



# DERRY VOCATIONS

Prayer Booklet



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Prayer Booklet

Day One

**Saturday  
17th  
April**

**A Reading from the Acts of the Apostles**

**6:1-7**

... You, brothers, must select from among yourselves seven men of good reputation, filled with the Spirit and with wisdom; we will hand over this duty to them, and continue to devote ourselves to prayer and to the service of the word. The whole assembly approved of this proposal and elected Stephen, a man full of faith and the Holy Spirit, together with Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolaus of Antioch, a convert to Judaism. They presented these to the apostles, who prayed and laid their hands on them.

***Prayer to St Joseph, Patron of the Church, Patron of Workers, Guardian of the Redeemer and often invoked as Patron of a Happy Death.***

To you, O blessed Joseph, do we come in our afflictions, and having implored the help of your most holy Spouse, we confidently invoke your patronage also. Through that charity which bound you to the Immaculate Virgin Mother of God and through the paternal love with which you embraced the Child Jesus, we humbly beg you graciously to regard the inheritance which Jesus Christ has purchased by his Blood, and with your power and strength to aid us in our necessities.

O most watchful guardian of the Holy Family, defend the chosen children of Jesus Christ; O most loving father, ward off from us every contagion of error and corrupting influence; O our most mighty protector, be kind to us and from heaven assist us in our struggle with the power of darkness. As once you rescued the Child Jesus from deadly peril, so now protect God's Holy Church from the snares of the enemy and from all adversity; shield, too, each one of us by your constant protection, so that, supported by your example and your aid, we may be able to live piously, to die in holiness, and to obtain eternal happiness in heaven. Amen.

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## **The Everywhere God**

May we open our minds and hearts  
to the presence of God-in-us.  
May God-in-us,  
the “everywhere God,”  
find generous and courageous expression  
in our words and actions  
as we undertake  
to make the reign of God evident in our world.  
Amen.

Michael Morwood, **The Everywhere God**, p6, from *Praying a New Story*.

All reflections taken from *Maryknoll Book of Inspiration, Readings for Every Day of the Year*, Michael Leach and Doris Goodnough, Editors, Orbis Books, New York, 2010.

## **Mass**

**Angelus for Vocations**

**Daily Examen**

**Rosary for Vocations: Joyful Mysteries**

**Night Prayer**

## **Mass Saturday 17th April**

### *Introduction:*

In the Acts of the Apostles, we learn how the faith community that formed the infant Church, were asked to choose from among themselves women and men of good reputation, filled with the Spirit and with wisdom, who would continue to devote themselves to prayer and to the service of the word. In this year of Saint Joseph, we pray for all Christians, and all the baptised. As disciples, may we be inspired by Joseph’s example and fulfil our vocation to be watchful guardians of families, and the defenders of the children in our care. As the family of God, may we cherish and nurture the vocation of the younger generation.

*Prayer of the Faithful:*

Reader:

The response to our intercessions is: Lord hear our Prayer.

1. That as Joseph and Mary welcomed the gift of the Child Jesus, may all mothers and fathers prayerfully nurture their children's vocations and especially encourage an openness in those who are called to serve the Gospel.  
We pray to the Lord. ***R. Lord Hear our Prayer***
2. For an increased understanding among our young people that they are uniquely chosen by God to be his disciples through their particular vocation; we pray especially for those who have been called to marriage or single life.  
We pray to the Lord. ***R. Lord Hear our Prayer***
3. That all mothers will draw close to Mary and encourage an openness to the Holy Spirit in their children; may their daughters and sons find love, support and acceptance, as they try to discern their calling in life  
We pray to the Lord. ***R. Lord Hear our Prayer***
4. That all fathers will foster an awareness among their children of having been called by God. As parents and guardians may their love, prayer, guidance and example inspire the young people in their care to become genuine disciples of Jesus Christ.  
We pray to the Lord. ***R. Lord Hear our Prayer***
5. That men and women will be encouraged to love God and their neighbour through being open to recognise and answer God's call to serve Him and His people, by becoming witnesses inspired by the life of Christ.  
We pray to the Lord. ***R. Lord Hear our Prayer***

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Day Two  
**Sunday**  
**18th**  
**April**

## **A reading from the First Letter of St John** **2:1-5**

We have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ, who, is just; he is the sacrifice that takes our sins away, and not only ours, but the whole world's. We can be sure that we know God only by keeping his commandments. Anyone, who says, 'I know him' and does not keep his commandments, is a liar, refusing to admit the truth. But when anyone does obey what he has said, God's love comes to perfection in him.

## **St Joseph - A Man of Faith**

In his recent Apostolic Letter "Patris Corde" (With a father's heart) Pope Francis tells us that Sts Matthew and Luke, the two evangelists who speak most of St Joseph, tell us very little, but enough to appreciate what sort of father he was, and the mission which God, in his love and mercy, entrusted to him. He was a carpenter who was engaged to be married to Mary. A just man, a man of faith who was ready to carry out God's will as it was revealed to him in the Jewish Scriptures and in the ways in which God spoke to him in a number of dreams. He was present at the birth of Jesus, and was there when the Shepherds and Wise Men came to adore the new-born King as the representatives of the people of Israel and the people of the rest of the world. At the Presentation, which we celebrate on 2 February, Joseph heard Simeon's prophecies about Jesus and Mary. Joseph took them both to safety in Egypt, and then home to Nazareth. Some years later, when they were returning from a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, having lost Jesus for a few days, he and Mary found him in the Temple, talking with the doctors of the Law. Jesus went home with them, and remained there until he began his public ministry.

### **A Calling**

There can never be any question of choosing a vocation: the word “choice” is excluded by the word “vocation,” which means “calling,” a call from God. Therefore, we do not “choose a vocation” but seek to find our vocation, to do all we can to hear God’s voice calling us, to make sure of what he is saying – and then to obey him. Where vocation is concerned God speaks, calls, commands: we do not have to choose, but to listen and obey.

