

100 Proven Parish Vocation Committee Projects to try

1. Include **Vocation Awareness components at each grade level of religious education.** Each grade can do a special project - some children might interview clergy/religious and **write** a report. The reports can be put into a resource booklet.
2. **Have a sister speak** at Masses on Vocation Sunday and visit the religious education classes to describe vocation and answer questions.
3. Have a **holy hour/Benediction for vocations**, especially on Corpus Christi.
4. Have **public recitation of the diocesan vocation prayer** at Masses on Sunday.
5. **Provide Eucharistic adoration** on certain days, asking for prayer for vocations.
6. **Send greeting cards to each of the seminarians** at the beginning of a new semester, holidays, exam times, closing of a semester, ordination, birthday, and so forth.
7. **Send spiritual bouquets** to the Holy Father, to priests, brothers and sisters, or to seminarians on special anniversaries, or have them deposited as spiritual offerings in a basket for that purpose in the church.
8. Provide **group holy hours** in church.
9. Supply **material for bulletin boards** - pictures of the seminarians, the pastor, or other vocation-interest materials ordered from religious orders.
10. **Institute the Traveling Crucifix Program**, or use a statue of Mary, a statue of the Sacred Heart, or a statue of a saint, for family prayer in the home. Several churches have three items circulating throughout the parish at a time. Others do this activity two or three times in a year, not continuously, to make it a special event every, time.
11. **Handcrafted tote bags** for transportation of statues with prayer materials, or for religious vocation literature are a great project for women of the parish. Where the prayer item is not presented ceremonially at Mass or after Mass. bags of vocation literature may be borrowed and returned to a designated place in the church.
12. Sponsor poster/coloring/essay **contests...** with prizes and exhibition of results.
13. Older students can present Living Stations of the Cross. Get help from the pastor or Director of Religious Education.

14. Encourage **interviews** of pastors, priests, sisters, brothers for the school newspaper or parish bulletin... especially on how they discerned their 'call'.
15. Create a **parish website with vocation information**, or listing of sites where vocational topics can be explored.
16. **Collage created of photos** of priests, brothers and sisters native to the parish.
17. Seminarian pictures and brief write ups, photographs **changed monthly**.
18. Have the vocation prayer printed on refrigerator magnets and distribute to the parish.
19. Have **Exposition** of the Blessed Sacrament. **Benediction** by a priest or deacon where Benediction is possible.
20. **Compile Resource Books for reference and enrichment.** Articles about priests or religious, the breadth and depth of their call, lifestyle, and the types of ministry, even obituaries, jubilee write-ups... anything that educates is appropriate.
21. Coordinate a **regional** vocation awareness afternoon, presenting area priests and religious as role-models, speakers.
22. Insert the **diocesan vocation prayer cards** in the hymnals or missalette.
23. **Do something creative!** One parish hung a priest's cassock and a sister's habit in the church for prayer until someone from the parish decided to pursue a vocation. It worked!
24. Use the VOCATION program at **one meeting of every parish committee.** Names of potential candidates are submitted to the pastor; follow-up by the PVC, the committee or the pastor as he designates.
25. **Schedule time for Eucharistic Adoration** First Friday, First Saturday, or some other time - to encourage prayer for vocations.
26. **Provide prayer aids...** leaflets, prayer cards... for personal prayer for vocations.
27. **Promote the lives of the saints** in various ways, e.g. in the bulletin, on the bulletin board, on posters, in a bibliography, have a sale-table for holy cards with depictions and prayers to the saints.
28. Start a **vocation library!** Begin by starting a **scrapbook** of pictures and articles relating to priesthood and religious life. Encourage others to contribute materials.
29. **Sponsor presentations,** especially by seminarians - in the classroom, at meetings, or from the pulpit.
30. **Publicize LIVE-IN weekends** for high school juniors and seniors;

- summer overnight retreat at a retreat center for interested teens and for adult men.
31. **Organize a bus trip** to a seminary or mother house and pray for vocations on the way.
 32. **Attend the ordination** of a diocesan priest at the cathedral. Attend a profession ceremony. Any religious will inform you if you ask.
 33. Sponsor a **supper for seminarians** - one or a few at-anytime, or all-together.
 34. **Invite a priest to supper to discuss vocations** around the family dinner-table - or encourage your son to take Father out for pizza and a talk!
 35. Accept an invitation to **accompany** a religious sister for a visit of her mother house.
 36. **Volunteer your services** at a fund raiser or festival hosted by a religious community.
 37. Post the pictures from the back of the **Knights of Columbus magazines**, for perusal by parish youth. (One parish collected 80 of these pictures and posted them all!)
 38. **Make tapes or videos available** for borrowing and return. One parish did this with Father John Corapi's "Amazing Story" tapes, with positive results.
 39. Don't forget to promote vocations to young people in **home schooling** situations. Provide materials they can use and involve them in the parish or school projects.
 40. Sponsor a **Communion Breakfast** with vocation speaker.
 41. Generate interest in World Day of Prayer for Vocations. Have a holy hour in your parish.
 42. Provide information for people in parishes who wish to contribute their **computer** expertise to establish a website or to provide vocation information available on the internet - to people interested in pursuing a vocation. Help parishioners' access vocation information... web sites.
 43. Feature **seminarians, one-at-a-time**, in the parish bulletin or on the bulletin board.
 44. Become involved with the **parish youth** ministry, and then encourage vocational interest.
 45. Sponsor suppers, barbecues, or picnics for confirmation classes, with **talks** on vocation.
 46. Find a way to have young adults hear personal "**Story-of-My-Vocation**" talks by priests, brothers, sisters.

