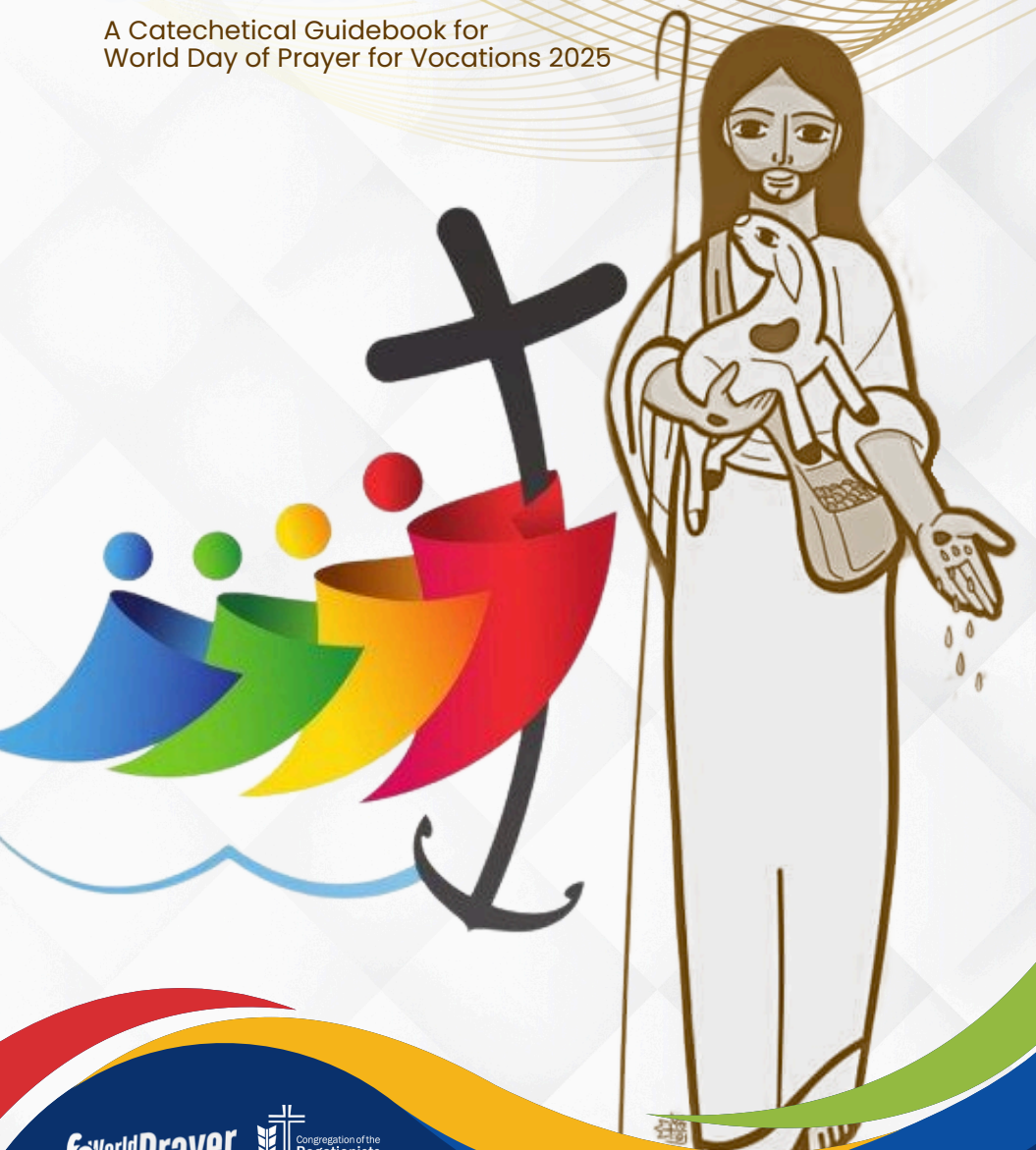


JOURNEYING IN FAITH

Vocations as
Pilgrimages of Hope

A Catechetical Guidebook for
World Day of Prayer for Vocations 2025



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Pilgrimages of Hope**

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World Day of Prayer for Vocations 2025





This catechetical booklet can be downloaded at www.rcj.ph.
For more resources on Prayer for Vocations message us through Facebook
and Messenger at 'Rogationists - St. Matthew Province (@rogatesmp),
or email us at rogatesmp@gmail.com.



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***Message from the
Provincial Superior***

Peace.

Vocation is a dynamic relationship that we have with God “to seek Him, to know Him, to love Him with all our strength,” who at the same time unites us as His family (CCC 1). It is a life process which allows us gradually to know and ascertain the will of God for us in our daily experience. Holy Mother Church continually guides and provides us everything to live our life to the fullest (cf. Jn. 10:10). In faith, we are one with God and the Church, the Body of Christ (CCC 773, 789). She continually nourishes us which keeps us in His love (cf. Jn. 15:9) and enables us to engage in the mission of the Kingdom of God (CCC 863).

We realize our vocation in the Church by participating in her life, prayer and mission. Living our vocation includes, among others, prayer with the whole Church which the Lord commanded us to do (Lk. 10:2; Mt. 9: 37), and being engaged in building the Kingdom of God (cf. Mt. 10:1-8; Lk. 10:1-2; *Apostolicam Actuositatem* 2). Included in our mission is to assist and guide other people, especially the children and the youth to discern God’s Will for them, which includes vocation to the Priestly and different forms of consecrated life. We give our best to pray with and for them. Through our witnessing, we hope that others will be generous to respond generously to the call of God. We journey with them with the hope that they will fulfill their vocation.

Our celebration of the World Day Prayer for Vocations is an opportunity provided by God through the Holy Mother Church to pray for more and holy vocations in the Church, to pray for the

fidelity and holiness of those who are already responding to God's call through the priestly and different forms of consecrated life, to pray for the young people so that they will be courageous to follow the Lord. In addition, we offer other means for others to follow Christ and to continually encourage those who are already following Him, according to God's will. We believe that our prayer will transform us to be good and holy laborers who will serve especially the poor and oppressed.

May this aid serve to facilitate that all of us will have a meaningful celebration of the World Day of Prayer for Vocations.

Please be assured of our constant prayer for all of you.



FR. ORVILLE CAJIGAL, RCJ
Provincial Superior
Rogationists - St. Matthew Province

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Note:

Each part is provided with discussion questions and activities that are designed to be adaptable to various settings, such as youth groups, retreats, or individual reflection sessions.

PART I

INTRODUCTION

Exploring the Theme

As we celebrate the World Day of Prayer for Vocations in 2025, we are invited to delve into a profound understanding of our vocational callings through the lens of the theme, "**Journeying in Faith: Vocations as Pilgrimages of Hope.**" In a world characterized by rapid change, increasing secularization, and widespread uncertainty, the theme reflects the enduring presence of faith and hope in our lives. This theme not only reaffirms our commitment to our Christian vocations but also reinvigorates each individual's spiritual journey as they navigate the complexities of modern life.

Contemporary Contexts



Global Uncertainty and Personal Anxiety

In an era marked by global pandemics, economic instability, and social upheavals, many people feel a profound sense of uncertainty and anxiety about the future. The theme addresses these challenges by emphasizing vocations as journeys of faith imbued with hope. It encourages individuals to find grounding in their faith, viewing their vocational paths as intentional movements guided by divine providence rather than random walks through life.

Secularization and Loss of Meaning

As society becomes increasingly secular, many individuals struggle with losing meaning and purpose in their lives. The concept of vocational journeys as pilgrimages of hope counters this trend by reconnecting individuals with their spiritual roots and the Christian call to service. It underscores that every vocation, whether religious life, lay ministry, or family life, is a call to meaningful, purpose-driven living.



