

Appendix 9 — Vocations - Our Call to Holiness

Vocation is the call of Christ to all the baptized to follow him by embracing a life of holiness and participating in the mission of the Church to build the kingdom of God. Each person responds to this call specifically: as a priest or deacon, as a vowed religious, to married life, or to single life. “Each leads to a manner of life and specific tasks that are essential to building up the Body of Christ and the reign of God.” (OSV, Catholic Encyclopedia 1319)

SPECIFIC VOCATIONAL CALLINGS

- **PRIEST**—A man ordained through the sacrament of Holy Orders. Priests “are called to holiness of life and an attitude of humility that conforms them to Christ whose priesthood they share.” (*United States Catholic Catechism for Adults*, 265) They serve by teaching, sanctifying and shepherding the People of God in the very person of Jesus Christ, the Head of his Body, the Church.
 - **DIOCESAN PRIEST**—A man ordained for the Church in service to a specific diocese and who ministers under the authority of the bishop of that diocese.
 - **RELIGIOUS PRIEST**—A religious priest belongs to a particular religious community, taking vows according to that community’s constitution. He ministers in service to the Church according to the charism of his community. Examples would be Franciscans, Dominicans, Jesuits, etc.



- **DEACON**—A man ordained by the bishop for ministry in the image of Christ the Servant. They may preside at the sacraments of Baptism and Marriage and also fulfill a liturgical role at the celebration of the Eucharist. They are essentially ministers of the Word, of the liturgy, and of charity and justice.
 - **TRANSITIONAL DEACONS**—Those men ordained deacons in preparation for ordination to the priesthood.
 - **PERMANENT DEACONS**—Those men who are ordained to the diaconate for life and not in preparation for the priesthood. Men who are married may be ordained permanent deacons.

- **CONSECRATED LIFE**—A state of Christian life recognized by the Church. Inspired by the Spirit some of the faithful deepen their baptismal consecration through a free and total self-donation to God. It is characterized by the profession of the evangelical counsels of poverty, chastity, and obedience and includes both clerics and laity who seek to strive for the perfection of charity in a permanent form of life.

- **RELIGIOUS LIFE**—One way to live out the Christian life committed to at Baptism. The Religious life is the most well known form of Consecrated Life. The three fundamental characteristics are: religious consecration expressed through the taking of vows to live a life of poverty, chastity, and obedience; living in community with other members of their orders or congregations; and working in a specific ministry of the Church promoting her mission of evangelization.
 - **NUN**—A member of a vowed religious community of consecrated women who live in a monastery committing themselves to silence, contemplation, and prayer.
 - **SISTER**—A woman who is a member of a religious community of consecrated vowed women who serve and minister to the needs of society and the Church.
 - **PRIEST**— A man ordained through the sacrament of Holy Orders who belongs to a particular religious community and takes vows according to that community’s constitution. He ministers in service to the Church according to the charism of his community
 - **BROTHER**—A layman who is a member of a religious community of consecrated vowed men who participate in specific ministry in the Church.
 - **MONK**—A member of a vowed religious community of consecrated men who adhere a monastic rule of life.

- **MARRIED LIFE**—An exclusive, permanent and lifelong covenant between a man and a woman in which they commit to care for each other and to procreate and raise children.

- **SINGLE LIFE**—Those who choose to remain single without seeking Holy Orders or taking vows as religious women or men.

For more information on Vocations to the priesthood or the religious life contact:

- ◆ Office of Vocations for the Diocese of Marquette, 800-562-9745 ext 101
- ◆ A Guide to Religious Ministries, www.religiousministries.com