

# Office of Vocations



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## Purpose of the Office

The Purpose of the Office of Vocations is to help young people to discover God's call for them in their lives. This discovery begins as young people are assisted to grow in holiness and encouraged to give their lives in the service of God and others. This discovery is fostered as young people are given the tools to discern their call and vocation, whether it be to marriage, priesthood, religious life or single. With a special emphasis on promoting vocations to the diocesan priesthood, young men are helped to understand and explore the beauty and mission of the total gift of self to God in service to the Church.

## Work of the Office

- To reach out to all young people and provide them opportunities and resources for their discernment.
- To direct promotion of priestly vocations for the Diocese of La Crosse and assists those making application for seminary studies for the Diocese.
- To help pastors in their role of fostering vocations with a special focus on diocesan priesthood.
- To give pastors the tools to help their young people discern their call.
- To coordinate educational programs for seminarians.
- To interview prospective candidates for the seminary and convene meetings of the Board of Admissions.
- To serve as an official representative of the Diocesan Bishop to seminarians on issues relating to education.
- To represent the Bishop to various state and national organizations for priestly vocations.

If not you... then WHO?

If not for the sake of Jesus Christ....

If not now... then WHEN?

then WHY?

# Discernment Retreats



## What is the Purpose of the Discernment Retreats?

Just as Jesus often took His disciples aside to spend time with them in prayer and formation, so too, the purpose of a discernment retreat is to take the time to be with Jesus and to listen to His call. This is done with priests, seminarians and other young men, who are asking the same question, “What is God’s plan and mission for my life?” These regular retreats offer an ongoing formation and support for the men in discernment and give them the tools needed to hear God’s voice, to grow in holiness and to open them for a life of service to the Church.

## What are the Components?

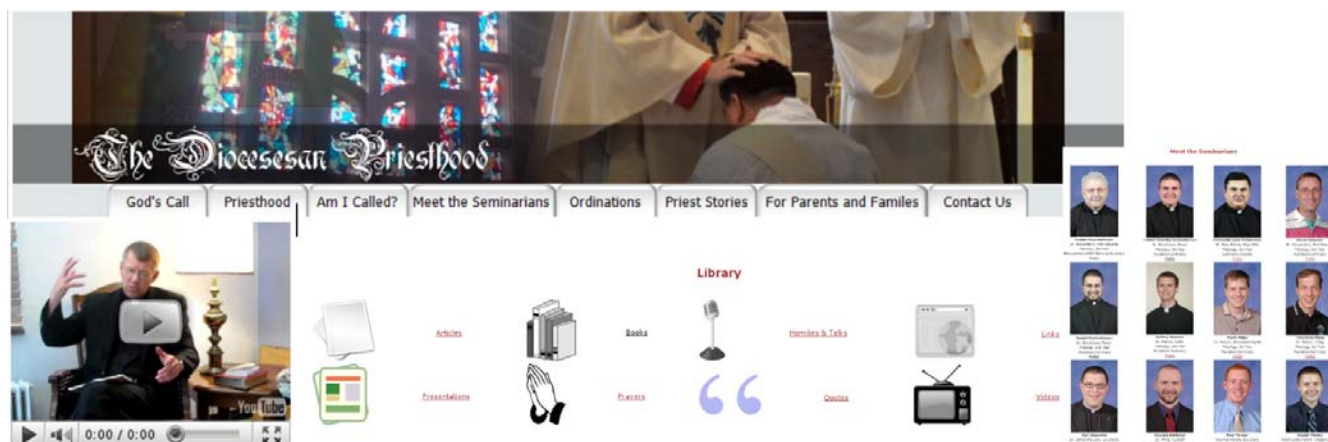
In a discernment retreat there are times for Mass, Adoration, Reconciliation, Liturgy of the Hours, presentations, small group discussions and free time to meet others. Each retreat covers the basic principles of discernment, which are applicable to all states in life, with a special emphasis on the call to Diocesan Priesthood.

## When are the Discernment Retreats and Who May Attend?

- **Dare to Follow Days** – (Grades 6-10) – Mid-Summer\*  
This retreat is to help young men to think and discern about living a life of service within and for the Church. It does this by leading them to encounter Christ in the Church and Sacraments and to respond to the question, “Do you have the Courage to dare to follow Jesus?”
- **Threshold Retreat** – (Grades 11 and Older) – Mid-Summer\*  
This retreat builds on the Dare to Follow Retreat by giving the young men tools for discernment as they prepare for the thresholds of their lives. It inspires the men to surrender more deeply to Christ and the Church. This retreat is for those who are willing to ask the question of “What does the Lord want me to do with my life?”
- **College Discernment Retreat** – (College / Young Adults) – Late Winter - Lions Camp Rosholt\*  
This is the one retreat during the year which is open to men and women in their twenties to guide them in discerning the state in life to which God is calling them.
- **Ongoing Monthly Events**
  - **Adoration for Vocations** - (Diocesan Center Crypt Chapel), 1<sup>st</sup> Mondays, 7 - 8pm.  
Eucharistic Adoration with songs, quiet prayer time, and confession available. Refreshments afterwards in the dining room.
  - **"Duc in Altum"** - (Diocesan Center Dining Room), 1<sup>st</sup> Mondays, 8:30-9:30pm.  
Men's Discernment Group led by Fr. Joseph Hirsch, Vocation Director, for men who are thinking about the priesthood. Call Fr. Hirsch for more information, (608) 791-2666.
- **Seminary Visits** - Contact the Vocations Office for more details or [www.thepriesthood.org](http://www.thepriesthood.org).

\* For specific times, see [www.thepriesthood.org](http://www.thepriesthood.org).

# Vocations Website: [www.thepriesthood.org](http://www.thepriesthood.org)



## **What is the Purpose of the Vocations Website?**

Increasingly young people use the Internet to find answers to their questions. The vocations website is a place where they can go to find resources to aid them in their search to answer life's basic questions like: Who is God? What is His plan and mission for my Life? Increasingly the website will be used to offer formational materials and talks for every stage of discernment. It is also a place where people can get to know our seminarians through video interviews, bios and reflections.

## **What are the Components?**

The vocations website contains many resources to aid people in discerning their call in life: It is divided into sections on discernment, the priesthood and priest stories, ordination, meet the seminarians, vocations library, resources for parents & families and upcoming events.

The website also has a large library of online articles, book recommendations, videos, and talks. This section is continually updated with information that discerners can access to answer their questions as well as help them to ask deeper questions.

Visitors can also access the vocation stories of all the seminarians as well as video interviews. While the path of each seminarian towards priesthood is unique, each story bears similar traits which are universal to all who feel a call to priesthood.

## **For Whom is the Website Intended?**

For men who are willing to ask the critical question, "Is Jesus Christ calling me to be a Catholic Priest?"