Technological Disconnection

Technology has brought many benefits but has also led to disconnection from real-world communities and values. By framing vocations in the context of pilgrimages, the theme advocates for a deeper engagement with the world and with others, promoting a lived faith that actively participates in the Church and society rather than retreating into virtual isolation.



Environmental and Social Crises

The increasing awareness of environmental degradation and social injustice calls for a response rooted in hope and proactive faith. This theme emphasizes that vocational journeys are not passive but are active engagements with the world's challenges. It calls on everyone to be 'Pilgrims of Hope,' who act out of faith to transform and heal the world.



Youth and Vocational Discernment

Young people today face unique pressures related to identity, success, and relationships. The theme offers a framework for vocational discernment that is holistic and hopeful, helping youth to navigate their futures with faith and a clear sense of divine calling, which is crucial in a time of limitless options and often overwhelming societal expectations.



The theme is a clarion call to all people, regardless of their specific vocation, to embrace their spiritual journey with faith and hope. It highlights the relevance of these timeless virtues in addressing contemporary challenges and affirms that each person's vocational journey can be a powerful testimony of faith, a beacon of hope, and a source of personal and communal transformation. By engaging with this theme, the Church answers the needs of the modern world, offering direction and purpose that counter feelings of aimlessness and despair and inspiring a proactive engagement with the world grounded in faith and propelled by hope.

Theme in the Context of Church Teachings

The Catholic Church has always upheld that each person's life is a journey of faith, during which one responds to God's call in various ways. This theme aligns seamlessly with the Church's teachings on vocations, which are understood as calls from God, involving a profound dialogue between the individual and the Divine. Each vocation is a personal pilgrimage, an ongoing response to God's call to service, whether in ordained ministry, consecrated life, marriage, or single life dedicated to Christ.

Biblical Foundations

1. **Abraham's Call** (Genesis 12:1-4) — God calls Abraham to leave his homeland and promises to make him a great nation. Abraham's journey is foundational for understanding the nature of divine calling and pilgrimage. His faith and obedience in setting out toward an unknown land encapsulate the essence of all vocational journeys.

2. **The Disciples' Call** (Matthew 4:18-22) — Jesus calls Simon, Peter, and Andrew to follow Him, promising to make them fishers of men. Their immediate response and willingness to leave everything behind to follow Jesus are emblematic of the vocational journey of faith and commitment.

Church Documents

1. Vatican II, **Gaudium et Spes**, 22 – This document profoundly states that Christ "fully reveals man to himself and makes his supreme calling clear." It emphasizes that everyone is called through grace to a particular vocation, and each must be open to receiving this call, which illuminates their life's purpose.

2. John Paul II, **Redemptoris Missio**, 11 – Saint John Paul II describes the entire life of Christians as a mission, and he insists that we are all called to participate in this mission by virtue of our baptism. He frames this participation as a vocational response to the universal call to holiness.

Purpose of the Guidebook

This guidebook aims to deepen readers' understanding of how our vocations are sacred journeys—pilgrimages of faith filled with hope. It is designed to assist catechists, educators, families, and individuals in exploring and embracing their unique callings within the vast horizon of the Church's mission. By journeying through this guide, readers are encouraged to reflect on their own lives as pilgrimages enriched by faith and guided by hopeful anticipation of God's promises.

Through this theme and the reflections herein, we hope to inspire a renewed zeal among the faithful, encouraging them to embrace their vocations as dynamic paths towards spiritual fulfillment and service to God and His people. This journey of faith and hope invites us to move forward, trusting in the Lord's guidance and supported by the Church's sacramental life and communal prayer.

PART I

Discussion Questions and Activities



To engage individuals and groups deeply with the theme "Journeying in Faith: Vocations as Pilgrimages of Hope," this section provides thought-provoking questions and interactive activities. These resources are designed to facilitate personal reflection and group discussion, helping participants connect more profoundly with their own vocational journeys.

Discussion Questions

- 1. Personal Reflection:** How do you see your current vocation or stage in life as a journey of faith? What are the landmarks of hope along this journey?
- 2. Biblical Connection:** Reflect on the story of Abraham's call to go to a land God would show him (Genesis 12:1-4). How does Abraham's journey of faith inspire you to respond to God's call in your own life?
- 3. Challenges and Triumphs:** What are some challenges you have faced in your vocational journey? How have these challenges tested your faith and hope?
- 4. Role of Community:** How does your faith community support you in your vocational journey? What role do you play in supporting others in their vocational journeys?
- 5. Future Orientation:** What hopes do you have for the future regarding your vocation? How do you plan to fulfill these hopes through your daily actions and decisions?

Activities



1. Vocational Timeline Creation

Objective: Participants create a visual timeline of their vocational journey.

Materials Needed: Paper, markers, stickers, and other craft supplies.

Instructions:

- Divide the paper into segments representing different phases of your life.
- Mark significant events, decisions, and people who have influenced your vocational journey.
- Use different colors or symbols to denote moments of challenge and triumph.
- Reflect on how faith and hope have played a role at each stage of your journey.
- *Reflection:* Share your timeline with a partner or group and discuss what insights this activity has provided about the role of faith and hope in your life.

2. Role-Play Scenarios

Objective: To explore real-life applications of faith and hope in vocational discernment and challenges.

Materials Needed: Scenario cards prepared in advance, based on common vocational challenges.

Instructions:

- Break into small groups and distribute scenario cards.
- Each group prepares a role-play based on their scenario, focusing on how they would apply faith and hope to navigate the situation.
- Perform the role-play in front of the entire group.
- *Reflection:* After each performance, discuss alternative approaches and insights gained from each scenario.

3. Community Mapping

Objective: To identify and plan for active engagement in the local community as an expression of one's vocation.

Materials Needed: Large map of the local area, post-it notes, markers.

Instructions:

- Identify areas in your community where you feel called to serve or where you see a need.
- Use post-it notes to mark these areas and write down potential activities or programs that could positively impact these local challenges.
- Discuss how these activities align with your vocational calling and how they can be implemented.
- *Reflection:* Share how this activity might help you live out your vocation as a pilgrimage of hope, and discuss steps to take action on the identified opportunities.

These questions and activities are designed to be adaptable to various settings, such as youth groups, retreats, or individual reflection sessions, helping all participants to engage actively with the theme and deepen their understanding of their own vocational journeys as pilgrimages of faith and hope.

PART II

UNDERSTANDING VOCATIONS

The Meaning of Vocation in the Catholic Faith

In the Catholic Church, the term "vocation" encompasses the call to follow Jesus Christ more closely. It involves a profound personal response, where an individual aligns their life purpose with the mission of Christ and the Church. This call is not just about choosing a profession or state of life but is fundamentally about growing in holiness and continuous conversion in whatever state life one is called to.

Scriptural Foundations

1. **The Call of the Prophets** (Jeremiah 1:4-8) - Jeremiah's call illustrates that God appoints individuals for specific missions, even from the womb, highlighting each vocation's divine origin and personal nature.
2. **The Great Commission** (Matthew 28:19-20) - Here, Jesus extends a vocational call to all His followers to make disciples of all nations, emphasizing that every Christian has a missionary vocation by virtue of their baptism.

Forms of Vocations

1. **Priesthood** – Priests are ordained to preach the Gospel, administer the sacraments, and shepherd the people of God. Their vocation is marked by a life of service and sacramental leadership, following the example of Christ, the High Priest.

2. **Religious Life** – Men and women in religious life commit themselves to the evangelical counsels of poverty, chastity, and obedience, living in community and dedicating themselves to God for the service of the Church and the world.