Charles de Foucauld A Calling, p36, from *Charles de Foucauld: Essential Writings*, edited by Robert Ellsberg.

### **Mass**

**Angelus for Vocations**

**Daily Examen**

**Rosary for Vocations: Glorious Mysteries**

**Night Prayer**

## **Mass Sunday 18th April**

### *Introduction:*

As we continue our journey in this week of prayer for vocations in the Diocese of Derry, we are reminded from our Gospel that the Risen Lord walks among us, that he brings his peace even when our hearts are troubled or anxious. Confident in his living and loving presence among his people, let us turn to him asking for pardon and mercy....

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*Prayer of the Faithful:*

Priest:

Our second reading proclaims that God's love comes to perfection in those who obey the word of God and the promptings of the Holy Spirit. Let us now open our hearts to his word as we bring before him the needs of our families, all those we love and the needs of our world as we pray...

Reader:

The response to our intercessions is: Lord hear our Prayer.

1. For Pope Francis, that his example may inspire all of us to consider the humble path of service to which we are called and in turn build up God's Kingdom of mercy and love.

We pray to the Lord. **R. Lord Hear our Prayer**

2. For all those who pass on the gift of faith. We remember today those who are called to the vocation and ministry of catechesis and teaching, that with compassionate hearts and a love for divine truth, they may lead others to truly know our Heavenly Father.

We pray to the Lord. **R. Lord Hear our Prayer**

3. For all those who serve God in political and civic life. That their calling to serve the common good may always be rooted in Christ's love for all people.

We pray to the Lord. **R. Lord Hear our Prayer**

4. For the sick. We continue to remember all those who are suffering as a result of the Covid-19 Pandemic. We remember especially all those who are called to the ministry of caring for the sick and housebound. May their witness and devotion to those they serve always be a reminder to us of the infinite and tender love of Christ.

We pray to the Lord. **R. Lord Hear our Prayer**

5. For all those who are discerning a calling to serve God in his Church. As we approach our annual day of discernment in the Diocese of Derry, we ask the Holy Spirit to place a generosity of heart and an openness to the promptings of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of those who are called.

We pray to the Lord. ***R. Lord Hear our Prayer***

6. For all our beloved dead: May the joy experienced by the disciples as they encountered the Risen Lord be theirs forever.

We pray to the Lord. ***R. Lord Hear our Prayer***

Priest:

Loving God, as you opened the minds of the disciples to know you through your word, direct the hearts and minds of your faithful to serve you with the same conviction that captured the hearts and minds of the disciples. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

# DERRY VOCATIONS

Prayer Booklet

Day Three

Monday

19th

April

A Reading from the Holy Gospel

According to John

6:22-29

Do not work for food that cannot last, but work for food that endures to eternal life, the kind of food the Son of Man is offering you, for on him the Father, God himself, has set his seal. Then they said to him, 'What must we do if we are to do the works God wants?' Jesus gave them this answer, 'This is working for God: you must believe in the one he has sent.'

**St Joseph – “An extraordinary man!” – Pope Francis**

Pope Francis says that, during the pandemic, he has seen how “...our lives are woven together and sustained by ordinary people, people often overlooked.” Many people whose names never hit the headlines are doing extraordinary things which are shaping the decisive events of our history right now. He mentions with gratitude doctors, nurses, shopkeepers, supermarket staff, cleaners, caregivers, transport workers, those who provide essential services and ensure public safety, volunteers, priests, religious men and women..... Working individually, but with a common purpose, they offer hope; they share the responsibility for defeating the pandemic. He goes on to mention parents, grandparents and teachers who are showing our children how to accept and deal with a crisis by adjusting their routines, to look ahead with hope, and they encourage prayer. The Pope offers St Joseph to us as a support and guide in times of trouble, as someone who works quietly, yet effectively, in the background. We turn to St Joseph as a Protector in times of danger.

**Witnesses**

Witnesses are those who testify from personal experience about what they saw or heard. Like a witness who takes the stand in court and pledges to speak the truth, Christian witnesses take the stand in the court of life and speak the truth of God. They tell us that God is alive and at work, that Jesus is risen and calls us to his discipleship journey of compassionate love, and that God's reign of peace and nonviolence is at hand, right now, at this very moment. John Dear, *Witnesses*, p85, from "*You Will Be My Witnesses*," Saints, Prophets, and Martyrs.

**Mass**

**Angelus for Vocations**

**Vocation Interview hosted by Bishop Donal McKeown**

**Daily Examen**

**Rosary for Vocations Joyful Mysteries**

**Night Prayer**

**Mass Monday 19th April**

*Introduction:*

In today's Gospel Jesus tells the crowd that, if they are to receive the "food that endures to eternal life", they "must believe in the one [the Father] has sent." We pray, in this Mass, for an increase in the gift of faith, that we may always do the work that God wants.

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*Prayer of the Faithful:*

Reader: The response to our intercessions is: Lord hear our Prayer.

1. For the Church: that our faith in the Risen Lord may grow stronger each day, and that our works may always bear witness to that faith.  
We pray to the Lord. **R. Lord Hear our Prayer**
2. For an increase in vocations to the priesthood: that God will raise up men from our parish, and from all the parishes of our diocese, to serve His people as priests, feeding them with the Bread of Life.  
We pray to the Lord. **R. Lord Hear our Prayer**
3. For the hungry: that Christians everywhere may respond generously to the needs of those affected by famine, hunger, and drought.  
We pray to the Lord. **R. Lord Hear our Prayer**
4. For our beloved dead: that those nourished with the Body and Blood of the Lord in life, may now be granted a place at the table of God's children in heaven.  
We pray to the Lord. **R. Lord Hear our Prayer**

Day Four  
**Tuesday**  
**20th**  
**April**

**A Reading from the Holy Gospel  
According to John**

**6:30-35**

Jesus answered: 'I tell you most solemnly, it was not Moses who gave you bread from heaven, it is my Father who gives you the bread from heaven, the true bread; for the bread of God is that which comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.' 'Sir,' they said, give us that bread always,' Jesus answered: 'I am the bread of life. He who comes to me will never be hungry; he who believes in me will never thirst.'

