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*What can we do to promote vocations  
to the Priesthood and Religious Life?*

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<u>Catechist</u>
<u>Deacon</u>
<u>Family</u>
<u>Parent</u>
<u>Parishioner</u>
<u>Priest</u>
<u>Religious Brother or Sister</u>
<u>Seminarian</u>
<u>Senior Citizen</u>
<u>Single Person</u>
<u>Teacher</u>
<u>Youth Minister</u>

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## *Ten things I can do as a Catechist*

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Develop vocation oriented projects.</b></p> <p>Have students work on projects with vocation themes. This can be done through poster contests, creative writing, photography, interviews and a variety of other activities. This will also encourage student interaction with sisters, brothers and priests and lead to a deeper understanding of religious and priestly vocations.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Encourage service.</b></p> <p>Serving the Lord by loving our neighbor is an idea that is central to our faith. There are numerous ways that this service can be lived out. Have someone speak to your students about the opportunities to serve that exist in the parish. Service to others is one way that we can best imitate Jesus.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Compose a vocation prayer.</b></p> <p>Have the students write a prayer for vocations to the priesthood and religious life that they can say each day. When the class meets, pray together one of the prayers the children have written. If some are particularly good, share them with the Diocesan Vocation Office.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Discuss modern day heroes in the church.</b></p> <p>Young people need to see that the church is alive, and that serving as a priest or religious is not something people only did in the past. Identify all the wonderful people serving in the church today. Let students dream about what it might be like in the future.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Suggest reading material.</b></p> <p>Create a reading list of spiritual books that students can read for class or on their own. Books that have short readings or prayers for each day will probably be the most appealing. Ask them to read about how a particular saint realized their vocation.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Explore scripture.</b></p> <p>The classroom setting is the perfect place to spend time reading and reflecting on the way vocation is presented in scripture. Consider the different ways those in scripture stories are called to their vocation and how they respond to that call.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Provide a list of vocation Websites.</b></p> <p>The appeal of the internet to young people cannot be ignored. Providing them with the addresses of religious and vocation oriented websites can create an interest and keep them away from the more inappropriate sites. The Diocesan Vocation Office will gladly share this information with you.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Show support for seminarians.</b></p> <p>Have an ongoing project in your class to “sponsor a seminarian.” Students will write letters and promise to pray for a particular seminarian. They can write their own prayer and make prayer cards. Attend the ordination ceremony in June with the class.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Invite a priest or religious speak to your class.</b></p> <p>Having priests and religious share their stories about how they came to their particular vocation is a great way to spend a class period. Leave some time for discussion so that the students can air some of their thoughts and ask questions about religious and priestly vocations.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Pray.</b></p> <p>Of all the ways we can work toward the increase of vocations to the priesthood and religious life, prayer is undoubtedly the most essential. Make a commitment to pray for this intention as a class. Also, consider praying for a particular priest or religious in your parish.</p>