3. **Marriage** – Married couples are called to witness to God’s faithful, fruitful, and lasting love through their lifelong union. Their vocation supports the Church’s mission by building the domestic church through a grace-filled family life.

4. **Lay Ministries** and **Single Life** – Laypeople are called to sanctify the secular world through their work and activities, bringing Christ’s light to the world. Those who are single consecrate their lives to Christ and His Church in various ways, contributing uniquely to the Church’s mission.



Church Documents

1. **Pastores Dabo Vobis** (*I Will Give You Shepherds*), by St. John Paul II, emphasizes the importance of the formation of priests in the likeness of Christ, the Good Shepherd.

2. **Apostolicam Actuositatem** (*Decree on the Apostolate of Lay People*), by Vatican II, elaborates on the vocation of the laity to participate in the Church’s mission through engagement in temporal affairs and by their conduct to animate all things with the spirit of the Gospel.

3. **Familiaris Consortio** (*The Role of the Christian Family in the Modern World*), by St. John Paul II, describes marriage as an "irreplaceable base" for a broader communal life, and its role in forming a family community of persons.

Personal Discernment and Response to God's Call

Discernment is a prayerful process of understanding God's will for one's life. It involves open dialogue with God through prayer, meditation on Scripture, participation in the sacraments, and often consultation with spiritual directors or mentors.

1. **Guidance in Discernment** - It is essential to seek spiritual guidance and to participate in the Church community, where one can find support and clarity in understanding and following one's vocation.

2. **Active Response** - Responding to a vocation requires faith and courage to step out into what is often unknown, trusting in God's grace and providence.

Understanding vocations in the broad context of the Catholic faith helps us see our personal calls as part of a larger divine plan. Each vocation, whether to priesthood, religious life, marriage, or lay ministries, contributes uniquely to the Church's mission and is a journey of faith meant to deepen one's relationship with Christ and witness to His love in the world.

PART II

Discussion Questions and Activities



In this section, we provide questions and activities that focus on deepening the understanding of vocations in the context of the Catholic faith. These tools are meant to facilitate both personal reflection and communal discussion, enhancing engagement with the complex and beautiful journey of discerning and living out one's vocation.

Discussion Questions

- 1. Understanding Vocations:** What does the term "vocation" mean to you? How does it extend beyond professional or career choices to encompass a broader calling from God?
- 2. Forms of Vocations:** Discuss the various forms of vocations within the Church (*priesthood, religious life, marriage, lay ministries*). How does each form contribute uniquely to the mission of the Church?
- 3. Personal Calling:** Reflect on your personal sense of calling. What elements of your life make you feel most alive and most closely aligned with God's purposes?
- 4. Challenges in Discernment:** What are some common challenges people face when discerning their vocations? How can the Church support individuals in overcoming these challenges?
- 5. Societal Views on Vocation:** How does society at large view the concept of vocation? In what ways can these views challenge or support the Church's understanding of vocation?

Activities



1. Vocation Role Models

Objective: To explore and reflect on the lives of various role models who have lived out their vocations in inspiring ways.

Materials Needed: Biographies or short stories of figures from the Church's history, contemporary role models, or saints.

Instructions:

- Split participants into small groups and assign each group a different figure whose life exemplified a unique response to a vocational call.
- Each group researches their assigned figure, focusing on how they lived out their vocation.
- Groups present their findings, highlighting lessons that can be applied in discerning and living out one's own vocation.
- *Reflection:* Discuss how the examples presented by each group can inspire participants in their vocational journeys.

2. Mapping My Vocation

Objective: To help participants visualize their current and future vocational journey.

Materials Needed: Large poster paper, markers, magazines, scissors, glue (for collage).

Instructions:

- Participants draw a map or pathway that represents their life journey. Include key moments when they felt their vocation was particularly affirmed or challenged.
- Use words, pictures, or symbols to mark significant people, events, and influences on their vocational path.

- Include areas of future aspirations and how they hope to live out their vocation.
- *Reflection:* Share maps within small groups or with the entire gathering, discussing insights gained and how these visual representations can help clarify vocational aspirations and commitments.

3. Vocation Testimonies

Objective: To hear and learn from the real-life vocational experiences of others within the community.

Materials Needed: Guest speakers or video testimonials.

Instructions:

- Invite members of the community who are living out their vocations in various ways to share their stories. This could include priests, religious, married couples, single individuals in lay ministries, etc.
- After each testimony, allow time for questions and answers.
- *Reflection:* Engage in a group discussion about the themes and challenges shared in the testimonies. Reflect on how these stories impact the participants' understanding of their own vocational journeys.

These discussion questions and activities are designed to not only enhance understanding of vocations but also to encourage participants to actively consider and engage with their own vocational callings within the framework of their faith and community.

By engaging deeply with these themes, participants can gain clearer insights into how to align their personal paths with God's divine plan, fostering a rich, fulfilling life that actively contributes to the broader mission of the Church.

PART III

JOURNEYING IN FAITH

Biblical Examples of Journey in Faith

1. **Abraham's Journey** (Genesis 12:1-4) - Called the "Father of Faith," Abraham's journey began with a call from God to leave his homeland for a place he would later receive as an inheritance. His unwavering faith in God's promises, despite many trials, illustrates the fundamental nature of faith in following God's call.

2. **Moses' Leadership** (Exodus 3:10-12) - Moses was called by God from a burning bush and sent on a mission to lead the Israelites out of Egypt. His journey was fraught with challenges, yet his faith in God's power and guidance was central to his ability to fulfill his vocation.

3. **The Disciples' Call to Ministry** (Mark 1:16-20) - Jesus called Simon Peter, Andrew, James, and John to leave their nets and follow Him, promising to make them fishers of men. Their immediate response and willingness to follow Jesus highlight the role of faith in accepting and pursuing a divine call.

The Role of Faith in Discerning and Living Out Our Vocations

Faith is not only the starting point for a vocational journey; it is also an essential component that sustains individuals as they discern and live out their calling. Discernment is fundamentally a faith-driven process where individuals seek to understand God's will through prayer, reflection, and often times through the counsel of others.

1. **Prayer and Meditation** – Engaging in regular, focused prayer and meditation to seek clarity and guidance from God regarding one's vocation.
2. **Sacramental Life** – Participating actively in the sacraments, especially the Eucharist and Reconciliation, which strengthen and affirm one's faith and commitment to a chosen vocation.

Church Teachings on Faith and Vocation

1. **Dei Verbum** (*Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation*) – This document emphasizes that by His Revelation, "the invisible God out of the abundance of His love speaks to men as friends and lives among them, so that He may invite and take them into fellowship with Himself." This divine invitation is foundational to understanding and responding to one's vocation.
2. **Lumen Fidei** (*The Light of Faith*) by Pope Francis – This encyclical teaches that faith is a light that illuminates every aspect of human existence, including one's vocational journey. It guides us in times of darkness and helps us to see our path clearly.

The Dynamic Nature of Vocations: Evolving, Growing, and Deepening Over Time

Vocations are not static; they require continuous growth and deepening understanding. As one progresses through different stages of life, the expression and

of their vocation can change, necessitating an ongoing commitment to adapt and respond to new challenges and opportunities.

1. **Continual Learning and Formation** - Engaging in ongoing education and spiritual formation to remain responsive to the evolving demands of one's vocation.

2. **Community Support** - Actively participating in community life for mutual support and encouragement, which is crucial for personal growth and the fulfillment of one's vocational commitment.

The journey of faith is integral to understanding and living out one's vocation. Through examples of faith in Scripture, the teachings of the Church, and the recognition of the dynamic nature of vocations, this section aims to inspire and guide the faithful in their continuous journey towards fulfilling God's calling for their lives.