**St Joseph – “A beloved father” – Pope Francis**

Pope Francis refers to St Joseph's greatness as the husband of the Virgin Mary and the “father” of Jesus. As such he placed himself “at the service of the entire plan of salvation.” As a husband and father, he sacrificed his entire life and all his abilities to God's plan for His people. Many people venerate St Joseph as a father and protector. There are many prayers written in his honour, prayed on Wednesdays and during the month of March in particular. Just as we read in the book of Genesis that the sons of Jacob were told to “Go to Joseph” who was their brother, for the help they needed in a time of famine, Pope Francis invites us to “Go to Joseph” to ask him to intercede for us, his spiritual children.

**Callings**

“What does the Lord require of you,” asks the prophet Micah? Only this: to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God.” Whether we are a doctor or a minister, an artist or a taxi driver, a nanny or a teacher, our fundamental vocation is to become just, loving, and humble persons during our short lives here on this earth. [This] always begins with how we treat our loved ones and the people in the circles of our everyday lives. As we consider our social responsibilities as citizens of our country and our world, though, our callings extend beyond our personal circle to an ever-expanding network of connection and solidarity with people both far and near.

Neafsey, **Calling**, p208, From *A Sacred Voice Is Calling*.

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Mass  
Angelus for Vocations  
Vocation Interview hosted by Bishop Donal McKeown  
Daily Examen  
Rosary for Vocations Sorrowful Mysteries  
Night Prayer

## Mass Tuesday 20th April

### *Introduction:*

In this week of prayer for vocations to the priesthood for our diocese we begin the celebration of Mass aware of the strength of our prayer when grounded in faith and trust in the Risen Lord.

### *Prayer of the faithful*

Sharing in the faith of St Stephen we bring our prayers in confidence before Our Heavenly Father

### Reader:

The response to our intercessions is: Lord hear our Prayer.

1. For Pope Francis, Bishop Donal and all who lead us in our faith, that they may witness the same zeal for spreading the gospel as that of St Stephen....  
We pray to the Lord. **R. Lord Hear our Prayer**
2. That more men and women will joyfully answer the call of the Lord to proclaim His life, death and resurrection as priests and religious....  
We pray to the Lord. **R. Lord Hear our Prayer**
3. For the priests of our diocese: that through their witness and example many young men will follow in their footsteps....  
We pray to the Lord. **R. Lord Hear our Prayer**

4. For all who suffer from sickness, rejection, or persecution; in their suffering may they recognise the love, support and presence of the risen Lord...  
We pray to the Lord. **R. *Lord Hear our Prayer***
  
5. For all our dead, particularly those who served as priests and religious in our diocese; may they hear the words of our merciful saviour 'well done good and faithful servant...'  
We pray to the Lord. **R. *Lord Hear our Prayer***

Heavenly Father give us the courage to live in the spirit of St Stephen, praying every day 'Thy Will be Done.' We make all our prayers to you through Christ our Lord.

# DERRY VOCATIONS

Prayer Booklet

Day Five

Wednesday

21st

April

A Reading from the Holy Gospel

According to John

6:35-40

All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I shall not turn him away; because I have come from heaven, not to do my own will, but to do the will of the one who sent me. Now the will of him who sent me is that I should lose nothing of all that he has given to me and that I should raise it up out he last day.

**St Joseph – a tender and loving father.**

Joseph saw Jesus grow daily ‘in wisdom, in age, in favour with God and with the people around Him.’ St Joseph would have taught the Saviour to walk and talk, to work and play, to grow up as a member of his local and faith communities.

In St Joseph, Jesus would have seen the tender love of God; he would have seen a man of faith who took him to the synagogue where the Scriptures, especially the Psalms, would have spoken to them of a God of tender compassion. Joseph trusted in God’s loving care, despite whatever doubts he may have had, and despite his own weaknesses. Pope Francis reminds us, in his document on St Joseph, that the devil exploits our weaknesses and doubts. He tempts us to judge and criticise other people instead of trying to deal with our own sinfulness and entrusting ourselves to God’s love and mercy.

St Joseph believed that God was working through him in ways that he couldn’t understand. In this, he teaches us to trust that God is with us and is guiding our pathway through life. We may want to be in complete control of everything, but we must remember that God sees the big picture.

### **Work and Prayer**

Work cannot substitute for prayer. Nevertheless, we can learn to make work a prayer. How can we do this? By doing our work with Jesus and for Jesus. That is the way to make our work a prayer. It is possible that I may not be able to keep my attention fully on God while I work, but God does not demand that I do so. Yet I can fully desire and intend that my work be done with Jesus and for Jesus. This is beautiful and that is what God wants - our will and our desire to be for him, for our family, for our children, for our brethren, and for the poor.

Mother Teresa, **Work and Prayer**, p271, from *Mother Teresa: Essential Writings*, edited by Jean Maalouf.

### **Mass**

**Angelus for Vocations**

**Vocation Interview hosted by Bishop Donal McKeown**

**Daily Examen**

**Rosary for Vocations Glorious Mysteries**

**Night Prayer**

## **Mass Wednesday 21st April**

### *Introduction:*

Today's first reading talks of the early Christians who, despite persecution, went about preaching the Good News, a message which was welcomed by many. With the help of the Holy Spirit, they brought not only God's Word, but also the gift of healing. The joy of those new converts is reflected in the response to today's Psalm. We pray that the joy our faith gives us will inspire many young people to follow Jesus, the Bread of Life, by serving Him in the priesthood and religious life.

