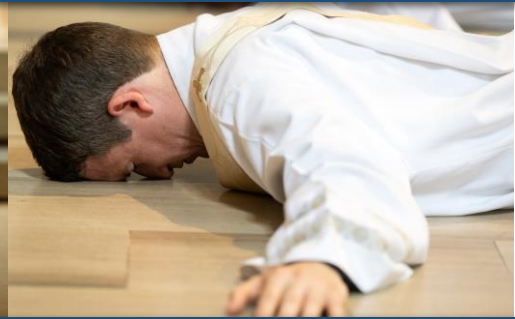


Take the Risk for Christ

Year for Vocation to Diocesan Priesthood



VOCATION MATTERS

Newsletter of the National Vocations Office

SUMMER 2023

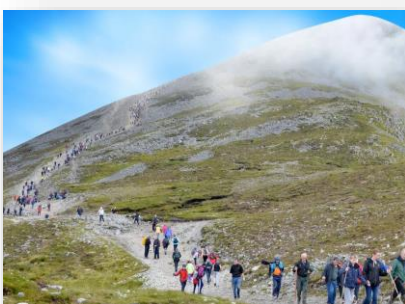
Ordinary Time



Evangelisation and Vocation
Conference in Maynooth



Press, Media and Social
Media Coverage



Events in Planning

The year so far . . .

It has been a busy time in the office since the start of the year, planning events, designing resources and organising a large conference, which thank God, was well attended and the feedback was very positive.



Deacon Eric Cooney
Administrator
National Vocations Office

There has been good take up throughout the country with many diocese encouraging their parishes to pray for vocations, some have been having regular periods of Eucharistic Adoration for Vocations, Rosaries for Vocations. One diocese has launched a programme where the laity “adopt a priest” for whom they undertake to pray for throughout the year. Another diocese has invited parishioners to write a story about a priest who has been significant in their lives.

Another diocese is making a special effort to have periods of Adoration in their schools. At third-level, the chaplains in UCD and DCU in Dublin have held a discernment evening, which was very successful.

A key message from Archbishop Fisichella at the recent conference, was the need to embrace the digital culture and to ensure we have an evangelising presence on digital platforms. To this end, we have enlisted the help of a third-party to broaden our digital footprint.



Evangelisation & Vocation Conference Keynote Speaker: Archbishop Rino Fisichella

The Gospel must be incardinated in digital culture

Addressing a packed conference of over 100 attendees in the Renehan Hall, Archbishop Fisichella urged all to bear credible witness to their faith both in their online and in their in-person interactions.

He said the '*digital culture*' represents a new form of culture which will determine the coming centuries and must be embraced by the Church. The challenge is not how to use new technologies to evangelise, but how to become an evangelising presence on the digital continent. At the same time, evangelisation cannot be carried out through digital means alone, since this would result in a weak and ineffective evangelisation. The act of bearing witness must include interpersonal exchange.

He urged the seminarians to accompany young people as they navigate this turbulent time in their lives. Speaking about priesthood he said that priests must be a concrete sign that the love of Christ is not a utopia ... but a reality that any person can experience when they seek to give their lives freely.





World Day of Prayer for Vocations Broadcast Mass on RTE One.

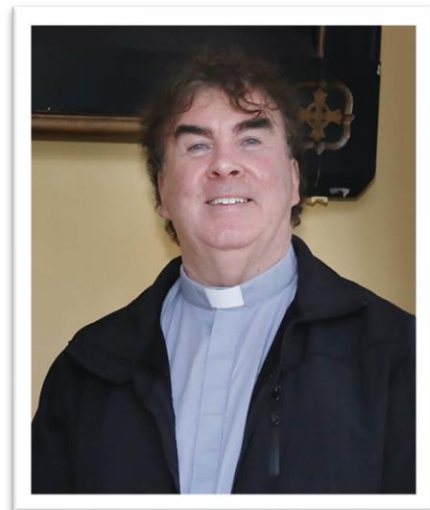
RTE

In 1963 Pope Paul VI designated Good Shepherd Sunday as World Day of Prayer for Vocations, The purpose of World Day of Prayer for Vocations is to publicly fulfil the Lord's instruction to, "Pray the Lord of the harvest to send laborers into his harvest" (Mt 9:38; Lk 10:2).

This year's annual televised Mass for Vocations Sunday was broadcast from the RTE studios and was **viewed by 48,000 people across the world**. The celebrant was Bishop Phonsie Cullinan chair of the council for vocations, assisted by Bishop Larry Duffy vice chair, Fr. Willie Purcell, National Vocations Coordinator and Deacon Eric Cooney National Vocations Office. The choir was directed by Sr. Moira Bergin RSM.