PART III

Discussion Questions and Activities



This section is designed to deepen the understanding of the role of faith in our vocational journeys and explore how faith acts as both a guiding force and a foundation for our decisions and actions. The activities and discussion questions provided here will help participants reflect on their personal faith journeys and understand the dynamic nature of vocations as they evolve and mature over time.

Discussion Questions

- 1. Faith as Guidance:** How has faith influenced your decision-making in critical moments of your life? Can you share a specific instance where faith played a key role in choosing a path or making a significant change?
- 2. Dynamic Vocations:** Reflect on the idea that vocations evolve and grow over time. How has your understanding of your vocation changed since you first felt called? What factors have contributed to this evolution?
- 3. Biblical Faith Journeys:** Consider the journeys of faith taken by biblical figures such as Abraham or Moses. What aspects of their stories resonate with your own vocational journey?
- 4. Challenges to Faith:** Discuss some challenges that might weaken faith during one's vocational journey. How can individuals and communities support each other in maintaining strong faith?
- 5. Faith and Witness:** In what ways does demonstrating faith through vocational commitment serve as a witness to others? How can your vocation inspire faith in those around you?

Activities



1. Faith Journey Mapping

Objective: Participants create a visual map of their faith journey highlighting key moments where faith influenced their vocational direction.

Materials Needed: Paper, markers, and other craft supplies.

Instructions:

- Have participants draw a path or road on their paper.
- Ask them to mark significant moments where faith played a crucial role in their vocational journey, using symbols, words, or images.
- Encourage them to note any people, scriptures, or events that strengthened their faith at these points.
- *Reflection:* Allow participants to share their maps in small groups, discussing how these faith experiences shaped their vocational decisions and growth.

2. Role-Playing Faith Challenges

Objective: To explore responses to challenges that test faith in vocational contexts.

Materials Needed: Scenario cards with hypothetical vocational challenges.

Instructions:

- Divide participants into small groups and give each group a scenario card.
- Groups will role-play the scenario, focusing on how to maintain faith when faced with vocational challenges.
- Each group presents their role-play to the others, followed by a discussion.

- *Reflection:* Reflect on the different strategies used to overcome challenges and maintain faith. Discuss what can be learned from each group's approach and how these strategies might be applied in real life.

3. Scripture Reflection Session

Objective: To connect personal vocational journeys with biblical teachings on faith.

Materials Needed: Bibles, reflection sheets with guided questions.

Instructions:

- Select key biblical passages that speak about faith (e.g., Hebrews 11, James 2).
- Participants read the passages individually or in groups and then discuss the questions on the reflection sheets related to how these scriptures apply to their vocational journeys.
- *Reflection:* Share insights with the larger group, focusing on how these passages inspire and reinforce faith in the context of vocational discernment and commitment.

These discussion questions and activities are crafted to not only foster a deeper understanding of faith's role in vocational journeys but also to equip participants with practical tools and insights for applying faith in the face of challenges and changes. This part of the guidebook encourages ongoing reflection and active engagement with one's faith as a central element in discerning and living out one's vocation.

PART IV

VOCATIONS AS PILGRIMAGES

The Concept of Pilgrimage in the Bible and Catholic Tradition

Pilgrimage in the Bible represents not just physical journeys to sacred places but also metaphorical journeys towards spiritual awakening and deeper communion with God. This concept has been embraced in the Catholic tradition as a vital expression of the faith journey.

1. **The Exodus Journey** (Exodus 13:17-18) – Perhaps the most significant biblical pilgrimage, the Exodus represents the Israelites' journey from slavery in Egypt to freedom in the Promised Land. It symbolizes the Christian journey from the bondage of sin to the freedom of life in Christ.

2. **Jesus' Pilgrimage to Jerusalem** (Luke 9:51-56) – Jesus' resolute journey toward Jerusalem, where He would fulfill His earthly mission through His passion, death, and resurrection, exemplifies the ultimate pilgrimage of faith and surrender to God's will.

In Catholic tradition, physical pilgrimages to holy sites, such as Rome, Jerusalem, or Santiago de Compostela, are seen as external expressions of an internal journey towards God. These pilgrimages are rituals that reflect the pilgrim's quest for deeper faith and spiritual growth.

Church Documents

1. **Catechism of the Catholic Church** (CCC 2691) – The Catechism discusses pilgrimages explicitly, emphasizing their role in Christian life as opportunities for renewal in prayer and a chance to strengthen our faith.
2. **Sacrosanctum Concilium** (*Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy*) – It highlights the liturgical year as a pilgrimage where the faithful traverse the mysteries of Christ's life, thus deepening their devotion and understanding.

Drawing Parallels Between Vocational Journeys and Pilgrimages

Just as pilgrimages involve travel to a sacred place to seek God, vocational journeys involve navigating the pathways of life guided by a call to service and communion with God. Both are marked by encounters with challenges and the unknown, requiring faith, perseverance, and a spirit of discovery.

1. **Stages of the Journey** – Both pilgrimages and vocational journeys encompass stages of initial calling, ongoing discernment, deeper commitment, and, ultimately, reaching a fuller understanding or destination (fulfillment in one's vocation).
2. **Role of Community** – Just as pilgrims often travel in groups, drawing support from each other, individuals on a vocational journey are supported by the Christian community – the Church, families, and other like-minded individuals.

The Transformation that Occurs in Pilgrimages and How It Mirrors Our Vocational Journeys

Both pilgrimages and vocational journeys are transformative processes. They change participants in profound ways, often leading to new insights into God's will, a deeper understanding of oneself, and a renewed commitment to live out one's calling.

1. **Conversion and Renewal** – Throughout the journey, whether a pilgrimage or a vocational discernment, there is an ongoing conversion; turning away from old ways towards God’s design and purpose for one’s life.

2. **Spiritual Growth** – Both journeys foster spiritual growth, increased reliance on God, and greater integration of faith in daily life, which are essential for fulfilling one’s divine vocation.

Understanding vocations as pilgrimages enriches the perception of our life’s calling as a sacred journey. It frames our vocational discernment and commitment as a dynamic, transformative process that, like a pilgrimage, draws us closer to God, deepens our faith, and shapes our identity in Christ. This perspective invites all the faithful to embark on their vocational paths with the enthusiasm and dedication of a pilgrim, continually seeking God’s presence and guidance along the way.

PART IV

Discussion Questions and Activities



This section aims to deepen the understanding of vocations as pilgrimages, exploring the transformative nature of these journeys and their reflection in our vocational paths. The discussion questions and activities provided here will help participants connect more profoundly with the concept of pilgrimage as a meaningful metaphor for their vocational journeys.

Discussion Questions

- 1. Understanding Pilgrimage:** How do you understand the concept of pilgrimage? Can you think of any personal experiences that felt like a pilgrimage? How did these experiences transform your understanding of your vocation?
- 2. Vocational Pilgrimage:** In what ways can you view your vocational journey as a pilgrimage? What are the 'sacred sites' or significant milestones in this journey?
- 3. Challenges and Transformations:** Reflect on the challenges you have encountered in your vocational pilgrimage. How have these challenges served as catalysts for personal or spiritual transformation?
- 4. Community Support:** Pilgrimage often involves traveling with others. Who are the companions on your vocational journey? How do they support and enrich your pilgrimage?
- 5. Integrating the Pilgrimage Experience:** How can the concept of pilgrimage help you to better integrate your spiritual and vocational life? What steps can you take to make your vocational journey more reflective of a pilgrimage?

Activities



1. Pilgrimage Walk

Objective: To physically engage with the concept of pilgrimage in a reflective way.