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*Intercessions:*

Priest:

Trusting in the promise of eternal life for those who know and believe in Jesus, we bring our prayers and needs to the Father.

Reader:

The response to our intercessions is: Lord hear our Prayer.

1. For Pope Francis, for Bishop McKeown, and for all those in positions of leadership and responsibility in the Church today, that they will listen to, and follow the promptings of the Holy Spirit as they guide us in faith.  
We pray to the Lord. **R. *Lord Hear our Prayer***
2. For Christians and others persecuted for their faith, and for all those who are suffering in any way at this time.  
We pray to the Lord. **R. *Lord Hear our Prayer***
3. For the gift of joy as followers of Christ, called to share the Good News of God's love for His people.  
We pray to the Lord. **R. *Lord Hear our Prayer***
4. For an increase in vocations of those called to shepherd the flock of Christ in His name as deacons and priests in the diocese of Derry and throughout the Church, that they may be faithful ministers of the gospel message they preach.  
We pray to the Lord. **R. *Lord Hear our Prayer***
5. For health and healing for our brothers and sisters who are sick at this time, and for those who dedicate their lives to caring for the sick and dying. Response.  
We pray to the Lord. **R. *Lord Hear our Prayer***

Priest:

Loving God, having listened to Your Word, we ask You to strengthen us in our Easter faith, to give us the “Joy of the Gospel” and the strength of the Holy Spirit as we come now to be nourished on Jesus, the Bread of Life. We make these prayers through the same Jesus, Your Son and our Brother, who lives and reigns for ever and ever. Amen.

# DERRY VOCATIONS

Prayer Booklet

Day Six

**Thursday**  
**22nd**  
**April**

## A Reading from the Holy Gospel According to John

6:40-51

Jesus said to the crowd: 'No one can come to me unless he is drawn by the Father who sent me, and I will raise him up at the last day. It is written in the prophets: They will all be taught by the Father, and to learn from it, is to come to me.

## **St Joseph – Obedient Listening**

God spoke to St Joseph on a number of occasions in dreams, to reveal his saving plan to him. When he's confused about Mary's pregnancy, and unsure of what to do, he's assured in a dream that God is at work in his life. Later, in another dream, an angel tells him to take Mary and Jesus to Egypt, to be safe from Herod. In a third dream, an angel advises him that it's safe to return to Israel. While the Holy Family are making their way there, a final dream warns him that, rather than going back to Judea, he should take Mary and Jesus to Galilee, and so they settle in Nazareth. We're told in the Gospels that Jesus "... learned obedience through what he suffered..." It's possible also that he learned obedience from St Joseph, learning to listen to the Father and do His bidding. Through St Joseph's obedience, the child Jesus was saved, so it's true to say, as Pope Francis writes in *Patris Corde*, that St Joseph cooperated fully [through his obedient listening] in the great mystery of salvation.

**Go and Tell**

Eucharist is always mission. The Eucharist that has freed us from our paralysing sense of loss and revealed to us that the Spirit of Jesus lives within us empowers us to go out into the world and to bring good news to the poor, sight to the blind, liberty to captives, and to proclaim that God has once again shown his favour to all people. But we are not sent out alone; we are sent with our brothers and sisters who also know that Jesus lives within them. It belongs to the essence of the Eucharistic life to make this circle of love grow. Having entered into communion with Jesus and created community with those who know that he is alive, we can now go and join the many who travel alone, and help them discover that they too have the gift of love to share... Every time there is a real encounter leading from despair to hope and from bitterness to gratitude, we will see some of the darkness being dispelled and life, once again, breaking through the boundaries of death.

Henri Nouwen, *Go and Tell*, p273, from *With burning Hearts*.

**Mass**

**Angelus for Vocations**

**Vocation Interview hosted by Bishop Donal McKeown**

**Daily Examen**

**Rosary for Vocations Luminous Mysteries**

**Night Prayer**

## **Mass Thursday 22nd April**

### *Introduction:*

In this Novena of Prayer for Vocations, the Liturgy of the Word directs our attention today to the consoling words of Jesus, reminding us that the Father draws us to Christ. It is with open hearts to his word and by living it that we come closer and closer to his Son. This belief, this humble act of faith, leads to eternal life. With such reassurance and confidence, let us open our hearts this day to be drawn to his love and mercy.

### *Prayers of the Faithful:*

Priest:

As Philip led the eunuch to know and love God through the Sacred Scriptures, so too we bring before God our needs and the needs of our world as we pray for that same contemplative wisdom to hear the voice of God calling in our midst.

Reader:

The Response to our intercessions is: Lord hear our Prayer

1. For our Holy Father Pope Francis, that he may continue to lead the Church by his faithful witness of humble service, and that he and all those in Church leadership may continue to draw others to the Father through their faithful example.

We pray to the Lord. **R. Lord Hear our Prayer**

2. For all those who are called to preach the Gospel in parts of our world where there is religious persecution. May their work be rooted in confidence that the Lord is their strength and their might.

We pray to the Lord. **R. Lord Hear our Prayer**

3. For all those who are called to serve God and neighbour in political life. That they may always promote a society that is just, caring and merciful.

