**Vocations Week – 2021**

**Day Eight**

**Saturday 24th April**

***A Reading from the Holy Gospel According to John***  6:60-69

The words I have spoken to you are spirit and they are life. ’But there are some of you who do not believe.’ For Jesus knew from the outset those who did not believe, and who it was that would betray him. He went on, ‘This is why I told you that no one could come to me unless the Father allows him.’ After this, many of his disciples left him and stopped going with him. Then Jesus said to the Twelve, ‘What about you, do you want to go away too?’ Simon Peter answered, ‘Lord, who shall we go to? You have the message of eternal life, and we believe; we know that you are the Holy One of God.’

***St Joseph – a creatively courageous father.***

If we wish to be like St Joseph in his embracing of things he did not choose, we need to imitate his creative courage, especially in the way we deal with difficulties. The easy thing to do would be to give up and walk away. Or we can choose to engage with the problem, whatever it is. We may even discover qualities and talents we didn’t realise we had.

God acts through events and people. In the early years of Jesus’ life, God acted repeatedly through St Joseph. Thanks to St Joseph, relying on his faith and his creative courage, both Mary and Jesus were protected in times of danger. If we’re tempted to think that the world is at the mercy of the strong and powerful, the “good news” of the Gospel is that God always finds a way to carry out His saving plan, enabling us to turn a problem into a possibility. At times when it seems that God isn’t helping us, or that God is staying silent and distant, we shouldn’t feel abandoned. Rather we should realise that we’re being trusted to plan, to be creative, and to find solutions for ourselves.

Pope Francis, writing in *Patris Corde*, invites us to think of the story of the paralytic whose friends had carried him on a stretcher to meet Jesus. When they couldn’t get into the house where Jesus was, they got up on the roof, made a hole in it and lowered their friend to the place where Jesus was. Faith, courage and creativity in action!

**The Heart’s Calling**

We discover who we are only by becoming conscious of the most authentic desires, loves, and longings of our hearts. “Who am I? is also close’ to another question, “Whose am I?” We come to know ourselves by recognising those to whom we belong. Whom do we love? With whom do we feel at home? To whom does our heart go out? With whose sufferings and aspirations do we most identify? The experience of falling in love, for example, is associated with a profound sense of vocation. There is the issue of the complex interrelationship between our desires and God’s desires. In vocational discernment, it is important to pay close attention to our feelings, because authentic callings always begin with a stirring of the heart. Someone or something moves or touches us in some way, and our heart responds with a feeling. We may not, at first, be able to articulate or make sense of our heart’s response; we know only that something significant has occurred… “The heart has its reasons,” wrote Pascal, “that reason does not know.”

John Neafsey**, The Heart’s Calling,**p288, from *A Sacred Voice is Calling*.

**Mass**

**Angelus for Vocations**

**Vocation Interview hosted by Bishop Donal McKeown**

**Daily Examen**

**Rosary for Vocations Joyful Mysteries**

**Night Prayer**

**Mass Saturday 24th April**

***Introduction:***

As we come to the end of our week of prayer for vocations to the priesthood in our diocese, we invoke in our Mass today the intercession of our Blessed Mother, Mary.

***Prayer of the Faithful:***

‘Lord, who shall we go to? You have the message of eternal life,’ confidant that you are the Holy one of God we bring our prayers before you.

**Reader:** The response to our intercessions is: Lord hear our Prayer.

1. As the Church, may we never tire of asking the Lord to send labourers to his harvest.… Lord, hear us.

We pray to the Lord. **R/Lord Hear our Prayer**

1. That all Catholic mothers will draw close to Mary and encourage their children to be open to the Holy Spirit when God calls them to serve Him and His people in the priesthood or consecrated life.… Lord, hear us.

We pray to the Lord. **R/Lord Hear our Prayer**

1. For the Priests and religious in our diocese; may they continue to proclaim the good news of the Gospel with zeal, and joyfully renew their ‘yes’ to Christ’s invitation, ‘Come Follow Me’.… Lord, hear us.

We pray to the Lord. **R/Lord Hear our Prayer**

1. For our sick, particularly our priests and religious, and those who suffer with mental illness; may they gain hope in their darkness by uniting their sufferings with Christ on the cross and turn to Mary who will never abandon her sons and daughters…. Lord, hear us.

We pray to the Lord. **R/Lord Hear our Prayer**

1. For our beloved dead, for priests religious and all who followed Christ in this life: may they now be united with Him in eternal life.… Lord, hear us.

We pray to the Lord. **R/Lord Hear our Prayer**

Lord you have the message of eternal life. Trusting in Your love, we make all our prayers to the Father through You, in the Holy Spirit, God for ever and ever. Amen.