wide-spreading tree has grown up in the field of the Lord, branching out into various forms of the religious life lived in solitude or in community. Different religious families have come into existence in which spiritual resources are multiplied for the progress in holiness of their members and for the good of the entire Body of Christ" (CCC 917). Therefore, religious life is not only for the good of the individual, but the for the good of the Church.

The most common examples of religious life are those who devote their lives to be nuns, sisters, monks, and friars. Below we will give a brief description of each.

## **Nuns:**

A nun a woman who belongs to a religious order (community who follows a certain spirituality) by taking the vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience. Nuns live a contemplative, cloistered life in a monastery/convent. The community of nuns are to have no ownership and often support themselves financially through a trade (cheese making, baking, candle making, etc.). Additionally, Nuns, through there dedicated prayerful life, are able to provide spiritual direction.

The life of a nun is a scheduled routine of prayer and work done in community in order that the community form a sisterhood to lead each other to heaven

## **Sisters:**

Religious sisters are similar to nuns in that they belong to a religious order and take the vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience. However, sisters do not live a cloistered life in a monastery. For a sister, their ministry is more in acts of service. You will often see sisters serve as teachers, nurses, or ministries that tend to the marginalized.

## **Monks:**

Monks are men who, like nuns, belong to a religious order by taking the vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience. Monks also live in a monastery where they dedicate their life to God through prayer and work. Again, like nuns, monks do not have ownership and often support themselves financially through a trade. One of the most famous trades monks are known for is their brewing of beers. Monks live a life of routine where they spend a lot of the day in prayer and work. Monks also provide a great service to the Church through their pursuit of wisdom and spirituality which they offer back as spiritual direction for others.

## **Friars:**

Friars are men who belong to a religious order by taking the vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience. However, for a friar, poverty is taken very seriously as it is central to their spirituality. The friar rids himself of owning material goods so as to be more dependent on God. Friars, like sisters, are called to go out among the people to preach, to pray, to educate, and to care for the sick. Therefore, they live a life of radical poverty and service.





“Our business is to love what God would have done. He wills our vocation as it is. Let us love that and not trifle away our time hankering after other people’s vocations.” - St. Francis de Sales

“Christ has no body now on earth but yours. Yours are the hands with which Christ can bless the world. Yours are the eyes with which Christ can shine compassion on a troubled world. Yours are the feet with which Christ walks to do good. Christ has no body but yours, No hands, No feet, No eyes on earth, But yours.” - St. Theresa of Avila

## What the Saints have to Say About Vocations

"We all have a vocation. We believe that God has placed us in this life to fill a special need that no one else can accomplish." - St. Francis De Sales

"Be strengthened in Almighty God and in the power of His might, for with His help nothing is difficult. Throw off the heavy load of your own will, cast aside the burden of sin, and gird yourselves as valiant warriors. Forget what you are leaving behind; strain forward to the great things before you." - St. Francis of Assisi

“Who except God can give you peace? Has the world ever been able to satisfy the heart?” - St. Gerard Majella

"If you are what you should be, then you will set the world on fire." - St. Catherine of Siena

“Many people mistake out work for vocation. Our vocation is the love of Jesus.” - St. Teresa of Calcutta



# Who can be Ordained and How to be Ordained?

In the Catholic Church there are two general requirements in order to be ordained. Those two requirements are listed below as well as an explanation for each.

- 1) **Must be Baptized** - This requirement is pretty obvious since it only makes sense that if one wants to be ordained in the Catholic Church they must belong to the Catholic Church. Only the Catholic Church possesses the fullness of truth, therefore, if one outside the Church is given an authoritative role, they will not be able to guide the Church in the fullness of truth She possesses.
- 2) **Must be a Male** - This is a controversial topic, especially in today's culture. However, there are two strong reasons why the Church holds to this teaching.
  - The first reason is because Christ became incarnate as a man and priest is to act in the person of Christ during the Sacraments. Therefore, in order to act in the Person of Christ, a priest must be a man just as Christ was a man.
  - The second reason is because the Bible teaches that Christ only chose men to enter the ordained ministry of the Church. We primarily see this at the Last Supper where Jesus tells the Apostles (who were men), "Do this in memory of me," (Lk. 22:19), which gives them the authority to consecrate the Eucharist. We also see that Jesus tells the 12 Apostles that, "whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven" (Matt. 18:18). Christ only gives the authority to bind and loose to the Apostles. Therefore, the Church has no authority change what Christ has instituted.