We pray to the Lord. **R. Lord Hear our Prayer**

4. For those who have received the Sacrament of Baptism this past Easter, that the grace they have received may bear fruit in their mission in homes, schools and parishes as joyful servants of our loving and merciful Lord.  
We pray to the Lord. **R. *Lord Hear our Prayer***
  
5. For those who are discerning a call to Priesthood and Religious Life. That the example of the eunuch in today's reading may move their hearts to cherish and love God's word and in turn give them an eager longing to share that word with others.  
We pray to the Lord. **R. *Lord Hear our Prayer***
  
6. We pray for the work of vocations leaders and promoters throughout the Diocese of Derry. That their efforts may always be a rich blessing for the life of our diocese, our Church and our world.  
We pray to the Lord. **R. *Lord Hear our Prayer***

Priest:

Lord our God, inspired by the faithfulness of Philip, and by the promise of eternal life from Jesus, may we be drawn closer to you, that we may know, love and serve him always. Hear these prayers which we make as we strive to build your Kingdom of mercy and truth in our world. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

# DERRY VOCATIONS

Prayer Booklet

Day Seven

Friday

23rd

April

**A Reading from the Acts of the Apostles**

**9:1-20**

When he heard that, Ananias said, ‘Lord, several people have told me about this man and all the harm he has been doing to your saints in Jerusalem. He has only come here because he holds a warrant from the chief priests to arrest everybody who invokes your name. The Lord replied, ‘You must go all the same because this man is my chosen instrument to bring my name before pagans and pagan kings and before the people of Israel; I myself will show him how much he himself must suffer for my name.’

In Patris Corde, his document on St Joseph, Pope Francis refers to Joseph’s acceptance of Mary. Trusting in the angel’s words, he showed great respect and sensitivity, even though he didn’t understand the bigger picture. He’s an example to men, especially in today’s world where psychological, verbal and physical violence towards women is so evident. St Joseph’s acceptance may invite us to ask how we react when things happen whose meaning we don’t understand – probably with disappointment and / or rebellion. But St Joseph shows us how to set aside our own feelings, and embrace things as they are. He isn’t passively resigned to his fate, but is courageously and firmly proactive. We can be the same, if we rely on the strength of the Holy Spirit to give us the hope and courage we need. The Lord invited Joseph, as He invites us, not to be afraid but, instead, to accept the way things are, even when they don’t turn out as we would wish. St Paul tells us that “...all things work together for good, for those who love God” (Rom. 8:28). Faith gives meaning to everything, every event, however happy or sad, positive or negative it may be. Just as St Joseph accepted Mary, and embraced everything that was asked of him, we’re invited to accept and welcome others as they are, without exception, and to show particular concern for the weak, the poor, the needy and our more vulnerable brothers and sisters. Following his example, we can love the stranger among us, and be as welcoming and forgiving as the father of the prodigal son.

### **Love Everything**

Love people even in their sin, for that is the semblance of Divine Love, and is the highest love on earth. Love all of God's creation, the whole and every grain of sand of it. Love every leaf, every ray of God's light. Love the animals, love the plants, love everything. If you love everything you will perceive the divine mystery in things. Once you perceive it, you will begin to comprehend it better every day. And you will come at last to love the whole world with an all-embracing love.

Fyodor Dostoyevsky, **Love Everything**, p18 (*The Brothers Karamazov*) from *Lenten Prayers for Busy People*, edited by William J. O'Malley.

### **Mass**

**Angelus for Vocations**

**Vocation Interview hosted by Bishop Donal McKeown**

**Daily Examen**

**Rosary for Vocations Sorrowful Mysteries**

**Night Prayer**

### **Mass Friday 23rd April**

#### *Introduction:*

We are reminded in today's passage from the Acts of the Apostles that, despite his past, Saint Paul had been called to become God's chosen instrument to bring his name before all nations and before the people of Israel. In *Patris Corde*, Pope Francis describes how St Joseph responded to his vocation to accept and support Mary, learning to trust in the angel's words, and how he displayed great respect and sensitivity, even though he didn't understand the bigger picture. We too are God's chosen instruments; we have been entrusted with a unique mission to make God's name known in our time and place. Likewise, we are asked to support, encourage and accompany those who have been chosen to serve God's mission in the Church.

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*Prayer of the Faithful:*

Reader:

The response to our intercessions is: Lord hear our Prayer.

1. For all those chosen by Christ to “prepare the way of the Lord;” may our prayers, encouragement and support help men and women to answer their calling to minister to the People of God.  
We pray to the Lord. ***R. Lord Hear our Prayer***
2. For a deeper trust and openness to the Holy Spirit among those discerning a call to serve Christ in the priesthood or religious life.  
We pray to the Lord. ***R. Lord Hear our Prayer***
3. That during this week of prayer for vocations in the diocese of Derry, every parishioner will be inspired to foster a vocational understanding of life. May the witness of our lives, and our words of invitation and encouragement, help our young people to listen to and answer God’s call.  
We pray to the Lord. ***R. Lord Hear our Prayer***
4. That all the baptised will be encouraged to share in the responsibility of discovering their vocation to follow Christ, either in the priesthood, religious life, single or married life.  
We pray to the Lord. ***R. Lord Hear our Prayer***
5. For a deeper sense of faith, hope and love among all Christians, and for a greater awareness of the richness of every vocation to love Christ, and that more men and women will respond to His invitation to follow Him.  
We pray to the Lord. ***R. Lord Hear our Prayer***

Day Eight  
**Saturday**  
**24th**  
**April**

**A Reading from the Holy Gospel  
According to John**

**6:60-69**

The words I have spoken to you are spirit and they are life. 'But there are some of you who do not believe.' For Jesus knew from the outset those who did not believe, and who it was that would betray him. He went on, 'This is why I told you that no one could come to me unless the Father allows him.' After this, many of his disciples left him and stopped going with him. Then Jesus said to the Twelve, 'What about you, do you want to go away too?' Simon Peter answered, 'Lord, who shall we go to? You have the message of eternal life, and we believe; we know that you are the Holy One of God.'