Materials Needed: None, just a safe walking space, possibly outside or a large open area.

Instructions:

- Organize a walking route that can act as a mini-pilgrimage. Designate stations along the route where walkers can stop to reflect on aspects of their vocational journey.
- At each station, provide a question or prompt related to their vocational pilgrimage (e.g., *encountering challenges, experiencing moments of clarity*).
- Encourage participants to walk in silence, using the time to meditate on each prompt.
- *Reflection:* Conclude with a sharing session where participants can discuss insights or revelations they experienced during the walk.

2. Mapping My Vocational Pilgrimage

Objective: To create a visual representation of one's vocational journey as a pilgrimage.

Materials Needed: Large poster boards, markers, stickers, and other decorative items.

Instructions:

- Ask participants to draw a path or roadmap on their poster board that represents their vocational journey.
- Encourage them to mark significant events, people, and experiences along the path like milestones or 'sacred sites'.
- Invite them to decorate their map with symbols or quotes that represent their spiritual insights or transformative moments.

- *Reflection:* Have participants present their maps to the group and explain the significance of the elements they included.

3. Vocational Testimonies Roundtable

Objective: To share and learn from each other's vocational pilgrimages.

Materials Needed: A quiet room set up for roundtable discussion.

Instructions:

- Invite participants to prepare a short testimony about their vocational journey, focusing on the idea of it being a pilgrimage.
- Arrange a roundtable setting where each person can share their story and listen to others.
- Encourage questions and reflections from the group after each testimony.
- *Reflection:* Discuss common themes and unique experiences. Reflect on how these stories inspire and provide new perspectives on the vocational pilgrimage.

These discussion questions and activities are designed to cultivate a richer understanding of one's vocational journey as a pilgrimage, marked by faith, supported by community, and transformative in nature. By engaging in these reflections and activities, participants aim to gain deeper insights into the spiritual dimensions of their vocations and how they can live out these callings more fully in their daily lives.

PART V

HOPE IN OUR VOCATIONAL JOURNEY

The Role of Hope in the Life of a Christian

Hope is one of the three theological virtues (faith, hope, and charity) that orient us toward living a life directed toward God and His promises. It is the virtue by which we desire the kingdom of heaven and eternal life as our happiness, placing our trust in Christ's promises and relying not on our own strength but on the help of the grace of the Holy Spirit (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1817).

Church Teachings on Hope

1. **Spe Salvi** (*Saved in Hope*) by Pope Benedict XVI – This encyclical delves deeply into the essence of Christian hope, explaining that it is rooted in the knowledge of and relationship with Christ, which leads us towards a promised future.
2. **Catechism of the Catholic Church** (CCC 1818) – The catechism states that "the virtue of hope responds to the aspiration to happiness which God has placed in the heart of every man." It discusses how hope takes up the human desire for happiness, directing it towards God.

The Connection Between Hope and Vocation

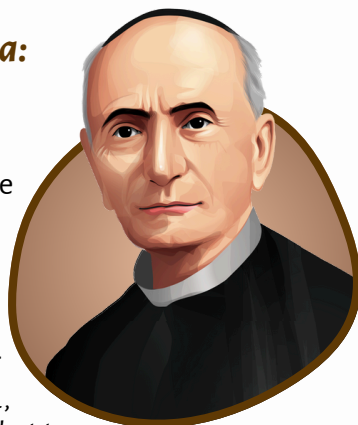
Hope guides and sustains us in our vocational journey by constantly orienting us towards a future that God has promised. It fuels our perseverance to carry forward despite challenges and helps us maintain a positive outlook on our calling and mission in life. In the context of vocation, hope compels a person to commit to lifelong service, whether in marriage, religious life, priesthood, or any other form of dedicated lay ministry.

1. **Resilience in Vocation** - Hope provides the resilience needed to continue in one's vocation even when faced with difficulties and setbacks.
2. **Vision for the Future** - Hope helps to keep one's vision of one's vocation clear and focused, especially when immediate circumstances seem discouraging.

Biblical Examples of Hope in Times of Struggle and Uncertainty

1. **The Hope of Abraham** (Romans 4:18) - "In hope, he believed against hope, that he should become the father of many nations." Despite his old age and Sarah's barrenness, Abraham hoped in God's promises, demonstrating the profound hope that sustains us in our vocational calls.
2. **The Patience and Hope of Job** (Job 13:15) - Even in his severe trials and sufferings, Job maintained his hope in God's justice and goodness, famously proclaiming, "Though he slay me, yet will I hope in him."
3. **The Anchoring Hope in Hebrews** (Hebrews 6:19) - "We have this as a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul, a hope that enters into the inner place behind the curtain." This passage highlights hope as an anchor, providing stability and security in the face of trials.

Saint Hannibal Mary Di Francia: An Apostle of Hope



Saint Hannibal was a beacon, an apostle of hope. His life was a radiant testament of unwavering faith and resolute hope in the divine promise of eternal life in paradise. His unwavering conviction resulted from his profound understanding of Christ's sacrifice. He frequently asked, "*Why should Jesus suffer his atrocious Passion but to ensure paradise for us?*" (The Father's Soul, Tusino, 1973, 166). He lived in the absolute certainty of God's infinite mercy and Christ's unparalleled sacrifice, fully acknowledging the paradise due to Jesus' redemptive act on the cross.

While humble in his recognition of the great gifts he received as a priest and the account he would give to the Lord, Saint Hannibal was confident that God's love would triumph. He found solace and grew closer to God by praying Saint Leonard of Port Maurice's prayer for a good death, manifesting his unwavering faith in God's mercy. He held a firm conviction that few souls are lost; he saw human rebellion as the only potential route to damnation and encouraged his flock to rely on the God-given instruments of salvation – prayer, sacraments, good works, and the intercession of the Holy Mary and the saints.

Saint Hannibal's message of hope permeated through his actions. He sparked the hope of paradise in everyone he interacted with, whether healthy, sick, dying, pious, indifferent, or even atheist. His mission was to fuse hope with faith and work, constantly reminding people that paradise must be reached through sacrifices, following the example of the saints. He loved inspiring the younger generation, fostering an early longing for heaven through faith, prayer, and good works. Saint Hannibal would say, "*Yes, all in paradise, but pay attention... pray, avoid sin, and do good works with faith* (Tusino, 169)."

The journey of each vocation is uniquely challenging and fulfilling. In these journeys, hope acts not just as a comfort but as a dynamic force that propels the Christian forward, secure in the knowledge of God's faithfulness and the ultimate fulfilment of His promises. By embracing hope, those discerning or living out their vocations can navigate their paths with confidence and joy, assured that God's providence is guiding their way.

PART V **Discussion Questions and Activities**



This section is designed to facilitate a deeper engagement with the theme, focusing on the vital role of hope in our vocational journeys. Through a series of discussion questions and activities, participants can explore how hope sustains and directs them, especially in times of difficulty, and how it is integrally linked to living out one's vocation authentically and courageously.

Discussion Questions

- 1. Defining Hope:** How do you define hope in your own words? What is the difference between hope and optimism, especially in the context of a Christian understanding?
- 2. Hope in Scripture:** Can you think of a story in the Bible where hope played a critical role? How did hope guide and sustain the biblical figure(s) involved?
- 3. Hope and Resilience:** Reflect on a 3me in your vocational journey when hope was particularly tested. What helped you to hold onto hope during this period?

4. Hope as a Witness: How can your expression of hope in your vocation be a witness to others? What practical actions might demonstrate this hope to those around you?

5. Cultivating Hope: What are some daily practices or habits that you can adopt to cultivate hope in your life and vocation?