Seminarians from Maynooth and Redemptoris Mater in Dundalk were present with representatives from various religious congregations, St. Joseph's Young Priests Society, and the Knights of St. Columbanus.

At the end of the televised Mass, the National Office for Vocations launched the year of prayer for Vocations to the Diocesan Priesthood which will run for one year from 30th April 2023 to 21st April 2024 on the theme 'Take the Risk for Christ'.



Fr Willie Purcell
National Vocations Coordinator



Take The Risk for Christ Video

A video “take the risk for Christ” was commissioned by the National Vocations Office and was produced by The Servant Sisters of the Home of the Mother.

The video was shown for the first time at the Evangelisation and Vocations Conference in Maynooth to launch the year. The video features testimonies and vocation stories from:

Fr Marius O’Reilly (Cork and Ross),

Fr Eamonn O’Connor (Elphin)

Fr Adrian Crowley (Dublin)

Fr Shane O’Neill (Waterford and Lismore)

Fr Oliver Crilly (Derry)

The video has been viewed over 2,500 times.



Ailbhe Conneely of RTE recorded interviews with Fr. Vincent Stapelton (Cashel & Emly) and seminarians Stephen Sherry and Anthony Hartnett for RTE.

The two-minute video was broadcast on RTE News on Sunday 30th April as a news item reporting that the Catholic Church in Ireland have commenced a special year-long campaign to promote vocations to the Diocesan Priesthood.

Radio & Print Coverage



Events in Planning

Come & See (July 2nd)

The Diocese of Cork and Ross are hosting a Come and See afternoon on Sunday 2nd July from 2 pm to 5 pm in Mardyke House, Cork.

To Register email: vocations@corkandross.org



Reek Sunday (July 30th)

The Vocations Office will have a presence at Croagh Patrick for Reek Sunday to distribute prayer cards and promote the Year of Vocation to Diocesan Priesthood.



Knock (August 17th)

It is planned to have a pilgrimage to Knock on 17th August (Feast of Our Lady of Knock) to pray for Vocations.



Lough Derg Pilgrim Path Saturday 26th August

An inspirational idea from Bishop Larry Duffy of the Diocese of Clogher to walk along the Pilgrim Path together around Lough Derg on Saturday 26th August 2023 with the expert guidance of Fr La Flynn.

While everyone is welcome to join us on the walk, there is a particular invitation on any man discerning priesthood. Vocations Directors are also most welcome and hopefully will be accompanied by those discerning priesthood. Please God the Lord will bless us with fine weather for the short "Camino" around the Lough Derg Pilgrim Path.



Ordinations to the Priesthood



During the coming months we look forward to celebrating the ordination to the Priesthood of those who were ordained to the Diaconate within the past year:

- Rev. Dawid Aksenczuk (Down & Connor)
- Rev. Frankline Nkopi Etuge (Elphin)
- Rev. Conrad Folikik (Elphin)
- Rev. Chris Garrett (Elphin)
- Rev. Mark O'Farrell (Waterford & Lismore)
- Rev. Stephen Ward (Derry)
- Rev Shaun Doherty (Derry)



May the Lord who called them continue to guide and accompany them in their prayerful preparations.

Come and See

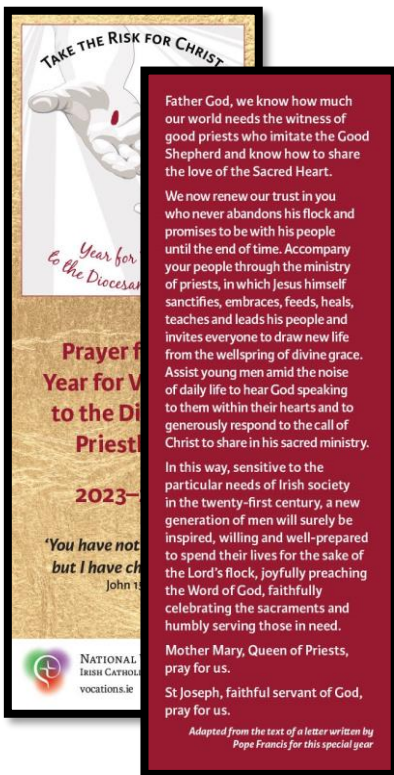
November Sat 18 & Sun 19

St. Patrick's National Seminary
Maynooth

Email: info@vocations.ie to Register

Resources

Prayer Cards in English & Irish



TAKE THE RISK FOR CHRIST

Father God, we know how much our world needs the witness of good priests who imitate the Good Shepherd and know how to share the love of the Sacred Heart.

We now renew our trust in you who never abandons his flock and promises to be with his people until the end of time. Accompany your people through the ministry of priests, in which Jesus himself sanctifies, embraces, feeds, heals, teaches and leads his people and invites everyone to draw new life from the wellspring of divine grace. Assist young men amid the noise of daily life to hear God speaking to them within their hearts and to generously respond to the call of Christ to share in his sacred ministry.