## How to be Ordained?

For any ordination, one needs to undergo a discernment process with a

spiritual director in order to discern if God is calling them to this life. Ordination is a supernatural vocation that comes from God who calls a man to serve His people on earth.

### Deacon:

There are two types of deacons, 1) a transitional deacon, which a man preparing to be a priest, and 2) a permanent deacon who intends to be a deacon the rest of his life. To be a permanent deacon, one must be 35 years old, have a high school degree or GED, and undergo 5 years of training. A permanent deacon can be married before becoming a deacon, but if he becomes a deacon before getting married he cannot marry.

### Priest:

When a man decides he wants to consider priesthood, he will apply to a seminary where he will receive education in philosophy and theology, and will also receive training in order to become a priest. One will be in seminary for at least 5 years, but depending on previous education and if the man is becoming a priest in a religious order it can take longer. A priest, in the Roman Catholic Church, must commit to a life of celibacy. Priesthood is a life long commitment, therefore, the discernment process should be patiently and prayerfully discerned with a spiritual director.

### Bishop:

To be ordained a Bishop, one must first become a priest. Unlike deaconate and priesthood, there is not a strict discernment process as bishops are appointed by the Pope based on priests who are nominated by other bishops in the area. Once the pope decides to appoint a bishop, the bishop does have a choice to accept the offer or not. If accepted, the priest is then ordained a bishop by another bishop.



# How Does One Enter Religious Life?

Unlike Ordination, religious life is open to both men and women. However, like Ordination, religious life does require a discernment process as it is a life commitment to dedicate your life to God through the vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience. That being said, below are some steps to pursue a call to religious life.

- 1) Be open to God's call. Everyone who is Catholic should be open to Ordination (if you are a man), or religious life. God may not call you to religious life, but it is important to be willing to accept the call if He does.
- 2) When you think you are called, or have interest in discerning religious life, find a good spiritual director who knows you well and can help you discern if this is a life God is calling you to live out.
- 3) Visit different religious orders so you can determine which one will best fit your spiritual needs. Like marriage, this is a lifelong commitment, so commit to a community that you will love.
- 4) Attend "Come and See Weekends" or request to spend some time at a monastery, convent, or friary so you can live the life for a few days and see if it is a life for you.
- 5) If you feel called to religious life, and have decided what order you want to attend, talk to the head of the community and discuss the text steps.
- 6) Lastly, all religious orders have a discernment period, so do not feel afraid to enter if you feel called. You will have several years before you make final vows and commit fully to the religious life.





# Lesson Template for 2-6 Year Old

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**Read following Scripture Passage as a Family, and ask the questions below to your kids:**

- 1 Corinthians 12:14-26
  - What is happening in this passage?
  - If you lost your hand, did you lose part of your body?
  - If you lost your hand, could you function/do the things you normally do?
  - What do you think this passage is referring to? (The Church)
  - If the Church is a body, can you name some of its parts?
  - What would happen if some of those parts were missing?

## **Reflection/question:**

The Church is a body of Christ made up of many parts. We, the people, make up the parts of the Church. We are the hands, feet, ears, and nose of Jesus on earth. Like the body, each part has a role to play in the Church. Without a certain part, the Church will be missing something and would not function to its fullest. By being Baptized we are made a part of the Body of the Church and are called to help Her function well.

- How do you think you can help the Church as part of the Body?