47. Volunteer to help provide school presentations in a '**road show**' of various priests, brothers, sisters.

48. Plan a **vocation prayer garden** to teach the uniqueness of each vocation, using various shrubs, plants, trees and flowers as symbols... a conversation-starter.

49. Form an **Altar Server society** to encourage study of the vocation to priesthood and to encourage personal spirituality.

50. Periodically, give or send **reports to the parish council** and the parish-at-large of the activities and goals of PVC monthly projects - for better understanding and participation.

51. Invite Vocation Director **to the parish** for a weekend, for Masses and homily on vocations.

52. Invite a Sister or Brother to your parish for a **vocation presentation** after the final prayer at weekend Masses.
(*Every religious community has a vocation director who could do this by arrangement.*)

53. Offer babysitting service **so parents can pray** for vocations during holy hours.

54. Ask **31 parishioners** to volunteer to pray the Rosary, or attend Mass, etc. on one of the 31 days of the month for vocations, on behalf of your parish and committee. This has been adapted by on, - parish where parishioners promise to say one decade of the Rosary each morning, so that 15 decade rosaries are continually being said throughout the parish for vocations.

55. **Celebrate feasts of the saints**, such as attending, Mass on the Feast of St. Therese

63. Include the topic of **vocations in World Youth Day** activities in October, suggesting the parish ask the LORD of the Harvest to

of the Child Jesus, of Lisieux, the Little Flower, patroness of missionaries and patroness of many vocations.

56. Celebrate feasts of the **apostles**, who were called by the first vocation director, Jesus.

57. PVC members can promise their **own daily prayer** for an increase of vocations to our diocese. Prayers, works, sufferings and joys also can be offered to God for vocations.

58. Provide **intercessory prayers** for vocations for Prayers of the Faithful at Mass... at least for the weekend Masses. Many parishes always have one intention for vocations.

59. Pray for vocations at the **daily Masses** when possible.

60. Celebrate the **National Vocation Awareness Week** in January, **World Vocation Sunday** in April/May, and the **Day for Consecrated Life** in February. by providing the NCCV kits, which include homily helps and ideas for parish celebrations. **Mission Sunday** in October is a great day to highlight **the missionary vocations** in the Church... and in our diocese.

62. Celebrate the **anniversaries** of the Pope, the Bishop, the Pastor, the Priests and Religious in the parish, to create a teachable moment for promoting vocation awareness.

help young people to be generous in carving their lives in service to the Church. Include prayers for those working with the youth of

the diocese.

64. **Celebrate All Saints Day** with a focus on the saints of our time, the founders and founders of religious orders, and all people who give witness to their faith in daily life. Ask them all in prayer to beg the LORD of the Harvest to send laborers to continue their good work on earth.

65. On All Souls Day, **focus attention on prayer for deceased priests and religious**, especially those who have served the People of God in our diocese. Publicize the month-by-month necrology for deceased priests (and possibly also religious) for specific prayer intentions. Ask these priests/religious to continue their work on earth.

66. Print and distribute a prayer **calendar of seminarians** in the parish bulletin monthly. By October the men are settled into seminary for the year.

67. Pray, especially in the **Fall for new recruits** and in the **Spring for candidates and applicants** who are being processed for entrance to seminary for the next year.

68. Publish a listing of all the **seminarians, with names and seminary addresses**. Encourage parishioners to send them cards and letters showing support and prayer - without expecting a response from the seminarians, which keeps this activity supportive but not intrusive to their study time.

69. Some parishes feature **one seminarian's name and address in the bulletin each week**, to keep this activity continuous. after a weekend Mass, in front of the congregation. It is returned in time to be displayed and then presented to another

70. Celebrate the Feast of Christ the King by arranging with the Parish Vocation Committee to **bless and commission new altar-servers** in the parish. Recognize the older servers, thanking them for their dedication and example.

71. Plan a prayer service using the theme of thanksgiving for Thanksgiving weekend. This is where we **think of all the vocations the LORD has sent to our diocese, and from our diocese into the Church throughout the world**.

72. **Advent and Lent** are excellent times for vocational activities and prayer.

73. The Feast of the Immaculate Conception of the **Virgin Mary** in December can be a special day to honor Our Lady, patroness of our diocese, and ask her **to intercede** with her Son for **new vocations** for our diocese.