## *Ten things I can do as a Deacon*

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Promote parish ministries.</b></p> <p>An active parish produces church vocations. As a deacon, you play an important role in helping the parish to be the vital, healthy community that is the seed-bed for a life of service in the church. Your participation in and knowledge of the various ministries in the parish make you a valuable resource in promoting these ministries.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Spend time with youth.</b></p> <p>Whether or not you are involved in a ministry that serves young people, try to find ways to spend time with them. Attend their activities or find ways that they can be helpful to you. Friendships between youth and those who have an involvement in parish life often aid in the discernment of a vocation.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Preach about vocations.</b></p> <p>By having the opportunity to reach the parish community through preaching, you can offer your unique perspective as deacon to address the topic of vocations. Share your own vocation story- perhaps it will inspire listeners to consider their own vocation.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Extend an invitation.</b></p> <p>Many people claim that they were never invited to explore a vocation to a life of service in the church. Ask young people who you think exhibit characteristics required of priests, religious or deacons if they have ever considered a church vocation. It can make a difference</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Visit classrooms.</b></p> <p>Children need to understand more fully the role of priests, religious and deacons. An educational setting is the natural place to do this. Speak to students about what you do in the parish community and the meaning your ministry has for the larger church.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Pray.</b></p> <p>Of all the ways we can work toward the increase of vocations to a life of service in the church, prayer is undoubtedly the most essential. As a deacon, your commitment to prayer is important and your prayer for this intention is invaluable. Consider joining the St. Thérèse Prayer Society for Vocations.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Exhibit a love of your vocation as deacon.</b></p> <p>It is encouraging to see people who are enthusiastic that they have devoted their lives to the Lord. By sharing the love you have for your vocation, you can serve the faith community in yet another way - as an inspiration!</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Participate in Vocation Awareness Week.</b></p> <p>Promote the World Day of Prayer for Vocations, which takes place on the Fourth Sunday of Easter, and other events sponsored by the Diocesan Vocation Office. Your presence and support will enhance the effectiveness of these events.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Encourage service.</b></p> <p>Serving the Lord by loving our neighbor is an idea that is central to our faith. The example you set in your vocation as deacon can encourage the many people you come into contact with to share their gifts through service in the church. Service to others is one of the best ways we can imitate Jesus.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Encourage cooperation.</b></p> <p>It is only by the cooperation of the entire community, with each member responding to the vocation that he or she received through baptism, that we will be able to create the proper environment to foster the increase of church vocations - with the Holy Spirit leading the way!</p>

## *Ten things we can do as a Family*

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Identify the gifts of family members.</b></p> <p>Through baptism each of us has received special gifts and talents. Reflect as a family on the gifts and talents of each person and how they can be used in service to the family and to the parish. There is a place for each of your unique gifts in the church.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Participate in parish activities.</b></p> <p>A healthy parish community includes the participation of all its members. The involvement of your family in the activities offered in your parish will help create the life-giving environment necessary for the nurturing of religious and priestly vocations.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Pray.</b></p> <p>Of all the ways we can work toward the increase of vocations to the priesthood and religious life, prayer is undoubtedly the most essential. Make a commitment to pray for this intention everyday as a family, perhaps at mealtime. Also consider praying for a particular priest or religious in your parish.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Tell stories.</b></p> <p>Recall times in your lives when a priest or religious showed kindness to you and helped make a positive difference. Have the children share an experience too. Talk about what these men and women mean to you and the services they offer to God's people, the church.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Offer friendship to priests and religious.</b></p> <p>Whether it be sharing a meal, taking a walk, or simply having a conversation, make an effort to share friendship with priests and religious. Friendships will foster awareness, communication and respect for the lifestyle and needs of each person. Feelings of happiness and satisfaction will be the sure result!</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Say thank you.</b></p> <p>We all know that it feels good to be thanked. Say thanks to a priest or religious. It is encouraging for them to feel that their generosity is being appreciated and the time they spend in service to the parish community is being recognized. Offering thanks also sheds a positive light on priests and religious.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Attend Mass.</b></p> <p>The celebration of the Eucharist is a fundamental aspect of our faith. Gathering around the Lord's table will serve to strengthen the bond in your own family and the bond of the parish family. It is a strong parish family that produces priestly and religious vocations. Bring the children - they add life to the celebration!</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Perform acts of charity.</b></p> <p>In the Gospels Jesus directs us to love our neighbor and he calls us to serve one another. There are varied ways that we can behave charitably and serve the Lord gladly. Look into ways that your family can generously meet the needs of your neighbors. A charitable heart is a hallmark of priestly and religious vocations.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Send cards.</b></p> <p>Find out the anniversary dates of ordination or entrance into religious life celebrated by priests and religious, and send them a card. By this simple act they will be assured of our prayers, support and friendship. It will also serve to reinforce the family atmosphere of the parish community.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Remember that your home is the "domestic church."</b></p> <p>Parents are the first preachers of the faith to their children and the home is where early formation occurs. Create a climate within your home that will foster and encourage all members of your family to live out the vocation that God has planned for them. Pray, read spiritual books, talk about your faith and vocations to the priesthood and religious life. Let your home truly be a dwelling place for the Lord!</p>