In this way, sensitive to the particular needs of Irish society in the twenty-first century, a new generation of men will surely be inspired, willing and well-prepared to spend their lives for the sake of the Lord's flock, joyfully preaching the Word of God, faithfully celebrating the sacraments and humbly serving those in need.

Mother Mary, Queen of Priests, pray for us.
St Joseph, faithful servant of God, pray for us.

Adapted from the text of a letter written by Pope Francis for this special year

Year for Vocations to the Diocesan Priesthood 2023

'You have not chosen me, but I have chosen you.'

JOHN 15:16

NATIONAL IRISH CATHOLIC VOCATIONS OFFICE



TÉIR SA TSEANS DO CHRÍO

A Dhia a Athair, tá a fhios againn an gá atá ag an ndomhain le sagairt mhaith mar fhinéithe a dhéanann aithris ar an Sár Aoire agus go bhfuil a fhios acu conas grá an Chroí Ró-Naofa a roinnt.

Déanaimid anois athnuachain inár muinín ionat sa, nach tréigean a thréad riamh agus a gheallann a bheith lena mhuintir go Lá an Luain.

Bí i dteannta do mhuintir tré mhinistreach na sagairt ina naomhaíonn, cuimsíonn, beathaíonn, leigheasann, múineann agus treoraíonn fósa féin a mhuintir agus a thugann cuireadh do chách beatha nua a bhaint as tobar a ghrásta Diamhar.

Cabhraigh le fearaibh óga Dia a chlos ag labhairt leo laistigh dá gcroíthe i measc ruathair laethúil an tsaoil agus freagairt go fal le glaoch Chríost chun roinnt ina mhinistreacht naofa.

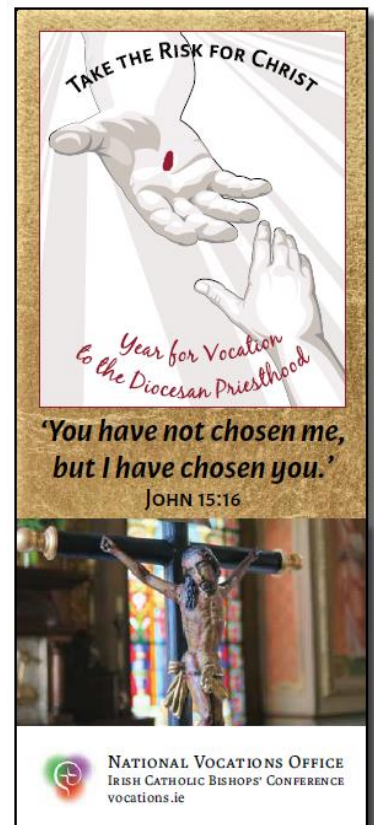
Sa tsli seo, aireadh do san-riachtanais sochail Éireannach sa 21ú Céad, is cinnte go mbeidh glúin nua fir spreagtha, fonnmhar agus dea-ullmhaithe a saoil a chaitheamh ar mhaithé tréad ar dTiarna, ag craobhscaoileadh go háthasach Briathar Dé, ag ceiliúradh na sacrimint go dílis agus ag freastal go humhal orthu siúd i ngátar.

A Mhuire Mháthair, Banríon na Sagairt, guígh ar ár son.

A Naomh Iosaef, a sheirbhíseach dílis Dia, guígh ar ár son.

Curtha in oiriúint: é Béir scríobha ag an bPápa Fraincis don bhliain speisialta seo

Rollup Banners



TAKE THE RISK FOR CHRIST

Year for Vocation to the Diocesan Priesthood

'You have not chosen me, but I have chosen you.'

JOHN 15:16

NATIONAL VOCATIONS OFFICE
IRISH CATHOLIC BISHOPS' CONFERENCE
vocations.ie

Prayer of the Faithful Scripture Themed Intercessions for Vocations

June 2023

Trinity Sunday - 4th June 2023

Jesus tell Nicodemus, a leading Jew that *“God loved the world so much that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not be lost, but may have eternal life.”* We pray for all who are discerning a call from God in their hearts to follow Jesus as a priest, deacon or religious, to bring belief and light to those in darkness, that they act on the call they hear in their hearts.

Corpus Christi 11th June 2023

Jesus tells us that *“He who eats my flesh and drinks my blood lives in me and I live in him. As I, who am sent by the living Father, myself draw life from the Father, so whoever eats me will draw life from me.”* We pray that receiving the Eucharist will nourish and strengthen those who are being called to follow the Lord as a priest, deacon or religious to respond with courage to the Lord’s call.