**Do the Following Activity's with your Kids and Ask the Questions under each activity:**

- [My Hands Can Serve Activity](#) (Link includes instructions. Print outs will be available in Church office if needed)
  - ◇ How do you think your hands can serve God?
  - ◇ What do you think, ““Go therefore and make disciples of all nations” means?
  - ◇ Why do you think God tells you, “I have redeemed you; I have called you by name; you are Mine!”?
- [Matrimony Project](#) (Link includes instructions. Print outs will be available in Church office if needed)
  - ◇ Ask your kids why they wrote down those words.
- [Holy Orders Project](#) (Link includes instructions. Print outs will be available in Church office if needed)
  - ◇ If you have sons, ask them what they thought about the project.
  - ◇ Ask yours sons if they could see themselves as a priest one day
- [Nun Coloring Pages and Order Explanations](#) (Copies available in the Church office)
  - ◇ Ask your daughters which nun they liked best. Then do some research together to learn more about that nuns Order.
  - ◇ Ask your daughters if they could see themselves being a nun?

## **Good Books for Kids to Have:**

[The Ball of Red String](#)

[What Does a Priest Do/What Does a Nun Do? ?](#)

[Molly McBride and the Purple Habit](#)

# Lesson Template for 7-12 Year Old

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**Read following Scripture Passage as a Family, and ask the questions below to your kids:**

- Romans 12: 4-8
  - What is happening in this passage?
  - What do you think Paul means by “the Body?”
  - What do you think Paul means by “Members of the Body?”
  - Do you see yourself as a member of the body?
  - How can you as a member of the body help the body grow?
  - What are some talents that you have that you can help the Church (body) with?

## **Reflection/question:**

The Church is a body in which Jesus is the head and we are the members (parts). Christ has chosen us in a special way to be a member of His Body so we can go out and bring more members into the Body and help the Body become stronger. Therefore, God calls us to use the talents and gifts He has given us to serve Him and help the Church grow.

- Have you ever thought of the talents and gifts God has given you?
- How have you seen others use their talents and gifts to serve the Church?
- How can a priest serve the Church?
- How can a nun serve the Church?
- How can a mom and a dad serve the Church?
- How can a single person serve the Church?

## **Do the Following Activity's with your Kids:**

- [My Hands Can Serve Activity](#) (Link includes instructions. Print outs will be available in Church office if needed)
- [Matrimony Project](#) (Link includes instructions. Print outs will be available in Church office if needed)
- [Holy Orders Project](#) (Link includes instructions. Print outs will be available in Church office if needed)
- [Summer Retreat Plan](#) (6th-8th grade)
- [Nun Word Search](#) (be sure to talk to your kids about what these words mean)

## **Watch Video ask questions:**

- [What's Your Vocation?](#)
  - What happens when we use our talents for God?
  - What does holiness mean?
  - How can you discover your purpose in life? How do you think that will help?
  - What are the three vocations that were mentioned in the video
  - Which vocation do you like best? Why?

## **Vocation Storries:**

- [Fr. Chase Hilgenbrinck Vocation Story](#)
- [Sister Vocation Stories](#)
- Tell your children how you knew you were called to marriage

# Lesson Template for Teens

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**Read following Scripture Passage as a Family, and ask the questions below to your kids:**

- Mark 1:16-20
  - What is happening in this passage?
  - Put yourself in Peter (Simon) and Andrews shoes, what would you do?
  - If God promised you a life a joy, but it required making tough choices (like James and John leaving their home), would you do it? Why or why not?
  - Have you ever asked God to show you what He wants you to do? Why or why not?

## **Reflection/question:**

God has a specific plan for everyone of us. Because God created us, He knows what is best for us and desires us to be happy. However, we often ignore God's call to do what He desires us to do and decide to do what we want to do. Sometimes doing what we want to do will give us a moment of satisfaction, but it will always go away. If, however, we do what God wants us to do, we will find a lasting joy because His will fulfills the desires of our hearts.

- Have you ever asked God to guide your decisions before you make them?
- Have ever thought of God's plan for you?
- Have you ever considered that God has great plans for you and through that plan He will bring joy?
- Start practicing listening to God's will by asking Him to guide your decisions so you can go down a path that leads to joy.