## *Ten things we can do as Parents*

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Explain the idea of “vocation.”</b></p> <p>Define the word “vocation” to your children. Stress how a vocation is different from a profession or career, and how it is distinguished from one’s lifestyle. Our vocation is who we are. Explain how through baptism we have each received certain gifts that we will use in living out the vocation that God has intended for us.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Suggest a priestly or religious vocation for your child.</b></p> <p>It takes a great deal of generosity on the part of a parent to suggest a vocation to the priesthood or religious life for your child. Some young people will not consider this as an option for their life unless they have been asked. Be generous. Do the asking.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Share your vocation story.</b></p> <p>Let your children know that you have a vocation - that of husband and wife, mom and dad. Share with them the story of how you fell in love and how you felt when they were born. Your children will treasure these stories and lead them to consider what their own vocation might be.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Serve in a parish ministry.</b></p> <p>Consider becoming a lector, Eucharistic minister, usher, religious education teacher or some other parish minister. Not only will you be helping your parish, but you will be setting an example for your children. It will make your family part of the parish family and inspire service.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Show support.</b></p> <p>Often times when a young person does express an interest in the priesthood or religious life, they do not receive support and encouragement from their parents. Explore how you would feel if your child were to express a desire for a church vocation. It could lead to a healthy and more productive dialogue with your child.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Pray.</b></p> <p>Provide opportunities for prayer in your home everyday. Make it a normal part of decision-making. Pray in particular for an increase in vocations to the priesthood and religious life. Ask God to bless the priests and religious known to your children by name. Pray for those who are in formation for a priestly or religious vocation.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Create a peaceful atmosphere in your home.</b></p> <p>The “busy-ness” of our lives can become overwhelming. The constant hunger for activity can prevent us from taking the time we need to sit in silence and stillness. Create an atmosphere in your home where the abiding presence of the Lord can be felt.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Speak positively about priests and religious.</b></p> <p>Our words and attitudes make an enormous impression on our children. By speaking positively about priests and religious, you will foster a set of values that will promote the respect and gratitude that is due to those who serve God’s church so faithfully.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Read the Bible.</b></p> <p>Read the Bible or other books of a spiritual nature to your children, or if they are old enough, encourage them to read on their own. Talk about the significance of what you have read. Keep the Bible in an accessible place in you home. Nothing nourishes a priestly or religious vocation like the sacred scriptures!</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Love.</b></p> <p>The best and holiest thing any of us can do for our children is to love them. By loving them and expressing this love they will have the courage and faith they need to allow the Holy Spirit to work within them and guide them to receiving their particular vocation. So just love them.</p>

