

11th Sunday in Ordinary Time (A)
June 14, 2026
“Vocations”

Years ago, a small altar boy was carrying the water and wine cruets in the sanctuary of a cathedral, when suddenly, he tripped and dropped them, shattering the glass and creating a loud crashing sound. Instead of yelling at the boy, the kind bishop said, “Do not worry. One day, you will attend a famous European university and be as I am now.” His predictions came to pass: decades later, the young boy went on to study at the prestigious Louvain University in Belgium, and was made auxiliary bishop of New York. His name was Fulton J. Sheen.

God’s call to serve comes in countless forms and styles. Today’s Gospel is the story of vocation. Our Lord calls the twelve and commissions them to serve “the lost sheep of the house of Israel.” This is what we call “re-evangelization,” announcing the good news of salvation to those who have heard and turned away.

A key question for discernment of any vocation is this: Do I want to *see* it or *be* it? If you look at a married couple, or a monk in a monastery, or a priest, are you content to admire from afar, or is something inside you urging you to pursue that life. Do you want to *see* it or *be* it?

That was true for me. When I realized that I don’t just want to *see* a priest on the altar, but rather *be* a priest on the altar, I knew God was calling me.

Three words in the Gospel account of the calling of the twelve highlight the structure of vocation: *sight*, *summon*, and *sent*.

First is the **sight** of the crowds. Our Lord looks on the poor people gathered in front of him, and feels pity for them. They are hungry, destitute, poor, sick, needy, and uninstructed. They are lost and longing for fulfillment. A good decision starts with research, by examining the facts before you, and getting the lay of the land. In this case, Our Lord sees people who need a vision and direction for their lives. When he sees the need, Jesus responds, not by waving his hand and making everything better, but by choosing human instruments to carry on his work.

He then **summoned** “his twelve disciples.” He chooses twelve specific men who represent the new Israel. Someone said, “God does not call the qualified, but

qualifies the called.” Jesus gives authority to teach in his name, to drive out unclean spirits, and to cure disease of body, mind, and soul. Jesus cured everything from blindness and demonic possession to paralysis and leprosy. There is nothing he cannot do (except sin), and there is nothing we cannot do apart from him.

Finally, Our Lord **sent** the twelve out. They were not to be an enclosed cultic community, but rather joyful missionary disciples who share the Gospel, advance the kingdom through justice and charity, and save souls entrusted to them. They were his chosen followers.

A man once walked through a poor and crime-ridden city neighborhood, and was shocked by the awful beatings, swearing, stealing, and vandalism. He came home at night and prayed, “God, why don’t you do something about this?” God did not answer. He went out a second night, saw the crime, and came home, praying, “God, why don’t you do something about this?” God did not answer. The man went out a third night, and the same thing happened. When he returned home and prayed, “God, why don’t you something about this?” God answered, “I did something. I gave you eyes to see the suffering, ears to hear cries for help, hands to lend assistance, feet to walk to assist others, and a heart to feel their pain.”

We are the hands, feet, eyes, ears, and heart of the Savior. Priests lead faith communities, administer the sacraments, and shepherd the flocks loaned to them. Consecrated religious pray, work, study, and witness to Christ. Married people embody God’s covenantal love and bring children into the world. Single people are salt and light for the world, bringing good news to sad people.

What is God calling you to do? If you are living a vocation, how are you doing? Is there more you can do in the service of God, perhaps serving in new ways? God is calling. How are we responding?

PRAYER FOR VOCATIONS

Lord, you call us all by name to follow your path. You always bless your Church and guide your followers to become leaders who think of others before themselves. Mold us in the image of your Son, to respond to your call as priests, deacons, brothers, sisters, and lay servants of the Gospel. Embolden us all to grow in knowing you, and allow this knowledge to open our hearts, minds, and souls to your enduring call. Through Christ our Lord. Amen. God bless you.