**St Joseph – *a creatively courageous father.***

If we wish to be like St Joseph in his embracing of things he did not choose, we need to imitate his creative courage, especially in the way we deal with difficulties. The easy thing to do would be to give up and walk away. Or we can choose to engage with the problem, whatever it is. We may even discover qualities and talents we didn't realise we had.

God acts through events and people. In the early years of Jesus' life, God acted repeatedly through St Joseph. Thanks to St Joseph, relying on his faith and his creative courage, both Mary and Jesus were protected in times of danger. If we're tempted to think that the world is at the mercy of the strong and powerful, the "good news" of the Gospel is that God always finds a way to carry out His saving plan, enabling us to turn a problem into a possibility. At times when it seems that God isn't helping us, or that God is staying silent and distant, we shouldn't feel abandoned. Rather we should realise that we're being trusted to plan, to be creative, and to find solutions for ourselves.

# DERRY VOCATIONS

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Pope Francis, writing in *Patris Corde*, invites us to think of the story of the paralytic whose friends had carried him on a stretcher to meet Jesus. When they couldn't get into the house where Jesus was, they got up on the roof, made a hole in it and lowered their friend to the place where Jesus was. Faith, courage and creativity in action!

## **The Heart's Calling**

We discover who we are only by becoming conscious of the most authentic desires, loves, and longings of our hearts. "Who am I? is also close' to another question, "Whose am I?" We come to know ourselves by recognising those to whom we belong. Whom do we love? With whom do we feel at home? To whom does our heart go out? With whose sufferings and aspirations do we most identify? The experience of falling in love, for example, is associated with a profound sense of vocation. There is the issue of the complex interrelationship between our desires and God's desires. In vocational discernment, it is important to pay close attention to our feelings, because authentic callings always begin with a stirring of the heart. Someone or something moves or touches us in some way, and our heart responds with a feeling. We may not, at first, be able to articulate or make sense of our heart's response; we know only that something significant has occurred... "The heart has its reasons," wrote Pascal, "that reason does not know."

John Neafsey, *The Heart's Calling*, p288, from *A Sacred Voice is Calling*.

**Mass**

**Angelus for Vocations**

**Vocation Interview hosted by Bishop Donal McKeown**

**Daily Examen**

**Rosary for Vocations Joyful Mysteries**

**Night Prayer**

## Mass Saturday 24th April

### *Introduction:*

As we come to the end of our week of prayer for vocations to the priesthood in our diocese, we invoke in our Mass today the intercession of our Blessed Mother, Mary.

### *Prayer of the Faithful:*

'Lord, who shall we go to? You have the message of eternal life,' confident that you are the Holy one of God we bring our prayers before you.

### Reader:

The response to our intercessions is: Lord hear our Prayer.

1. As the Church, may we never tire of asking the Lord to send labourers to his harvest.... Lord, hear us.  
We pray to the Lord. **R. Lord Hear our Prayer**
2. That all Catholic mothers will draw close to Mary and encourage their children to be open to the Holy Spirit when God calls them to serve Him and His people in the priesthood or consecrated life.... Lord, hear us.  
We pray to the Lord. **R. Lord Hear our Prayer**
3. For the Priests and religious in our diocese; may they continue to proclaim the good news of the Gospel with zeal, and joyfully renew their 'yes' to Christ's invitation, 'Come Follow Me'.... Lord, hear us.  
We pray to the Lord. **R. Lord Hear our Prayer**
4. For our sick, particularly our priests and religious, and those who suffer with mental illness; may they gain hope in their darkness by uniting their sufferings with Christ on the cross and turn to Mary who will never abandon her sons and daughters.... Lord, hear us.  
We pray to the Lord. **R. Lord Hear our Prayer**

# DERRY VOCATIONS

Prayer Booklet

5. For our beloved dead, for priests religious and all who followed Christ in this life: may they now be united with Him in eternal life.... Lord, hear us.  
We pray to the Lord. **R. *Lord Hear our Prayer***

Lord you have the message of eternal life. Trusting in Your love, we make all our prayers to the Father through You, in the Holy Spirit, God for ever and ever. Amen.

Day Nine  
**Sunday**  
**25th**  
**April**

**A Reading from the Holy Gospel  
According to John**

**10:1-10**

The one who enters through the gate is the shepherd of the flock; the gatekeeper lets him in, the sheep hear his voice; one by one he calls his own sheep and leads them out. When he has brought out his flock, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow because they know his voice. They never follow a stranger but run away from him: they do not recognise the voice of strangers.

**Saint Joseph, Courageous Father**

In “Patris Corde” (‘With a father’s heart’) Pope Francis continues his reflections on St Joseph as a creatively courageous father by talking about how Joseph must have worked to provide for his family as they faced the concrete problems which would have been part and parcel of their life in exile in Egypt. The Pope considers St Joseph to be the special patron of all those forced to leave their native land because of war, hatred, persecution or poverty. St Joseph acts as an obedient son of God, listening as the Lord encourages and inspires him to look after Mary and Jesus, his and our most precious treasure. Just as Joseph guarded, protected and provided for his wife and their Son, we are entrusted with the care and protection of the Body of Christ which is the Church, especially the weakest and most vulnerable of our brothers and sisters. We ask St Joseph to help us in this task. We often call on him as the Protector of the Church, just as we call on Mary as Mother of the Church. If we wish to call ourselves Christians, we cannot fail to show a special love and concern for the unfortunate, the needy, exiles, the afflicted, the poor and the dying. As Jesus says in St Matthew’s gospel (Chapter 25), “As you did this to one of the least of these brothers or sisters of mine, you did it to Me.”