Activities



1. Hope Collage

Objective: To create a visual representation of what hope looks like in the context of vocational journeys.

Materials Needed: Magazines, newspapers, scissors, glue, large poster paper.

Instructions:

- Invite participants to cut out images, words, or phrases from magazines and newspapers that symbolize hope to them.
- Assemble these into a collage on poster paper.
- Have participants explain their choices and how these images or words relate to their sense of hope in their vocation.
- *Reflection:* Discuss as a group how these visual elements can inspire and remind us to remain hopeful, especially in challenging times.

2. Hope Letters

Objective: To articulate and reinforce personal hopes for the future in written form.

Materials Needed: Paper, pens, envelopes.

Instructions:

- Ask each participant to write a letter to their future self, describing their hopes for their vocational journey and the spiritual growth they wish to see in themselves.

- Seal the letters in envelopes and decide on a future date when they will be opened (e.g., *one year from now*).
- *Reflection:* Share the feelings or challenges involved in articulating these hopes. Discuss the benefit of setting such reflections in writing.

3. Hope Testimonies

Objective: To share personal stories of hope, strengthening communal bonds and inspiring others.

Materials Needed: None

Instructions:

- Invite participants to prepare a short story or testimony about a time when hope played a significant role in their vocational discernment or challenges.
- Allow each person to share their story with the group.
- *Reflection:* After each testimony, encourage feedback and reflection from others. Highlight themes of resilience and the impact of hope on overcoming obstacles.

4. Scriptural Hope Mapping

Objective: To connect personal experiences of hope to the scriptural accounts where hope is central.

Materials Needed: Bibles, paper, pens.

Instructions:

- Select key biblical passages that focus on hope (e.g., *Romans 5:2-5, Hebrews 6:19*).
- Have participants read these passages and then write down personal experiences that echo the scriptural themes.
- *Reflection:* Encourage sharing these reflections with the group and discuss how scripture can continually renew our hope.

These discussion questions and activities are crafted to foster a deeper understanding and appreciation of hope as an essential component of the vocational journey. By reflecting on personal and biblical stories of hope, participants can gain insights into how hope not only sustains but also propels them forward in their callings.

PART VI

THE INTERSECTION OF FAITH, VOCATION, AND HOPE

How Faith and Hope Work Together in Our Vocational Journey

Faith and hope are foundational to the Christian experience, especially in the context of vocation. Faith provides the basis for understanding God's call, and hope propels us to respond with courage and perseverance.

1. **Faith as the Foundation** – Faith in God's promises and His character is the starting point for every vocational journey. Through faith, we believe in the goodness of God's plan for us and trust in His guidance. Faith makes us open to hearing God's call in the first place (Hebrews 11:1).

2. **Hope as the Motivation** – Once faith has established a trust in God's promises, hope becomes the virtue that motivates us to continue moving forward, even when the path becomes difficult. Hope keeps our eyes fixed on the eternal, not just the temporal outcomes of our vocational pursuits (Romans 5:2-5).

Church Documents

1. Pope Francis's Encyclical Letter **Lumen Fidei** (*The Light of Faith*) discusses how faith is not only a personal belief in God but also opens our minds to a vision that embraces all of humanity. This vision is crucial for under-

standing the broader implications of individual vocations in the life of the Church.

2. Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation **Christifideles Laici** by St. John Paul II – This document stresses the laity's vocation to shape the world according to God's plan. It beautifully articulates how the laity can live out their faith and hope in practical ways that transform the world.

The Impact of Our Vocations on the World - Being 'Pilgrims of Hope'

The concept of being 'Pilgrims of Hope' encapsulates the mission of every Christian to bear witness to the hope within us, rooted in Christ's resurrection. Our vocations are not just for personal sanctification but also missions to infuse the world with this hope.

1. **Transformative Influence** – Whether as laity, religious, or clergy, Christians are called to transform their environments through the virtues of faith and hope. In family life, the workplace, or the community, the Christian's vocation should be a sign of hope to a world facing despair and disillusionment.

2. **Service and Witness** – By living out our vocations with integrity and enthusiasm, we serve as witnesses to the joy and fulfillment that come from a life committed to following Christ. Our vocations become testimonies of what it means to live a life of hope grounded in faith.

3. **Biblical Exemplar of Joseph** (Genesis 50:20) – Joseph's story is a powerful testament to living out one's vocation with hope. Even after being sold into slavery and imprisoned, he maintained his faith in God's plan, which eventually led him to a position where he could save many people from famine. His life vividly illustrates how God uses our vocational journeys, intertwined with faith and hope, to bring about His purposes in the world.

The Christian journey takes on its full expression at the intersection of faith, vocation, and hope. By nurturing these virtues, we live out our callings as 'Pilgrims of Hope.'

making a tangible difference in the world and pointing others to the ultimate source of our hope — Jesus Christ. This section encourages readers to embrace their vocational challenges and triumphs as integral to the Christian witness, fostering a world renewed in hope and steeped in faith.

PART VI *Discussion Questions and Activities*



In this section, we explore how faith, vocation, and hope intersect to shape our experiences and actions. The following discussion questions and activities are designed to help participants reflect on this interplay and assess how it impacts their vocational journey and broader life mission.

Discussion Questions

- 1. Intersecting Virtues:** How do you see faith, vocation, and hope interacting in your own life? Can you identify moments where these three elements have distinctly converged?
- 2. Balancing Act:** Discuss the challenges of maintaining a balance between faith, hope, and the responsibilities of your vocation. What strategies have you found effective in managing these aspects?
- 3. Mutual Reinforcement:** How does hope strengthen your faith, and how does faith deepen your commitment to your vocation? Provide examples from your own experience or observations.
- 4. Faith and Hope in Action:** What are some practical ways you can put your faith and hope into action?

within your vocational calling? How might these actions influence those around you?

5. Long-term Impact: Consider the long-term impacts of integrating faith, hope, and vocation on personal and community levels. What potential changes do you foresee if these elements are fully embraced?

Activities



1. Virtue Venn Diagram

Objective: To visually map out the connections between faith, vocation, and hope.

Materials Needed: Large sheets of paper, markers in different colors.

Instructions:

- Draw a large Venn diagram with three overlapping circles, labeled *Faith*, *Vocation*, and *Hope*.
- Inside the overlapping areas, write down activities, feelings, or outcomes that arise from these intersections.
- Reflect on the central overlap where all three circles meet and identify key experiences or aspirations that reside in this space.
- *Reflection:* Discuss how this visual representation helps understand the interplay and significance of these elements in one's life.

2. Faith, Hope, and Vocation Stories

Objective: To share experiences where faith, vocation, and hope have dynamically interacted.

Materials Needed: None

Instructions:

- Invite participants to prepare a short story or tes-

timony about a time when their faith, vocational path, and hope were deeply interconnected.

- Share these stories in small groups or with the entire gathering.
- *Reflection:* Explore common themes and insights from the stories and discuss how these experiences can further inspire and guide the community.

3. Role-Playing Challenges

Objective: To navigate hypothetical situations where faith, vocation, and hope must be balanced and applied.

Materials Needed: Scenario cards, space for role-play.

Instructions:

- Create scenario cards depicting various vocational challenges that require the integration of faith and hope.
- Participants choose cards and role-play the scenario, focusing on solutions that embody all three virtues.
- *Reflection:* After each role-play, discuss the approaches taken and alternative strategies that could be used in such situations.

4. Impact Projection Workshop

Objective: To project and plan the potential impacts of living out an integrated approach of faith, vocation, and hope.

Materials Needed: Flip charts, markers, sticky notes.

