

Vocations: Hearing the Call

It has always been a mystery to me why the Lord chose me as a minister of the Gospel. As with St. Paul “I am grateful to him who has strengthened me, Christ Jesus, our Lord, because he considered me trustworthy in appointing me to the ministry.”

Paul says he was once a blasphemer. Blasphemy is defined as the act of insulting or showing contempt or lack of reverence for God or irreverence towards religious or holy persons or things, or toward something considered sacred or inviolable. I have so often wondered how many times I have shown contempt and lack of reverence for God – not by standing and shaking my fist at the heavens, but rather through the lack of reverence toward others – sometimes intentionally and sometimes by just not paying attention.



I think of the many failures, personal and relational; knowing they have had the “butterfly effect.” I wonder in how many ways the sacredness of this world and the dignity of others has been lessened, because of my own weaknesses.

In our family life, in those moments of private and community prayer, in the countless encounters of each day, we are able to recognize God’s grace abounding. What is amazing is that God’s love continues to manifest itself; a love that speaks so loudly even in the midst of a world filled with lights contrary to the light of Christ. Yet the Lord still considers each of us trustworthy in being instruments of His love, forgiveness, peace and compassion.

In our community there are so many who have been strengthened by Christ and who demonstrate in a multitude of generous and self-giving acts of kindness. There are so many who reach out to those who are seeking to experience the goodness of God’s love – and so often see that love in the actions of our parishioners.

Being a community of faith, journeying together – companions with Paul – and despite our failures, weaknesses and blind spots, the Lord still calls from among us and in our community those inspired and called to the priesthood, religious life and the diaconate. Our greatest failure today would be to think that Jesus has stopped calling our parish sons and daughters to minister to the Gospel as priest, sister or brother or deacon.

With the apparent shortage of vocations, I would ask you set aside a place in prayer for vocations – allowing the “spectacular” of our world to not discourage receptivity in considering a vocation. A greater blasphemy could be in not recognizing the holiness in the lives of our people and in not encouraging those men and women to respond to God’s call of ministry within the Church. The “butterfly effect” of the Church scandals that has brought disillusionment in the Catholic community; the secularism that idolizes the consumer and material culture of our society; replacing reference and reverence to God - all have had a dramatic effect within the Church.

Please keep the call to vocations in your prayer and ask the love of Christ to inspire a generosity of spirit within our people in sharing the ministry entrusted to the community of Christ the Servant. LGaetano