74. **Provide National Coalition for Church Vocations resources to your parish religious education program** or parish school - in plenty of time - before Advent for January celebration of National Vocation Awareness Week. Encourage them to use some of the many resources available for grades 1- 12.

75. Develop a **Vocation Crucifix Program or Traveling Statue Program**. (Possibly St. John Vainer) Some parishes have one, two or three crucifixes circulating throughout the parish. The Vocation Crucifix is presented to a family during or

family. The names of parishioners participating in this program are sometimes printed in the parish bulletin and sometimes

posted in the vestibules of the church. We suggest the program and let the parish committee work on the details.

76. Pray the **Litany for Vocations**.

77. Pray the **Litany of the Parish Patrons** for Vocations to our Diocese, which includes every title honoring the Trinity, Jesus, Mary and then every parish patron saint, and concludes with the Diocesan prayer for Vocations.

78. Encourage **parents to promote** religious vocations at home.

79. Let the **children see the example of parents** who live a Christian life and who take the Gospel demands seriously and value Church Vocations.

80. Help the children understand, by word and action, that religion is important and that **parents build positive attitudes** regarding a life of prayer and service to God and humanity.

81. **Read Stories** to young children (make stories available for children to read) about persons who reached out in service to others. **Discuss the stories**.

82. **Make a collage with the children** that illustrates 'call', 'service', 'healing', 'prophecy', and 'prayer'. Help the children understand that the work of Christ continues in the world today through people helping people.

83. Pray **at the family table**. Spontaneous and personal prayer helps set the scene for prayer around the table of the LORD.

84. Pray **as a family** for particular persons involved **in** priesthood and religious life. This helps children be aware of the esteem

with which the Christian family regards vocations to the religious life and priesthood.

85. Instill in children a **desire to serve others**.

86. Pray **daily** as a family, at a time most convenient for all. Include intentions for those already living a vocation to Church ministry that they may fulfill their Christian vocation in life and service to God; - that those persons faced with a vocational choice consider their own God-given abilities, and decide a vocation in light of God's Will for them.

87. **Encourage children to become involved** in parish projects, organizations, and in charitable activities.

88. **Speak always with respect** for priests and religious, even/especially when differences of opinion arise. Be careful of the way criticism of the Church is handled. Be intolerant of humor and innuendo which devalues spirituality, religious life and priesthood.

89. **Invite** your parish priest, religious priest, brother or sister **to your home** - or at least, **let** them know, in the presence of your children, that they are welcome in your home. Encourage them to visit with you and your children.

90. **Be aware of current ideas** regarding the formation, life and role of priests and religious in the Church, become familiar with their goals and the manner in which their role evolves into new **ministries...** especially education.

91. **As a family**, pray for persons who are in

the process of discernment.

92. As **parents, pray the difficult prayer:** that one of your children will be called by God to the priesthood or religious life.

93. Encourage people 16 to 40 years of age (who exhibit the qualities and virtues you have admired in priests and religious who have been an influence in your life) to consider a religious or priestly calling from God. **Personal invitation** can be the affirmation someone needs to contact a vocation director for further information and discernment.

94. Promote **subscriptions to good solid newspapers or magazines** which regularly feature vocational stories/articles.

95. Read VISION **magazine** for ideas for your own vocation awareness education. Write for **free copies** and give one to someone you think **may** have a religious vocation. **VISION** is the annual publication of the National Religious Vocation Conference (which serves vocation directors of religious communities which pay for membership and advertising). The magazine is published by the Claretian Publications, 203 West Monroe Street, Chicago, IL 60606. Telephone (312) 236-7782; Fax: (312) 236-8207. ([http://www.visionguide.orc.,](http://www.visionguide.orc.)) **For copies, call Norma Perez at (800) 3826515.**

96. **Write/call for a copy of *Guide to RELIGIOUS MINISTRIES***, published by the Catholic News Publishing Company, 910 North Avenue, New Rochelle, NY 10801, Telephone:(924) 6312-1220 or 1 **(800) 433-7771** or Fax:(914)632-3412. (\$ 10/copy)

97. **Visit a religious book store** and familiarize your self with what is available

in books and tapes and videos on religious topics, lives of the saints, liturgy, and so forth. For a start, look at the Christopher Walker ***Stories and Songs of Jesus***, which is available in cassette, storybook and coloring-book formats. These make great gifts which encourage youth and young adults to share their faith at home and to reflect on the possibility of making, that sharing a life career.

98. **Adopt a missionary.** Most religious communities have some foreign-mission outreach. Ask for a missionary to correspond with, and learn what his/her life is about... and then share that with others who could begin to consider life as a missionary.

99. **Adopt a retired priest or brother or sister.** They will appreciate the mail you send them, and you can profit from their advice. Invite him or her to conversation with one or two of our prospects - the people you are personally inviting to consider religious life or priesthood.

100. **Recruit a candidate** and then for the rest of your life, **celebrate the blessing** as you accompany him or her with your prayerful support along his/her way to ordination/profession of vows as a religious.