



HE HAS A PATH FOR YOU

The Office of Vocations reaches beyond forming seminarians and those entering consecrated religious life. It also supports the process of discerning the vocation that God calls us to for a younger group.

Each year, the Office of Vocations facilitates Focus 11, a four-day event for sixth grade Catholic school students in the diocese. This event provides students with an opportunity to interact with and learn from those living out their vocation.

They also offer tools and knowledge, helping students begin discerning their vocation. By providing the opportunity to ask questions, participate in prayer activities, and diving deeper into their own faith with trust, students can see that a vocation leads to ultimate fulfillment whether they are called to marriage, religious life, consecrated life, or priesthood.

"I think this is the stage that they are starting to think about what God wants them to be even if they don't say it," shared Sister Sherly Vazhappilly, F.S.S.E., Associate Director of Vocations. "It is planting a seed in their heart."

Not only did the Office of Vocations notice these seeds, but teachers and students as well. Natalie Lisko, religion teacher at St. Paul Catholic School in St. Petersburg saw immediate fruit.

"I think a lot of them will be open to that calling and in getting to hear about how some of the priests and religious discerned their own vocations, they can take that prayer aspect and apply it," Lisko shared. "One student already has said 'oh, maybe I'm being called to be a sister.'"

Many participants expressed they were inspired to consider a vocation to the priesthood or religious life whether they've been thinking about it for a while, or they had never considered it before. All can, now call

to mind this experience as they continue in their faith journey.

"I think this has given me an experience I can look back on when I'm feeling down or when I'm feeling unsure," said Mason, a sixth-grade student at the Cathedral of St. Jude the Apostle. Mason shared that he had thought about God calling him to be a priest in the past and this gave him an experience to help as he grows in his faith. "No matter what God is telling you to do, he has a path for you to follow."



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