## **Suggested Activity's to do with your Teens:**

- Visit a monastery or convent and request a tour
- Invite a priest, nun, or strong Catholic married couple for dinner so all vocations become familiar and part of their life already.
- If open, sign your teen up for a "Come and See" retreat so they can see the lifestyle of a priest, nun, monk, or friar (please contact EJ Cerdeiras if you have trouble finding any).

## **Watch Video ask questions:**

- [Fr. Mike Schmitz - "What's My Vocation?"](#)
- First Sense of Vocation:
  - What do you think it means to be holy?
  - How can you better live your life to pursue holiness?

Second Sense of Vocation:

- Have you ever considered being a priest/nun/monk/friar/Married? Why?
- How do you think the above vocations can make you holy?

Third sense of Vocation:

- What is your current vocation? How do you think you can do that vocation well in order to become more holy?

## **Vocation Stories:**

- [Fr. Josh and Fr. Mike Schmitz Vocation Story](#)
- [Sister Vocation Stories](#)
- Tell your children how you knew you were called to marriage



# Tips For Parents on Children's Vocations

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- 1) Work on living out your vocation well. Work on being a good example of marriage for your kids.
- 2) Surround yourself with other good Catholic families so your kids can see more examples of what a Catholic Marriage looks like.
- 3) Have priests, nuns, monks, friars, etc. over for dinner so your kids can be exposed to the different vocations. That way priesthood and religious life does not become something new, but something familiar.
- 4) Take your kids to monasteries, convents and friaries when on vacation so they can be exposed to lives of monks and nuns, as well as be exposed to different charisms.
- 5) If your child tells you they are thinking of becoming a priest or nun, support their desire, but encourage them to take their time and seek guidance.
- 6) Do not let your own desires of wanting your kids to be married or wanting your kids to be a priest or a nun get in the way. This is their vocation, you are there to support and offer guidance.



# Resources on Vocation

## For Adults

- [Beth Sri on “Vocation of Motherhood”](#)
- [Sam Guzman’s Blog on Vocation of Fatherhood](#)
- [Bishop Fulton Sheen on the Vocation of a Priest](#)
- [Vocation of a Nun– Catholic Talk Show](#)
- [Pints With Aquinas – How to Discern Well](#)

## How to Live out Your Vocation as a Married Couple and Parents (For Lay Adults)

- [Fulton Sheen– \*Thinking Life Through Father at Night\* \(a book on real life fatherhood\)](#)
- [Parenting for Eternity](#) (a book on living out your vocation as a Catholic parent well)
- [Pints With Aquinas - Emily Wilson Hussem on Motherhood](#)
- [Living out your Vocation of Marriage - Edward and Beth Sri](#)
- [Cameron Fradd on 7 tips to live out your Vocation of Marriage well](#)
- [Fr. Mike Schmitz on Living Out Your Vocation](#)
- [Fr. Mike Schmitz on Career as a Catholic Vocation](#)
- [Dr. Scott Hahn and Fr. Donal Calloway on Vocation of Marriage](#)

## How to Help your Children Properly Discern Their Vocation

- [Raising Catholic Kids for Their Vocations - John S. Grabowski, PhD](#)
- [Jackie and Bobbie - 3 Ways Parents Help Their Children Discern](#)

## Discernment for Teens

- [What's Your Calling? \(feat. Paul J. Kim\)](#)
- [Reading the "Signs" from God - Fr. Mike Schmitz](#)

- [4 Helpful Rules for Discernment \(for any decisions\)](#)

## Vocation for Middle School aged Children

- [What is Vocation?](#)
- [Our Life in the Church - Grade 8 Activity Book](#)
- [By Our Actions We Bring Peace" Worksheet](#)
- [Life of a nun](#)
- [Life of a seminarian \(priest in training\)](#)
- [Life of a monk](#)
- [My Hands Can Serve Activity](#)
- [Matrimony Project](#)
- [Holy Orders Project](#)
- [Summer Retreat Plan](#) (6th-8th grade)
- [Nun Word Search](#)