Instructions:

- Break into groups and brainstorm the potential impacts of fully integrating faith, hope, and vocation in daily life.
- Each group presents their projections and outlines practical steps to achieve these outcomes.

- *Reflection:* Reflect on the feasibility and long-term benefits of these projections, encouraging actionable commitments from participants.

These discussions and activities are intended to motivate participants to actively think about and integrate faith, hope, and vocation in their lives, promoting a holistic approach to living out one's calling with purpose and passion. Through these engagements, individuals can gain a deeper appreciation for the transformative power of these virtues working in concert.

PART VII

APPLYING THE THEME IN DAILY LIFE

Practical Ways to Live Out Our Vocations as Journeys of Faith and Hope

Living out our vocations with intentionality involves recognizing each day as an opportunity to respond to God's call with faith and to inspire hope in ourselves and others.

1. **Integrating Faith in Daily Actions** - Whatever our vocation, we can make choices that reflect our faith in God and His teachings. This might mean ethical decision-making at work, fostering forgiveness and love in family life, or volunteering our time and talents to serve the Church and community.

2. **Being Beacons of Hope** - Christians are called to be beacons of hope in a world often marked by cynicism and despair. This can be as simple as offering encouragement, affirming the dignity of those around us, or maintaining a positive outlook in the face of life's challenges.

Ways to Maintain Hope and Faith in Difficult Times

Challenges and setbacks can sometimes overshadow our journey, yet faith and hope are most essential in these moments.

1. **Staying Rooted in Scripture** – Regular reading and meditation on the Scriptures can provide comfort and guidance. Biblical figures such as Job and Paul, despite their sufferings, remained steadfast in their hope and faith, serving as profound examples for us (Romans 5:3-5).
2. **Embracing Crosses as Paths to Growth** – Understanding our difficulties as opportunities for spiritual growth can transform our perspective on suffering. Just as Christ's suffering was redemptive, our trials, when united with His, can lead to deeper faith and greater hope (Colossians 1:24).

The Role of Prayer, Community, and the Sacraments in Supporting Our Vocational Journey

The Catholic tradition provides rich resources that can strengthen us on our vocational path.

1. **Prayer as Daily Dialogue** – Prayer should be the foundation of our day, a constant dialogue with God where we express our desires, fears, and thanksgivings. The Church teaches that prayer is the "vital and personal relationship with the living and true God" (Catechism of the Catholic Church, 2558). This relationship fosters a deep-seated peace and direction in our vocational journey.
2. **Community as a Source of Strength** – The Christian community is vital in supporting each person's vocation. Fellowship with other believers provides encouragement, advice, and a sense of belonging. Engaging in church activities, small groups, or faith-sharing communities can fortify our sense of purpose and belonging.
3. **Sacraments as Wellsprings of Grace** – The sacraments are fundamental in sustaining our vocational journeys. Regular reception of the Eucharist and the Sacrament of Reconciliation provide the grace needed to continue in our vocations with zeal and integrity. The Eucharist especially nourishes our souls, giving us the strength to carry our daily crosses and to

serve others with joy.

Applying the theme of "*Journeying in Faith: Vocations as Pilgrimages of Hope*" in daily life requires an active commitment to live out our faith and maintain hope, supported by the profound resources of prayer, community, and the sacraments. By embracing these practices, we can ensure that our vocational journey is not a solitary or burdensome one, but a fulfilling path that leads us closer to God and to the realization of His kingdom on earth.

PART VII *Discussion Questions and Activities*



This section aims to provide practical ways for participants to apply the theme of "Journeying in Faith: Vocations as Pilgrimages of Hope" in their daily lives. Through discussion questions and interactive activities, the material encourages a deeper personal connection with the theme, promoting the integration of faith, hope, and vocational discernment into everyday actions.

Discussion Questions

- 1. Daily Application:** What are some specific ways you can incorporate the principles of faith and hope into your daily routine, whether at work, home, or in your community?
- 2. Challenges in Practice:** What obstacles do you anticipate facing as you try to more fully live out your vocation? How might you overcome these challenges using faith and hope?
- 3. Role of Prayer:** How does prayer influence your ability to maintain faith and hope? Can you share a

personal experience where prayer played a crucial role in your vocational journey?

4. Community Support: In what ways can your faith community support you in living out your vocation? Conversely, how can you contribute to supporting others in their vocational journeys?

5. Sacramental Life: Discuss how participating in the sacraments can strengthen your vocational commitment. What steps can you take to more regularly engage with the sacramental life of the Church?

Activities



1. Daily Faith and Hope Journal

Objective: To cultivate a habit of reflecting on and recording instances where faith and hope are evident in daily life.

Materials Needed: Journals or notebooks, pens.

Instructions:

- Distribute journals to participants and ask them to keep a daily record of moments where they actively live out their faith and maintain hope in their vocational journey.
- Encourage them to note both challenges and victories, reflecting on how their responses were shaped by their faith.
- *Reflection:* After a designated period, invite participants to share insights from their journals in small groups, discussing how this practice has impacted their vocational journey.

2. Prayer Partner Initiative

Objective: To strengthen the role of prayer in supporting vocational journeys.

Materials Needed: None

Instructions:

- Pair up participants as prayer partners, assigning them to pray for each other's vocational discernment and challenges.
- Set up regular intervals for partners to exchange updates on their needs and experiences, either through meetings, calls, or digital communication.
- *Reflection:* Have prayer partners share about their experiences and any changes they've noticed in their faith journey and vocational discernment as a result of this initiative.

3. Vocational Commitment Pledges

Objective: To encourage concrete commitments to living out one's vocation with renewed faith and hope.

Materials Needed: Pledge cards, pens.

Instructions:

- Ask participants to write down specific commitments they want to make regarding their vocational journey.
- Invite them to share these pledges with the group, explaining why they chose them and what they hope to achieve.
- *Reflection:* Discuss how making these public commitments might help hold them accountable and inspire others to do the same.

4. Sacramental Engagement Plan

Objective: To enhance participation in the sacramental life of the Church as a way to bolster the vocational journey.

Materials Needed: Calendar, Church schedule (mass, confession, adoration times).

Instructions:

- Provide participants with access to the Church's sacramental schedule.
- Help them plan regular attendance at Mass, Confession, and other sacramental events, fitting these into their personal schedules.
- *Reflection:* Encourage participants to reflect on how increased sacramental engagement affects their sense of vocational clarity and spiritual vitality.

These discussion questions and activities are designed to encourage participants to think practically about applying the theme of their vocational journey as a pilgrimage of faith and hope. By integrating these practices, individuals can enhance their day-to-day lives, making their faith journey more vibrant and intentional.

PART VIII

CONCLUSION

As we conclude this catechetical guidebook, *"Journeying in Faith: Vocations as Pilgrimages of Hope,"* it is important to reflect on the profound journey we have embarked upon together. By examining the roles of faith, vocation, and hope and exploring how they intertwine within the fabric of our Christian lives, we have uncovered the essence of our callings as dynamic, transformative pilgrimages toward greater communion with God.

Summary of the Guidebook

This guidebook began by defining and dissecting the meaning of vocation within the Catholic faith, supported by biblical reflections and Church teachings that ground our understanding of God's call in the lives of every believer. We explored the rich tapestry of vocations that constitute the body of Christ—from the priesthood and religious life to married and lay single lives—all of which contribute uniquely to the Church's mission.

We delved into the role of faith as the starting point of our vocational journey, where like Abraham and Moses, we are called to trust in God's promises. We discussed how hope sustains and propels us forward, even in periods of uncertainty and struggle, drawing inspiration from biblical figures such as Job and the perseverance of early Christians highlighted in texts like Romans.