# DERRY VOCATIONS

Prayer Booklet

## **Ministering to Others**

We must continually remind ourselves that every Christian who is baptised into the church is admitted to the royal priesthood of all believers in Christ, and that each of us has a ministry, whether we are young or old, male or female, lay member or clergy. To be a Christian is to follow Jesus Christ's example of ministry, to be God's representative on earth. Each of us has been called by God to love and serve him and our fellow human beings. However sinful rebellious, or inadequate we may feel, we cannot escape God's claim on us... We minister when we pray for others, when we stand before God, holding them in our thoughts. We minister by our presence with another in time of trouble, giving reassurance that the other is not alone in adversity. We minister when we simply listen with a sympathetic ear to one who is full of sorrow and grief; or when we telephone a shut-in just to let someone know that he or she is not forgotten; or when we offer a welcoming smile or a welcoming handclasp to a stranger in our midst... We encounter God in our ministry to others, for only as we love and serve others do we love and serve God... God is to us as our neighbour's hand.

Pauli Murray, **Ministering to Others**, p377, from *Pauli Murray: Selected Sermons and Writings*, edited by Anthony B. Pinn.

**Mass**

**Angelus for Vocations**

**Daily Examen**

**Rosary for Vocations Glorious Mysteries**

**Night Prayer**

## Mass Sunday 25th April

### *Introduction:*

Through the Prophet Jeremiah, God promised to give His people shepherds after His own heart to feed them with knowledge and understanding. Jesus Christ is our Good Shepherd. He is Truth Incarnate, and He feeds us with His very Body and Blood as He leads us on the path to eternal life. Today, in this Mass, we pray that He will raise up shepherds after His own heart to lead and guide His people, the Church.

### *Prayer of the Faithful:*

Reader:

The response to our intercessions is: Lord hear our Prayer.

1. For Francis, our Pope; Donal, our Bishop; and for all bishops, priests, and deacons: that they may be shepherds after the Lord's own heart.

We pray to the Lord. **R. Lord Hear our Prayer**

2. For an increase in vocations to the priesthood: that many more young men will be called to serve as shepherds in the Diocese of Derry.

We pray to the Lord. **R. Lord Hear our Prayer**

3. For an increase in vocations to the religious life: that young men and women may hear the voice of the Good Shepherd calling them to lay down their lives in the service of the Gospel.

We pray to the Lord. **R. Lord Hear our Prayer**

4. That our deceased brothers and sisters who served the Lord as priests and religious may now praise Him for all eternity in heaven.

We pray to the Lord. **R. Lord Hear our Prayer**

# DERRY VOCATIONS

Prayer Booklet

## Prayers

### Derry Diocesan Vocation Prayer

Lord Jesus Christ, gentle shepherd, you know your sheep,  
And you know how to reach their hearts.

Give to the people of the diocese of Derry  
Hearts that are open to the call of the Holy Spirit.

Speak to the hearts of the (young) men of our diocese  
That they may hear your call

To follow you and serve your people as priests.

Awaken in them the courage to answer: 'Here I am, Lord,  
Send me.'

St Eugene, pray for us.

St Columba, pray for us.

St John Vianney, pray for us.

### School Prayer for Vocations - Diocese of Derry

Lord Jesus Christ, gentle shepherd, you know each of us by  
name.

Through Baptism you call us to do something special for you  
with our lives.

Open our hearts to listen to your Holy Spirit within.

Like Mary our Mother, may we have the courage to say yes to  
your call.

We make this prayer through Jesus Christ, our friend and  
brother.

Amen.

### Litany of Saints

Saint Eugene -- Pray for us.

Saint Columba -- Pray for us.

Saint Patrick -- Pray for us.

Saint Brigid -- Pray for us.

**A Parent's Prayer to Saint Joseph**

O glorious St. Joseph, to you God committed the care of His only begotten Son amid the many dangers of this world. We come to you and ask you to take under your special protection the children God has given us. Through holy baptism they became children of God and members of His holy Church. We consecrate them to you today, that through this consecration they may become your foster children. Guard them, guide their steps in life, form their hearts after the hearts of Jesus and Mary.

St. Joseph, who felt the tribulation and worry of a parent when the child Jesus was lost, protect our dear children for time and eternity. May you be their father and counsellor. Let them, like Jesus, grow in age as well as in wisdom and grace before God and men. Preserve them from the corruption of his world, and give us the grace one day to be united with them in Heaven forever.

Amen.

**Prayer to Saint Joseph (Catholic Online Prayers)**

Blessed Joseph, husband of Mary,  
be with us this day.

You protected and cherished the Virgin.

Loving the Child Jesus as your Son,  
you rescued Him from the danger of death.

Defend the Church,  
the household of God,  
purchased by the Blood of Christ.

Guardian of the Holy Family,  
be with us in our trials.

May your prayers obtain for us  
the strength to flee from error  
and wrestle with the powers of corruption  
so that in life we may grow in holiness  
and in death rejoice in the crown of victory.

Amen.

# DERRY VOCATIONS

Prayer Booklet

## **Prayer to Know One's Vocation**

Lord, my God and my loving Father, you have made me to know you, to love you, to serve you, and thereby to find and to fulfil my deepest longings. I know that you are in all things, and that every path can lead me to you.

But of them all, there is one especially by which you want me to come to you. Since I will do what you want of me, I pray you, send your Holy Spirit to me:

into my mind, to show me what you want of me;

into my heart, to give me the determination to do it, and to do it with all my love, with all my mind, and with all of my strength right to the end.

Jesus, I trust in you. Amen.

(Holy Hour for Vocations, USCCB)

**Angelus  
for  
Vocations**

Leader: Let us pray the Angelus as a prayer for a greater awareness of our own vocation, asking for guidance to understand and respond to God's call. As a people, we pray for an increase of vocations, to the priesthood and consecrated life throughout the world. Hopefully, more men and women, will have the courage to follow the call to serve the Christian community.