## *Ten things I can do as a Parishioner*

<p><b>Offer friendship to priests and religious.</b> Whether it be sharing a meal, taking a walk, or simply having a conversation after mass, make an effort to share friendship with priests and religious. Healthy friendships will foster awareness, communication and respect for the lifestyle and needs of each person. Feelings of happiness and satisfaction will be the sure result!</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Say thank you.</b></p> <p>We all know that it feels good to be thanked for a job well done. Say “thanks” to a priest or religious. It is encouraging for them to feel that the generosity of their lives is appreciated. This appreciation sheds a positive light on priestly and religious vocations. Your show of gratitude may lead others to do the same.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Extend an invitation.</b></p> <p>Many people claim that they were never invited to explore a vocation to the priesthood or religious life. Extend this invitation to a young person who you think might have a religious or priestly vocation. Your invitation could make a difference in someone’s life.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Serve in parish ministry.</b></p> <p>In the Gospels Jesus directs each of us to a life of service. Your service in the activities of your parish will help create the life-giving environment necessary for the nurturing of religious and priestly vocations. Let us fulfill this Gospel message by sharing our gifts.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Exhibit a love of your faith.</b></p> <p>By showing a love of your faith, you can provide the parish community with a powerful personal witness as to the importance of living out one’s vocation as the Lord intended. You can be a model for others to discover the vocation to which they are being called.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Pray.</b></p> <p>Of all the ways we can work toward the increase of vocations to the priesthood and religious life, prayer is undoubtedly the most essential. Make a commitment to pray for this intention everyday. Also consider praying for a particular priest or religious in your parish.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Attend Mass.</b></p> <p>Celebration of the Eucharist is a fundamental aspect of our faith. Gathering around the Lord’s table will serve to strengthen the bond you have to your faith and the bond of the parish family. It is a strong parish family that produces priestly and religious vocations.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Participate in Vocation Awareness Week.</b></p> <p>Take part in the events of Vocation Awareness Week by praying with others throughout the diocese for an increase in vocations to the priesthood and religious life. Check the bulletin for details regarding vocation activities. Your presence and support will enhance the effectiveness of these events.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Support parish functions.</b></p> <p>Your participation in parish functions is important. Not only will you benefit in terms of your own spiritual growth, you will be setting a fine example for your friends and neighbors. Having the parish as a focal point in your life can be an impetus for others to do the same. Such an atmosphere gives rise to church vocations.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Encourage cooperation among the different ministries in your parish.</b></p> <p>It is only by the cooperation of the entire community, with members responding to the vocation they received through baptism, that we will be able to create the proper environment to foster the increase of vocations to the priesthood and religious life - with the Holy Spirit leading the way!</p>

## *Ten things I can do as a Priest*

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Preach about vocations.</b></p> <p>In the Gospels we read the story of how Jesus chose his first disciples. Their stories were as vital to the early church as your story is to the church today. Whether it is dramatic, ordinary, inspiring or mundane, share your vocation story and invite others to share theirs!</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Greet Parishioners.</b></p> <p>The simple act of greeting parishioners after Sunday and daily Mass is an excellent way to promote a friendly, caring atmosphere in your parish. Such environments will serve as the foundation that is necessary for nurturing vocations to the priesthood and religious life.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Recognize altar servers.</b></p> <p>There is an undeniably strong link between altar servers and a future in the priesthood and religious life. Giving altar servers recognition in some way during mass is an excellent way to make them feel special and give an increased importance and holiness to their service.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Pray.</b></p> <p>Of all the ways we can work toward the increase of vocations to the priesthood and religious life, prayer is undoubtedly the most essential. During the General Intercessions, include a petition for the increase of church vocations. Encourage Eucharistic adoration.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Spend time with youth.</b></p> <p>Young people need to see priests as approachable and friendly. Attend their activities or find ways that they can be helpful to you. Consider offering them employment at the rectory. Friendships between youth and priests and religious can often aid in the discernment of a church vocation.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Attend Operation Andrew.</b></p> <p>These evenings of dinner, prayer and conversation provide an opportunity for young men to learn more about the priesthood. This event has proven to be a positive experience for all those involved. It allows young men to share their thoughts, questions and concerns with priests in an informal setting.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Extend an invitation.</b></p> <p>Many people claim that they were never invited to explore a vocation to the priesthood or religious life. Extend this invitation to young people who you think might have a church vocation. Your invitation could make a difference in their lives.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Exhibit a love of priesthood.</b></p> <p>It is encouraging to see a man who is enthusiastic about living out his priestly vocation. Your positive, prayerful attitude will help others recognize that the vocation of priest is worthwhile, valuable and fulfilling. Be an inspiration.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Visit Classrooms.</b></p> <p>It is only natural that vocations should be addressed in an educational setting. Talk to the students about the meaning of "vocation" and encourage them to consider their own vocation. You will always be welcomed by the students, even if it is because it means a break from the usual classroom routine!</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Encourage cooperation among the different ministries in your parish.</b></p> <p>It is only by the cooperation of the entire community, with members responding to the vocation they received through baptism, that we will be able to create the proper environment to foster the increase of vocations to the priesthood and religious life - with the Holy Spirit leading the way!</p>