The guide has also highlighted the importance of viewing our vocations as pilgrimages—a concept deeply

in Scripture and tradition. This perspective invites us to embrace the often winding paths of our callings as opportunities for profound growth and transformation. By living our vocations as pilgrimages of hope, we actively participate in the journey toward the ultimate destination of our faith — the Kingdom of God.

The Significance of Understanding Our Vocations as Pilgrimages of Hope

Understanding our vocations as pilgrimages of hope offers a vibrant, hopeful lens through which we can view our daily lives and challenges. It transforms our perception of routine and adversity, framing our vocational responses not as static states but as dynamic, continuous movements toward God's promises. This outlook fosters resilience, inspires courage, and deepens our trust in God's providential guidance.

Through documents such as *Lumen Fidei* and *Christifideles Laici*, the Church urges us to live out our faith actively and with purposeful hope. It reminds us that our vocational journeys are integral to the Church's mission in the world — to evangelize, heal, teach, and serve in the name of Christ.

Call to Action

As we move forward, let each of us take up the mantle of our vocations with renewed zeal and clarity. May we be encouraged to engage more deeply in prayer, participate fully in the sacramental life of the Church, and seek the support of our Christian communities. Let us step out each day as pilgrims equipped with faith, guided by hope, and moved by love, knowing that each step taken in response to God's call is a step toward transforming the world.

Final Blessing

May the journey of faith and hope
you undertake in your vocation
be filled with the light of Christ,
guiding you ever onward and upward
toward the fulfilment of your deepest calling.
Let us go forth, inspired and sustained by the Holy Spirit,
to live out our vocations with joy and perseverance
as true Pilgrims of Hope in the world.

Saint Hannibal Mary Di Francia, pray for us!

PART VII Discussion Questions and Activities



This section provides participants with the opportunity to engage with the theme "Journeying in Faith: Vocations as Pilgrimages of Hope" in relation to the challenges posed by contemporary contexts. Through these activities and discussion prompts, participants can connect their personal vocational journeys with broader societal issues, cultivating a more responsive and responsible approach to living out their faith in the world.

Discussion Questions

- 1. Global Uncertainty and Personal Anxiety:** How does faith offer a grounding presence in times of global uncertainty and personal anxiety? Can you share an instance when your faith helped you navigate such a period?
- 2. Secularization and Loss of Meaning:** In an increasingly secular world, how can you effectively maintain and express your faith? How does your vocation provide a sense of meaning and purpose

against societal trends towards secularization?

3. Technological Disconnection: While technology can often lead to feelings of disconnection, how can it be utilized to foster community and advance your vocational journey? What are some specific ways you have used or could use technology to enhance your faith experience?

4. Environmental and Social Crises: How does your vocation guide your responses to environmental and social crises? Discuss a situation where your faith prompted you to take action on such issues.

5. Youth and Vocational Discernment: For participants who are young or work with the youth, how do contemporary challenges specifically impact the vocational discernment process? What resources or practices have been helpful in discerning during such complicated times?

Activities



1. Faith in Action Project

Objective: To generate an actionable response to a chosen societal issue, grounded in faith and connected to the participants' vocational journey.

Materials Needed: Pens, paper, internet access for research.

Instructions:

- Participants select a societal issue they feel called to address, such as environmental conservation, social justice, or supporting those who suffer from anxiety and stress.
- They plan a practical project or initiative that aligns with their vocation and addresses the chosen issue.
- Once the plans are formulated, participants present their projects to the group.

- *Reflection:* Discuss the various projects and how they reflect the theme of vocations as pilgrimages of hope. Consider potential collaborations and ways to support each other's projects.

2. Scripture and Contemporary Challenges

Objective: To connect scriptural teachings with current societal challenges.

Materials Needed: Bibles, pens, paper.

Instructions:

- Participants choose a contemporary issue to focus on.
- Using the Bible, they find relevant scripture passages that offer guidance or insights on how to engage with these issues from a faith perspective.
- Participants share their chosen passages and explain their relevance to the group.
- *Reflection:* Discuss the relevance of Scripture in addressing contemporary issues and how it can guide our vocational paths amidst these challenges.

3. Digital Faith Sharing

Objective: To navigate technological disconnection by using digital platforms for faith sharing and vocational support.

Materials Needed: Access to digital platforms such as social media or video conferencing.

Instructions:

- Participants consider how they can utilize technology to share their faith or support each other's vocations. This could be creating a social media page, starting a virtual prayer group, or hosting a webinar on a pertinent issue.
- Participants implement their ideas and invite feedback from the group.

- **Reflection:** Discuss the advantages and challenges of using technology in this way. Reflect on how digital engagement affects faith experiences and vocational journeys.

These discussion questions and activities aim to help participants articulate and act on their faith and vocations in a contextually relevant manner. By engaging with these contemporary challenges, participants can strengthen their commitment to journey in faith and hope, fostering a more resilient and responsive faith. In this way, their vocations become dynamic pilgrimages that actively contribute to the betterment of our world.



St. Hannibal Mary Di Francia *Apostle of Prayer for Vocations*

St. Hannibal Mary Di Francia (1851-1927) was given an intuition of the need for the 'prayer for vocations' since he was young. Since becoming a priest in March 16, 1878, he committed himself to the upliftment of the poorest area of his city – the Avignone Compound in Messina, Italy.

St. Hannibal left no stone unturned in spreading and propagating the Lord's command: 'The harvest is great is great but the laborers are few. Pray therefore, the Lord of the harvest to send workers in to his harvest.' (Mt. 9, 38) These words

of Jesus, became his advocacy, the very soul and breath of his life and ministry. This charism unfolded in his life in his mission and service for the little ones and the poor in the Avignone Compound.

He founded Orphanages dedicated to St. Anthony, (1882-1883), the religious Congregations of the Daughters of Divine Zeal (FDZ) – March 16, 1887, and the Rogationists of the Heart of Jesus (RCJ) – May 16, 1897). He established the Priestly Alliance for Vocations – September 22, 1897, which brings together clerics in a renewed effort to grow in priestly spirituality and dedicate themselves actively in prayer and pastoral care for vocations. He also formed the Union of Prayer for Vocations (UPV) – December 8, 1900, a lay catholic association committed to the Lord of the Harvest by praying and propagating this prayer for vocations and cultivating a culture and spirit of prayer and care for vocations within the Church.

St. Hannibal Mary did his best to involve everyone, to be aware and respond to Jesus' demand to pray that He may send more and holy vocations for the Church. He worked with untiring zeal so that the prayer for vocations would become 'unceasing and universal.' His holy desire became a reality when the St. Pope Paul VI instituted the 'World Day of Prayer for Vocations' in 1964.

St. Pope John Paul II regarded St. Hannibal Mary as a 'Father of the orphans and the poor' and an 'authentic anticipator and zealous teacher of the modern pastoral care for vocations.' The same pope beatified him on October 7, 1990 and canonized him on May 16, 2004, following the Vatican recognition of the miraculous recovery of a Filipina kid from bacterial meningitis in 1993.

JOIN US IN OUR CRUSADE FOR VOCATIONS! PRAY THIS VOCATION PRAYER HABIT:

Lord Jesus, You told your disciples 'Pray therefore the Lord of the Harvest to send laborers to His harvest.' We beg You! Send many and holy priests and religious in our Diocese, and in the world. Have mercy on us! Grant O Lord, the grace of perseverance and fidelity to those whom You have called. We trust in You!

Mary, Mother of Vocations, pray for us!

St. Hannibal Mary, pray for us!

Send O Lord, Holy Apostles into Your Church!

**SEND, O LORD,
HOLY APOSTLES INTO YOUR CHURCH.**