## Vocation for Young Children

- [My Hands Can Serve Activity](#)
- [Matrimony Project](#)
- [Holy Orders Project](#)
- [Nun Coloring Pages and Order Explanations](#)
- [The Ball of Red String](#)
- [What Does a Priest Do/What Does a Nun Do? ?](#)
- [Molly McBride and the Purple Habit](#)
- [By Our Actions We Bring Peace" Worksheet](#)

## Vocation Stories (good for kids to listen to)

- [Fr. Josh and Fr. Mike Schmitz Vocation Story](#)
- [Sister Vocation Stories](#)
- [Fr. Chase Hilgenbrinck Vocation Story](#)
- [Sr. Maria Regina Vocation Story](#)
- Talk to your kids about your call to marriage
- Have other couples tell your kids their call to marriage.

# Feast Days and How to Celebrate Them

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**Note: Listed below are feast days and memorials of some saints. Not all memorials for the month are listed.**

- **December 8th - The Feast of the Immaculate Conception (Holy Day of Obligation)**
  - ◆ Put Flowers in front of a statue or image of Mary at home
  - ◆ Have a feast with family and friends and bake/decorate a white cake in honor of Mary's purity
  - ◆ Read Luke 1:26-38 and pray the prayer of the [Immaculate Conception](#)
- **December 9th - St. Juan Diego**
  - ◆ Read the Story of [St. Juan Diego](#)
  - ◆ Put roses in front of an image of Our Lady of Guadalupe in honor of her sending Juan Diego roses as a sign of her presence.
- **December 12th - Our Lady of Guadalupe**
  - ◆ [Story of Our Lady of Guadalupe](#)
  - ◆ Attend Mass and Our Lady of Guadalupe Celebration at Church
- **December 25th - Nativity of Jesus**
  - ◆ Go to Mass as a family
  - ◆ Read Luke 1:26-36, 2:1-21 during breakfast
  - ◆ Say a prayer of thanksgiving as a family, for Christ is born!
- **December 26th - St. Stephan**
  - ◆ Read the [story of St. Stephen](#)
  - ◆ [6 Ways to Celebrate St. Stephen](#)
- **December 27th - Holy Family**
  - ◆ [Read about the Feast of the Holy Family](#)
  - ◆ Do something special as a family.
  - ◆ Say a prayer as family(Can find a prayer in the link above)
- **December 28th - The Holt Innocents**
  - ◆ Read about the Holy Innocents
  - ◆ It is traditional to allow the youngest child of the family make the decisions for the day
  - ◆ Pray for the unborn



# Events in December

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## December 3rd

### *First Saturday*

- First Saturday Rosary (7:25am)
- First Saturday Meditation (8:30am)

## Wednesdays of December

### *Mass/Adoration/Confession*

- Mass starts at 5:15, followed by adoration and confession

## Throughout December

### *Podcasts on Holy Orders/Religious Life (Both in English and Spanish)*

- Video podcasts on prayer will be released every month to discuss the topic of the month. These podcasts can be found on YouTube and our Podcast outlets. All podcast will be directed toward adults, but will be kid friendly as well.

## December 29th

### *Catechism Series (3:30pm)*

- Fr. Eckert and Michael Becker discuss a section of the Catechism of the Catholic Church (live on FB and YouTube at 3:30pm)



# What's Coming in January

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## ***Heart & Soul Topic for January: Confession***

- What Confession?
- Why do we confess?
- Why do we have to confess to a priest?
- How to make a proper confession?
- And more!

## **Events in January**

- First Saturday: January 7th
- First Friday Adoration: January 2nd-3rd
- Every Wednesday in January: Mass/Adoration/Confession starting with Mass at 5:15pm.
- Wednesday *FIDE* Night: January 18th @6:30pm
- Podcasts Discussing Confession: Throughout January
- Catechism Series: January 26th @3:30pm

**For more information, and to access hyperlinks, scan the QR code on the bottom right, or follow the instructions below to get access on our website:**

**salisburycatholic.org → *FIDE* → *Heart and Soul: Monthly Catechetical Resource***



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