## *Ten things I can do as a Religious Brother or Sister*

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Share your vocation story.</b></p> <p>In the Gospels we read the story of how Jesus chose his first disciples. Their stories were as vital to the early church as your story is to the church today. Whether it is dramatic, ordinary, inspiring or mundane, share your story and invite others to share theirs!</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Use the bulletin to keep the parish informed.</b></p> <p>The efforts of religious men and women often go unnoticed. The bulletin can be a good place to spread the word as to the tireless work being done in your various ministries. This will reinforce the active, vital role religious sisters and brothers play in the church.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Exhibit a love of religious life.</b></p> <p>It is encouraging to see women and men who are enthusiastic that they have devoted their lives to the Lord. By sharing the love you have for your vocation, you can serve the faith community in yet another way - as an inspiration!</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Participate in Vocation Awareness Week.</b></p> <p>Promote the World Day of Prayer for Vocations, which takes place on the Fourth Sunday of Easter, and other events sponsored by the Diocesan Vocation Office. Your presence and support will enhance the effectiveness of these events.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Extend an invitation.</b></p> <p>Many people claim that they were never invited to explore a vocation to the priesthood or religious life. Ask young people who you think exhibit qualities characteristic of a priest or religious if this might be a possibility for their life. It can make a difference.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Pray.</b></p> <p>Of all the ways we can work toward the increase of vocations to the priesthood and religious life, prayer is undoubtedly the most essential. As a religious sister or brother your commitment to prayer is important and your prayer for this intention is invaluable.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Invite young people to share a meal with you.</b></p> <p>The communal aspect of religious life is unique and much needed in our society in which individualism is the rule. Let others experience the human and spiritual support that exists in community and the love and companionship that is inherent in religious life.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Spend time with youth.</b></p> <p>Whether or not you are involved in a ministry that serves young people, try to find ways to spend time with them. Attend their activities or find ways that they can be helpful to you. Friendships between youth and religious can often aid in the discernment of a church vocation.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Publicize those in formation in your religious community.</b></p> <p>Make up prayer cards with the names of those preparing for final vows or create a display with their pictures and bios. It will be encouraging to them as well as the parish to see that there are vocations out there. Don't keep them a secret!</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Encourage cooperation.</b></p> <p>As religious sisters and brothers, you are models of cooperation through your lives as members of a community. Your involvement in so many different ministries enables you to teach others to live in the spirit of cooperation that is necessary in a parish community. With the guidance of the Holy Spirit, vocations to the priesthood and religious life will indeed flourish!</p>