Eleventh Sunday in Ordinary Time - 18th June 2023

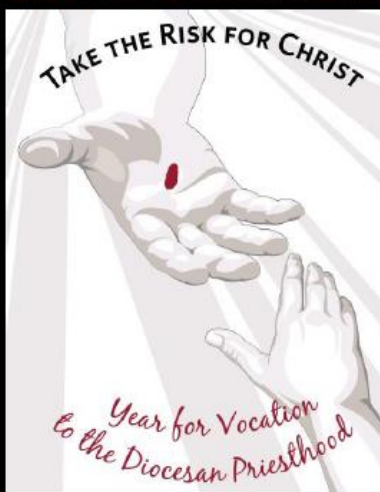
When Jesus saw the crowds *“he felt sorry for them because they were harassed and dejected, like sheep without a shepherd”*. Then he said to his disciples, *‘The harvest is rich, but the labourers are few, so ask the Lord of the harvest to send labourers to his harvest.’* Christ has no body now but ours. We pray for those who are discerning a vocation to serve as a priest, deacon or religious in the harvest of the Lord, to be his hands, his feet, to speak his words of compassion to those who are harassed and dejected.

Twelfth Sunday in Ordinary Time - 25th June 2003

In our Gospel Jesus instructs the Twelve not to be afraid and assures them of his love: *‘So if anyone declares himself for me in the presence of men, I will declare myself for him in the presence of my Father in heaven.’* We pray that for those who the Lord is calling to declare themselves by a life as a priest, deacon or religious, that they may follow the path that the Lord is directing them to take.



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Scripture Themed Intercessions – July

Prayer of the Faithful Scripture Themed Intercessions for Vocations

July 2023

Thirteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time 2nd July 2023

Jesus tells the twelve, *“anyone who loses their life for my sake will find it”*. We pray for an increase in vocations to the priesthood, the diaconate and religious life. We pray that those whom the Lord is calling will find affirmation in their discernment to follow the Lord for the sake of the Gospel.

Fourteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time – 9th July 2023

In our Gospel today, Jesus invites us all to *come to him* and *find rest* for our souls. We pray for those who are discerning a vocation to the priesthood, the diaconate or the religious life, that they place their trust in Jesus, who is *gentle and humble in heart*. May they *shoulder his yoke and learn from him*.

Fifteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time 16th July 2023

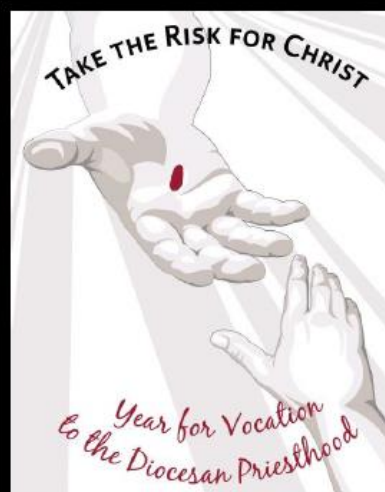
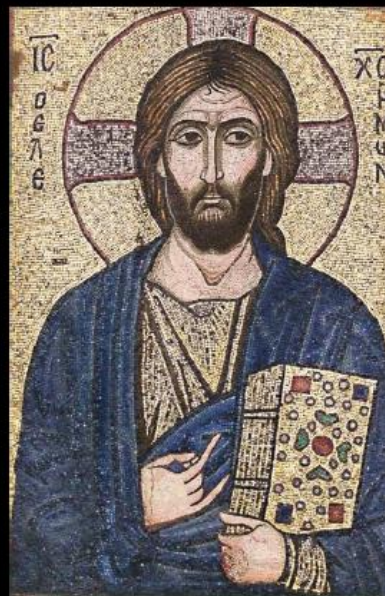
In the “Parable of the Sower”, Jesus tells us that *‘the one who received the seed in rich soil is the man who hears the word and understands it; he is the one who yields a harvest and produces now a hundredfold, now sixty, now thirty.’* We pray for those who are discerning a vocation, that they may hear and ponder the Word in their hearts that they may yield a harvest of plenty.

Sixteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time – 23rd July 2023

St Paul in our second reading tells us that *“The Spirit comes to help us in our weakness . . . and expresses our plea in a way that can never be put into words”* May those who are discerning a vocation implore the Holy Spirit to guide them and to express their pleas to our Heavenly Father.

Seventeenth Sunday in Ordinary Time – 30th July 2023

In our first reading from the First book of Kings, Solomon, who feels he is *young and unskilled* in leadership asks God *“for a heart to understand how to discern”*. We pray for all whom the Lord is calling to the priesthood, diaconate or religious life, who feel anxious about responding, that they may be blessed in their discernment and have the courage to place their trust in God.



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