

**VOCATION EDUCATION RESOURCES
FOR TEACHERS, CATECHISTS & THOSE WORKING WITH YOUTH**

PARISH PROJECTS

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Vocations Parish

The Archdiocese of Chicago Vocations Office has a new “Vocations Parish” initiative whereby parishes are asked to deliberately, actively, and joyfully make the promotion of all Christian vocations an underlying element of all parish activities. Training is provided to the parishes. For more information on how you can help your parish to become a “Vocations Parish,” contact Susanne Smith in the Vocations Office at 312-534-5234 or susmith@archchicago.org.

Submitted By:

Kevin Cody, DRE
St. Alphonsus Parish
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Parish Activity – Elijah Cup

Our parish has a cup (Elijah) that is passed around to different families during the year at various Masses for a week of family prayer for vocations. Holy Redeemer Catholic School passed the cup around from classroom to classroom for the third trimester of school. Each grade received or returned the cup at our weekly school Mass and prayed for vocations for the following week. It really brought the need for vocations to the forefront as each priest talked about it when the cup was passed.

Submitted By:

Colleen Ehlenbeck
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Parish Vocation Encouragement Project

Letter of invitation to participate in a parish vocation encouragement ministry. Several choices on how to engage in this ministry are given -- praying a simple vocational prayer or choosing a vocational prayer service for each day of the week. The letter, a prayer and a prayer service follow. See the PRAYERS tab for the other six prayers and prayer services.

LETTER

January, 2009

Dear Parishioner:

Thank you for signing up to participate in your parish's vocation encouragement ministry.

We are providing you with several choices of how to engage in this ministry: praying a simple vocational prayer or choosing a vocational prayer service for each day of the week. The choice is yours.

Whichever you choose, we are truly grateful that you are joining the priests of your parish as well as the priests and men and women religious of your diocese in praying that our young people do not leave God out of the picture when they are considering which vocation to choose in life.

Thanks so much for your willingness to be part of this prayer ministry for your parish.

Sincerely yours,

Sister Dorothy Ann Dirx, SSM
Vocation Director of the Sisters of the Sorrowful Mother
U.S./Caribbean Province

Submitted By:

Sister Dorothy Ann Dirx, SSM
Vocation Director
U.S./Caribbean Province of the
Sisters of the Sorrowful Mother



VOCATION PRAYER I

Lord God, thank you for those men and women who have answered the call to priesthood or the call to religious life as a religious Sister/Brother. Thank you for those parents/grandparents who, with their sons and daughters/grandsons and granddaughters, accepted God's call to priesthood or religious life. Give us today the same courage to seek Your will above all for the men and women today who you are to the consecrated life or to priesthood.

We ask this in Jesus' name.

R. Amen.

Created by: Sister Dorothy Ann Dirx, SSM
Vocation Director
U.S./Caribbean Province of the
Sisters of the Sorrowful Mother

VOCATION PRAYER SERVICE I

Opening prayer: Lord God, thank you for those men and women who have answered the call to priesthood or the call to religious life as a religious Sister/Brother. Thank you for those parents/grandparents who, with their sons and daughters/grandsons and granddaughters, accepted God's call to priesthood or religious life. Give us today the same courage to seek Your will above all for the men and women today whom you are calling to the consecrated life or to priesthood. We ask this in Jesus' name. **R. Amen.**

Scripture Reading: Lk 1: 26-38

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man named Joseph, of the House of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. He went in and said to her, 'Rejoice, so highly favored! The Lord is with you.' She was deeply disturbed by these words and asked herself what this greeting could mean, but the angel said to her, 'Mary, do not be afraid; you have won God's favor. Listen! You are to conceive and bear a son, and you must name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his ancestor David; he will rule over the House of Jacob forever and his reign will have no end.' Mary said to the angel, 'But how can this come about, since I am a virgin?' 'The Holy Spirit will come upon you,' the angel answered, 'and the power of the Most High will cover you with its shadow. And so the child will be holy and will be called Son of God. Know this too: your kinswoman Elizabeth has, in her old age, herself conceived a son, and she whom people called barren is now in her sixth month, *for nothing is impossible to God.*' 'I am the handmaid of the Lord,' said Mary, 'let what you have said be done to me.'

Reflections (Silent or voiced)

Prayer: Psalm 16: 1-2, 5-11

Side 1: Look after me, God, I take shelter in you.

Side 2: To Yahweh you say, 'My Lord,
You are my fortune, nothing else but You',

.....

Side 1: Yahweh, my heritage, my cup,
You, and You only, hold my lot secure;
the measuring line marks out delightful places for me,
for me the heritage is superb indeed.

Side 2: I bless Yahweh, who is my counselor,
and in the night my inmost self instructs me;
I keep Yahweh before me always,
for with God at my right hand nothing can shake me.

Side 1: So my heart exults, my very soul rejoices,
my body, too, will rest securely,
for You will not abandon my soul to Sheol,
Nor allow the one you love to see the Pit;

Side 2: You will reveal the path of life to me,
give me unbounded joy in your presence,
and at your right hand everlasting pleasures.

Side 1: Glory be to the Father, and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit,

Side 2: As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

Intercessory Prayer: Response—Lord, hear our prayer!

Leader: Lord, like Mary, may we listen to “the angels” you send into our lives with messages from God for us to hear, let us pray to the Lord, **R**

Leader: Lord, Mary was favored in your sight. May each one of us realize that we too are favored in your sight, let us pray to the Lord, **R**.

Leader: Lord, you calmed Mary’s fears. Calm the fears we may have if our sons or daughters/grandsons or granddaughters are called to priesthood or to the consecrated life of a Sister or a Brother, let us pray to the Lord, **R**.

Leader: Lord, calm any fears our sons/daughters or grandsons/granddaughters may have concerning their vocation in life. May they be strengthened in knowing that the Holy Spirit will overshadow them, as it did Mary, in the embrace of Your will for them, be that marriage, the single life, or a life consecrated to the Lord as a priest or a religious Sister/Brother, let us pray to the Lord, **R**.

Leader: Lord, you have mapped out a path for each of us. May we look for that path. May the young among us especially look for the vocational path you have mapped out for them, let us pray to the Lord, **R**.

Leader: Lord, when we allow Your will to take possession of us and of our children/grandchildren, we, like Elizabeth are no longer in a “barren state,” but are blessed with newness of life. Give us the courage to surrender our wills to Your will, let us pray to the Lord, **R**.

Leaders: Personal petitions:

Leader: Let us bring our petitions to God in the words that Jesus taught us: **Our Father...**

Let us pray: Lord God, just as you sent an angel to bring your message to Mary of her vocation in life, so, too, do you send “angels” to help us know your will for our lives. May we be willing to listen to each other, to our sons and daughters, to our pastors and teachers, to the circumstances in our lives by which You communicate Your will to us. May we be unafraid of challenging each other, as the angel challenged Mary and calmed her fears. May we calm each other’s fears when what you ask of us might be a bit frightening. When we think it is impossible, may we like Mary be reminded that nothing is impossible for You. We ask for these graces in Jesus’ name.

Response: Amen

Sister Dorothy Ann Dirx, SSM 9/15/2008