



CREATING A CULTURE OF CALLING

Young Adult & Adult Faith Formation Program *Discovering Your Call & Vocation*

Discovering your call and vocation is not the work of one season of life, but is central to each and every stage from childhood through older adulthood. We are called to discover God's calling and our vocation in each season of life.

Introduction

Introduce the program with these words:

Vocation embraces who we are, how we live, and what we do—identity, relationships, and work. Vocation includes the diverse ways God calls people within their particular circumstance. It embraces how to find meaning and purpose in work and relationships, how to balance multiple responsibilities, how to connect personal concerns to the common good, how to listen deeply to God, and how to respond with faith and courage. (Laura Kelly Fanucci)

Vocation is a central part of the Christian life, encompassing:

- *who we are called to be*—the core of our identity, as created by God and baptized in Christ, and sent forth to serve by the power of the Holy Spirit;
- *how we are called to live*—our commitments of lifestyle and relationships, including marriage, parenting, or the single life;
- *what we are called to do*—the work, service and activities that fill our daily lives, including paid or professional work, volunteering, homemaking, raising children or caregiving. (Kathleen Cahalan)

Through the activities in this program you will have the opportunity to discern your calling and vocation in this season of your life.

Video Presentation: *Discerning God's Call* with Jennifer Haworth

Show the video *Discerning God's Call* with Jennifer Grant Haworth from the Practicing Our Faith project. Go to YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fVq3DBiYOYw>.

After watching the video, invite the group to share insights about calling and discernment they discovered while watching the video.

Jennifer draws on Frederick Buechner's definition of vocation as "the place where your deep gladness and the world's deep hunger meet" (*Wishful Thinking: A Seeker's ABC*). *Can you think of someone who seems to be living exactly in that place? What is appealing about his or her life? Ask for examples of people who are living their "deep gladness."*

Experience: Discovering Call and Vocation

Guide people through the following process to discover their calling and vocation at this time in their life. (There is a handout with questions that you may want to copy for the participants.)

Organize people into groups of three people. Explain the process and give people quiet time to reflect on the questions. Then have them share their story with their group. Remind each person to be attentive listeners. This is not a group discussion, but a storytelling experience.

Conclude the activity by inviting insights and reflections from the participants about their experience.

Uncovering your God-given desires is key to discovering your calling. For many of us, discovering your passion can seem like an overwhelming task, but there are questions you can answer that will help with your quest.

1. ***What are you passionate about?*** For some people this is an easy question to answer. For others it is difficult. Use the following prompts to help identify your passions.
 - What gives you energy?
 - What catches and keeps your attention?
 - How do you choose to use your free time?
 - What are you doing when you feel "fully alive"?
 - How would your friends or others you trust answer this question for you?
 - When were you last amazed with joy, overwhelmed with gratitude?
 - What breaks your heart?
2. ***What are doing to live your passion? Is it something that calls forth your gifts, engaging your abilities and talents, using them fully?***
3. ***Does your passion serve others? Is this genuine service to others and to the wider society?***
4. ***Are their fears and doubts that impact discovering and living your calling and vocation? How do you deal with this? Is there a community of people who can help you in times of fear and doubt?***

5. *How have you experienced God in the midst of your discovering and living your calling and vocation, and in dealing with fears and doubts? How has your relationship with God sustained and developed your calling and vocation?*

Scripture Reflection: Jesus Discerning God’s Call

Use the following introduction and questions to engage people in the story of Jesus’ temptations in the desert.

Immediately after Jesus is baptized by John in the Jordan River he is “led by the Spirit” into the wilderness where the devil tempts him.

Read Matthew 3:13-4:17.

Suggest that people pay attention to who is speaking and who is acting. Notice the various settings or locations.

Discuss the Scripture passage in small groups of six people (combine the groups of three from the first activity). Use the following questions to discuss these story.

- In what ways is this story about Jesus “discerning God’s call?”
- In the video Jennifer Haworth relates an image of the Mississippi River with its deep current and its many surface cross-currents. Use this image to describe Jesus’ discernment. How might this image help you describe your own life and discernment?
- How is “listening” part of discernment for Jesus? for you?
- How is Scripture used in this passage? Is it part of your discernment? How?
- Why is the wilderness the setting for Jesus’ temptation? What has wilderness looked like for you during a time of discerning God’s call in your life?
- Do you think “fear and doubt” were part of Jesus’ discernment? How have you experienced fear and doubt in discernment?
- Have “angels” attended you in the wilderness? How?

Invite people to reflect on how Jesus’ story can inspire, support, sustain, and challenge their own sense of calling and vocation.

Conclude with reflections from the group: What did they learn about their own calling and vocation? What new insights did they gain about Jesus discerning his call?

Closing Prayer

Select a prayer from *To Bless Our Callings: Prayers, Poems, and Hymns to Celebrate Vocation* or a resource of your choosing.

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