## *Ten things I can do as a Seminarian*

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Offer a tour of the seminary.</b></p> <p>Offering a tour of the seminary is an excellent way of introducing young people to the formation process of a priest. Exposing them to the beauty and prayerfulness of the seminary grounds will be a memorable experience.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Participate in Vocation Awareness Week.</b></p> <p>Promote the World Day of Prayer for Vocations, which takes place on the Fourth Sunday of Easter, and other events sponsored by the Diocesan Vocation Office. Your presence and support will enhance the effectiveness of these events.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Share your vocation story.</b></p> <p>In the Gospels we read the story of how Jesus chose his first disciples. Their stories were as vital to the early church as your story is to the church today. Whether it is dramatic, ordinary, inspiring or mundane, share your vocation story and invite others to share theirs!</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Share your vocation story.</b></p> <p>In the Gospels we read the story of how Jesus chose his first disciples. Their stories were as vital to the early church as your story is to the church today. Whether it is dramatic, ordinary, inspiring or mundane, share your vocation story and invite others to share theirs!</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Visit Classrooms.</b></p> <p>It is only natural that vocations should be addressed in an educational setting. Seeing young men who are aspiring to a priestly vocation is vital to young people. Your willingness to make this commitment will be an inspiration to them.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Extend an invitation.</b></p> <p>Many people claim that they were never invited to explore a vocation to the priesthood or religious life. Extend this invitation to young people who you think might have a church vocation. Your invitation could make a difference in their lives.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Pray.</b></p> <p>As seminarians, you understand well the necessity of prayer when it comes to increasing vocations to the priesthood and religious life. The importance of your prayer for this intention is invaluable. Also be assured of the prayers offered for you as you continue your journey toward priesthood.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Spend time with youth.</b></p> <p>Young people who know and spend time with seminarians and priests are more likely to consider thinking about the priesthood for themselves. Make an effort at spending time with youth in an informal setting. Often, these friendships can lead to the discernment of a vocation.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Involve yourself in the activities of your home parish.</b></p> <p>The people of your parish appreciate the specialness of having a member of their community become a priest. It is encouraging for them to see you participate in church events. Your vocation can strengthen the bond of the parish family that will lead to the nurturing of future vocations.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Be a presence at vocation oriented events.</b></p> <p>Although you have busy schedules, try to attend vocation oriented events around the diocese, such as Operation Andrew. Most parishioners do not have the opportunity to see seminarians very often and your presence makes an impression.</p>

## *Ten things I can do as a Senior Citizen*

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Tell stories to your family.</b></p> <p>Families cherish stories that have been passed down through generations, and grandparents are marvelous sources of stories. Stress the importance of the family bond and the role played by priests and religious in your youth and throughout your life.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Attend parish functions.</b></p> <p>Church vocations are the responsibility of the entire community and as a member of the parish family, your presence is vital. You're never too old to join the community in prayer or fun. If you can't join us physically, join us through prayer! We need you!</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Offer a monthly Holy Hour.</b></p> <p>Whether it be at your parish church or in your home, make a commitment to pray a holy hour for an increase of vocations to the priesthood and religious life at least once a month. The Seminary of the Immaculate Conception holds a holy hour on the third Friday of each month for this intention.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Extend an invitation.</b></p> <p>Many people claim that they were never invited to explore a vocation to the priesthood or religious life. Through the wisdom of your years, you may have the keen awareness of the presence of a church vocation in a young person. Ask this person if he or she has ever considered exploring this possibility.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Say thank you.</b></p> <p>We all know that it feels good to be thanked. Say thanks to priests and religious. It is encouraging for them to feel that their generosity is being appreciated and the time they spend in service to the parish community is being recognized. Offering thanks also sheds a positive light on priests and religious.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Pray.</b></p> <p>Prayer is essential in working toward an increase in vocations to the priesthood and religious life. The prayer of senior citizens for this intention is invaluable. Pray the rosary for an increase in church vocations, or pray daily for a particular priest, religious or person considering a life as a priest or religious.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Send cards.</b></p> <p>Find out the anniversary dates of ordination or entrance into religious life celebrated by priests and religious and send them a card. By this simple act they will be assured of our prayers, support and friendship. It will also serve to reinforce the family atmosphere of the parish community.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Exhibit a love of your faith.</b></p> <p>By showing a love of your faith you can provide the parish community with a powerful personal witness as to the importance of living out one's vocation as the Lord intended. You can be a model for others to discover the vocation to which they are being called.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Share your wisdom.</b></p> <p>With age comes an increased spirituality that is yet undeveloped in younger people, even in some priests and religious. Express the deepening spirituality that can only come from years of faithfulness, and indeed friendship with the Lord. As people of wisdom in the parish community you can provide the pastoring that is necessary in the ongoing formation of priests and religious.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Encourage those who serve in your parish.</b></p> <p>Take the time to offer acknowledgment to those who serve in various parish ministries. Your taking the time to recognize their hard work will lend encouragement and support to those whose tireless efforts often go unnoticed. Share a positive comment with your pastor when you see something worthwhile going on. Observations from respected parishioners such as you will help foster the life-giving environment so vital to the nurturing of church vocations.</p>

