

4th Sunday of Easter
May 11-12, 2019

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Living Catholic in the 808: World Day of Prayer for Vocations

Very Rev. Msgr. Gary L. Secor, V.G.
**Rector, Cathedral Basilica of
Our Lady of Peace**

This weekend we celebrate World Day of Prayer for Vocations. When we hear the word "vocation" in Catholic circles, we automatically think of those called to be deacons, priests, brothers, or sisters. Actually, all of us are called, through our baptisms, to a life of holiness and service. To be holy and to serve others is not an optional extra for those who believe in Christ. It is a basic requirement of those who are authentic Christians. We become holy and offer loving service in a variety of ways through being single or married and by being students, those who work, or those who volunteer.

The root of the word "vocation" is "vocare", a Latin word that means "call". The gospel reminds us that the Good Shepherd, Jesus, is the one who is calling us. We need to be prayerful and perceptive so that we can listen to His voice. God speaks to our entire being and helps us to become aware of what we are truly and deeply passionate about. It is this passion that God wants to purify and direct toward a significant and meaningful purpose. Ultimately, God wants us to find a vocation that that we can be excited and passionate about; one that fills us with joy and fulfillment, even as it calls us to sacrifice and commitment.

Speaking for myself, and having been a priest for over 40 years, I can tell you that God's calling in my life has brought me much joy and fulfillment. It has given me an opportunity to be life-giving in many deeply beautiful and moving ways. It has involved challenge and sacrifice, but it has been much more of a blessing than a burden. Because this life of service as a priest has been such a gift to me, I want to be part of passing this gift on to others. I strongly encourage others, especially young people in our community, to consider whether God might be calling them to a life of service as a deacon, priest, brother or sister. Don't be afraid or ashamed about asking me or another priest, deacon, or religious about what is involved in pursuing this calling. Let us pray that all of us will listen to God's call, allow God to use our passion for God's purpose, and be able to live our vocation to holiness and service.

This weekend we also celebrate the vocation of motherhood as we honor our mothers, living and dead, on Mother's Day. We thank God for their "yes" to God's call to be life-giving in so many ways. May they know the love of God, especially through the love and respect that we show them today and always.