

Sunday, January 22, 2012

A MESSAGE FROM FR. CONRAD

Sisters and Brothers of Our Parish Family,

My column this week is directed primarily to parents and grandparents. Today is Vocations Awareness Sunday, when Catholics all over the United States are asked to pray for vocations to the priesthood and religious life.

Have you ever wondered where we as Church would be without priests and consecrated religious? How would you respond if your son or daughter (grandson or granddaughter) told you that he perceived that God was calling him to the priesthood and/or religious life or she to the religious sisterhood? Would you support and nurture a religious vocation in your family?

The fundamental truth about a vocation is that its source is not us, but God. God calls. Even before God created us, He had a specific dream for each one of us. But for God's plan to come true, the one perceiving it needs to act upon it. And parents and grandparents can be very helpful in helping fulfill God's plan, first and foremost by praying (as a couple) for the specific vocation of each one of your children/grandchildren.

Additionally, help your children to see that a Christian is meant to make a difference in the world. Make them aware that their faith is a gift to share. Make them proud of their faith; teach, explain, give them answers. Encourage them to be involved in the liturgical life of the parish, as servers, readers, musicians, etc. From their earliest age, help them enter into a personal relationship with Jesus as their best friend.

Be countercultural and make Confirmation the real beginning of personal and mature practice of the Faith. Encourage simple, direct prayer, a sense of His presence in everything they do, and make gratitude a major element of all family prayer. Lead by example in receiving the Sacrament of Penance; we all need it! Together, as a family, do things that serve others. And finally (for now), witness to your own vocation in your love and care for each other.

Peace and Blessings,

Father Conrad