## *Ten things I can do as a Single Person*

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Become involved in youth ministry.</b></p> <p>Our young people need positive role models. Consider volunteering some of your time in youth ministry. It will benefit the young people of the parish to see the example of your vocation as a generous single person and you will benefit from the energy and enthusiasm that youth brings to the church!</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Attend Mass.</b></p> <p>Celebration of the Eucharist is a fundamental aspect of our faith. It is around the table of the Lord that the parish family gathers and you are an important part of that family. Our prayer is not complete without you. Such community oriented environments give rise to priestly and religious vocations.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Attend Holy Hours.</b></p> <p>Make a commitment to attend a Holy Hour for Vocations to the Priesthood or Religious Life at least once a month. The Seminary of the Immaculate Conception holds a holy hour on the third Friday of every month for this intention.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Participate in Vocation Awareness Week.</b></p> <p>Promote the World Day of Prayer for Vocations, which takes place on the Fourth Sunday of Easter, and other events sponsored by the Diocesan Vocation Office. Your presence and support will enhance the effectiveness of these events.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Teach a religious education class.</b></p> <p>Religious education programs are always eager for intelligent, faithful people to teach religious education classes. Helping children explore their spirituality will be a rewarding experience for you and start them on the path that will one day lead them to their vocation.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Pray.</b></p> <p>Of all the ways we can work toward the increase of vocations to the priesthood and religious life, prayer is undoubtedly the most essential. Make a commitment to pray for this intention everyday. Also, consider praying for a particular priest or religious in your parish.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Participate in parish activities.</b></p> <p>A healthy parish community includes the participation of all its members. Your involvement in the activities, both spiritual and social, offered in your parish will help create the life-giving environment necessary for the nurturing of religious and priestly vocations.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Extend an invitation.</b></p> <p>Many people claim that they were never invited to explore a vocation to the priesthood or religious life. Extend this invitation to young people you know who you think might have a church vocation. Your invitation could make a difference in their lives.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Say thank you.</b></p> <p>We all know that it feels good to be thanked for a job well done. Say thanks to priest or religious or send them a card expressing your gratitude. It is encouraging for them to feel that the generosity of a life of service is appreciated. It also sheds a positive light on priestly and religious vocations.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Explore the possibility of a church vocation for yourself.</b></p> <p>As a single person, you may still be considering a vocation to marriage and parenthood. Feel invited to also explore the possibility of a vocation to the priesthood or religious life. If you would like information or just some conversation, contact a vocation director. Give it some thought.</p>

## *Ten things I can do as a Teacher*

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Develop vocation oriented projects.</b></p> <p>Have students work on projects with vocation themes. This can be done through poster contests, creative writing, photography, interviews and a variety of other activities. This will also encourage student interaction with sisters, brothers and priests and lead to a deeper understanding of religious and priestly vocations.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Encourage service.</b></p> <p>Serving the Lord by loving our neighbor is an idea that is central to our faith. There are numerous ways that this service can be lived out. Have someone speak to your students about the opportunities to serve that exist in the parish. Service to others is one way that we can best imitate Jesus.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Create a “Vocation Bulletin Board.”</b></p> <p>Devote a bulletin board in your classroom to highlighting a particular priest, sister or brother and display their picture and a short biography. Identify and explain their work and the many ministries they are involved in.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Explore scripture.</b></p> <p>The classroom setting is the perfect place to spend time reading and reflecting on the way vocation is presented in scripture. Consider the different ways those in scripture stories are called to their vocation and how they respond to that call.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Sponsor field trips.</b></p> <p>Take your students on a field trip to a religious community, seminary or the rectory. A familiarity with the lifestyle of priests and religious- seeing how they live, work and pray- may be appealing to some young people and may aid them in the discernment of a church vocation.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Pray.</b></p> <p>Of all the ways we can work toward the increase of vocations to the priesthood and religious life, prayer is undoubtedly the most essential. Make a commitment to pray for this intention as a class. Also consider praying for a particular priest or religious in your parish.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Make vocation literature available.</b></p> <p>The Diocesan Vocation Office has materials that will gladly be shared with you for distribution and for discussion in your classes. You may even want some literature available on a table in a corner of the room that your students can feel free to take and read on their own.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Acquaint students with the various ministries in the church.</b></p> <p>Inform your students as to the different ministries that are present in the church. Remind them that they each have unique gifts and talents that can be offered to the parish community in a variety of ways.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Invite a priest or religious brother or sister to speak to your class.</b></p> <p>Having priests and religious share their stories about how they came to their particular vocation is a great way to spend a class period. Allow time for discussion so that the students can air some of their thoughts and ask questions about religious and priestly vocations.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Attend diocesan sponsored events as a class.</b></p> <p>There are many events that take place in the diocese that would be enhanced by the participation of young people. Consider attending one of these events as a class or plan your own vocation event! This will increase their awareness and stress the importance of the need for vocations in the church.</p>

## *Ten things I can do as a Youth Minister*

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Plan “Prayer time for Vocations.”</b></p> <p>Have your youth group plan a time of prayer for Vocations to the Priesthood and Religious Life. Have them invite priests, religious, seminarians and parishioners to the event. This can be a marvelous way for them to get involved in a parish activity while bringing attention to the need for religious and priestly vocations.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Pray.</b></p> <p>Of all the ways we can work toward the increase of vocations to the priesthood and religious life, prayer is undoubtedly the most essential. Make a commitment with your youth group to pray for this intention. If you celebrate a youth mass in your parish, include a petition for an increase in church vocations.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Extend an invitation.</b></p> <p>Many people claim that they were never invited to explore a vocation to the priesthood or religious life. Extend the invitation to young people and encourage those who are interested to contact the vocation director.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Show films with religious themes.</b></p> <p>Watching videos is a favorite activity among youth. Devote “video night” to viewing films that will lead to a discussion of church vocations. In the ensuing discussion, explore how the protagonist was led to his or her vocation.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Inform the parish youth of vocation events.</b></p> <p>Keep the youth informed of the events that they can participate in regarding vocations. These may include Operation Andrew evenings, holy hours, retreats and more. Consider attending ordination in June as a group.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Exhibit a love and respect of priests and religious.</b></p> <p>Our attitudes regarding priests and religious have a tremendous influence on the attitudes of young people. Talk about how your life has been affected by a particular priest or religious and provide opportunities for the youth to do the same.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Make vocation literature available.</b></p> <p>The Diocesan Vocation Office has materials that will gladly be shared with you. In addition, offer young people a reading list of spiritual books or suggest biblical readings and follow up with a group discussion. Our office would also be happy to provide you with a list of vocation-oriented websites.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Participate in Vocation Awareness Week.</b></p> <p>Promote the World Day of Prayer for Vocations, which takes place on the Fourth Sunday of Easter, and other events sponsored by the Diocesan Vocation Office. Your presence and support will enhance the effectiveness of these events.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Invite a priest or religious brother or sister to spend time with youth.</b></p> <p>Invite a priest or religious to come and share their vocation story with the youth group. Having them spend time with young people offers an opportunity to develop personal relationships which are so important to a developing vocation.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Plan a trip to the Seminary.</b></p> <p>In addition to appreciating the beauty of the seminary grounds, your youth group can have the opportunity to see what it is like to live, study and pray at the seminary. They can also meet the men who are on their journey toward priesthood and hear how they were led to their particular vocation.</p>