Leader: The Angel of the Lord declared unto Mary.  
All: *And she conceived of the Holy Spirit.*

All: *Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee; Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, Pray for us sinners, Now and at the hour of our death. Amen.*

Leader: We pray for an increase in vocations throughout the Diocese of Derry. We pray also for our Bishop Donal, our priests and all those called to serve in the Church. May they continue to grow in charity, responding to their calling, by joyfully serving God in all that they say and do. We pray especially for those from our diocese who have begun their journey of formation towards priesthood and the religious life.

# DERRY VOCATIONS

Prayer Booklet

Leader: Behold the handmaid of the Lord.  
**All:** *Be it done unto me according to thy word.*  
**All:** *Hail Mary ...*

Leader: We pray for the men and women of our parish, whom God is inviting to answer his call, to marriage, the single life, the priesthood or the religious life. May they be granted the strength and courage to hear God's call and, through the support of their parish, their family and friends, answer that call with generosity.

Leader: And the Word was made flesh.  
**All:** *And dwelt among us.*  
**All:** *Hail Mary ...*

Leader: Pray for us, O holy Mother of God.  
**All:** *That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.*

Leader: Let us pray.  
**All:** *Pour forth, we beseech thee, O Lord, thy grace into our hearts, that we to whom the incarnation of Christ thy Son was made known by the message of an angel may, by his passion and cross, be brought to the glory of his resurrection. Through the same Christ our Lord. Amen.*

**Rosary  
for  
Vocations**

**Joyful Mysteries**

**The Annunciation**

In the sixth month, the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a town of Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man named Joseph, of the house of David, and the virgin's name was Mary. And coming to her, he said, "Hail, favoured one! The Lord is with you." But she was greatly troubled at what was said and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. Then the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favour with God. Behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall name him Jesus. (Luke 1:26-38)

God, your Word comes to us as a gentle invitation to know you better and to follow your will. Help us to be open to your call in our lives, and, like Mary, to respond to that call with generosity. May we allow your Son to be born into our hearts and dedicate ourselves to you as your servants. Let us offer this decade for those who are being called to serve the Gospel, that following the example of Mary, they will be given the grace to respond whole-heartedly. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Our Father, Hail Mary (10x), Glory be.

**The Visitation**

*During those days Mary set out and travelled in haste to the hill country to a town of Judah, where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the infant leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth, filled with the holy Spirit, cried out in a loud voice and said, "Most blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. And how does this happen to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For at the moment the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the infant in my womb leaped for joy. Blessed are you who believed that what was spoken to you by the Lord would be fulfilled." (Luke 1:39-45)*

# DERRY VOCATIONS

Prayer Booklet

Father in heaven, your Spirit moves our hearts to be filled with love. Help us to seek you through serving our brothers and sisters. Support those who hear your call to overcome their fears and doubts, helping them to lead lives of faithful service. We pray for the grace to follow the example of Mary who immediately responds to God's call with courage and a spirit of compassionate love. Let us offer this decade for those who have been called but are hesitating. May God's grace encourage them to answer the call and help proclaim the good news of the gospel.

Our Father, Hail Mary (10x), Glory be.

## The Birth of the Lord

*In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that the whole world should be enrolled. This was the first enrolment, when Quirinius was governor of Syria. So, all went to be enrolled, each to his own town. And Joseph too went up from Galilee from the town of Nazareth to Judea, to the city of David that is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and family of David, to be enrolled with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. While they were there, the time came for her to have her child, and she gave birth to her firstborn son. She wrapped him in swaddling clothes and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn. (Luke 2:1-7)*

God, your Son became flesh for the salvation of the world. Hear your people as we ask you to raise up in your Church, women and men who will build up your kingdom, by making Jesus present through loving service to others. Jesus comes to us in the midst of a family. Let us offer this decade for all parents that they may provide an atmosphere of love and faith in the home. May parents help foster their children's vocations.

Our Father, Hail Mary (10x), Glory be.

### **The Presentation of the Lord**

*When the days were completed for their purification according to the law of Moses, they took him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord, just as it is written in the law of the Lord, "Every first-born male shall be consecrated to the Lord," and to offer the sacrifice of "a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons," in accordance with law of the Lord... The child's father and mother were amazed at what was said about him; and Simeon blessed them and said to Mary his mother, "Behold, this child is destined for the fall and rise of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be contradicted (and you yourself a sword will pierce) so that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed." (Luke 2:22-35)*

Heavenly Father, as your Son was presented in the Temple, help us to offer to you our lives in response to your call. May those called have the courage to offer the gift of themselves, becoming a sign of the presence of God in our world. Joseph and Mary presented Jesus in the Temple and dedicated Him to God. As parents Joseph and Mary knew their Son was a gift, we pray for parents that they will appreciate the gift of their children and provide them with the wisdom and strength to dedicate their lives to supporting their children and all those in their care.

Our Father, Hail Mary (10x), Glory be.

### **The Finding of Christ in the Temple**

*When his parents saw him, they were astonished, and his mother said to him, "Son, why have you done this to us? Your father and I have been looking for you with great anxiety." And he said to them, "Why were you looking for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?" But they did not understand what he said to them. He went down with them and came to Nazareth and was obedient to them; and his mother kept all these things in her heart. And Jesus advanced in wisdom and age and favour before God and men. (Luke 2:41-52)*

# DERRY VOCATIONS

Prayer Booklet

God our Father help us to discover where you can be found in the routines of life. May your children hear and answer your call, to be the salt of the earth and a light to the world. Help us to find the courage to offer our lives in response to the generous gifts you have given to us. We pray for those parents who find it difficult to understand and support their child's vocation. May they be graced with the faith to support God's will for their children, like Joseph and Mary. Our Father, Hail Mary (10x), Glory be.

## Sorrowful Mysteries

### The Agony in the Garden

*Then they came to a place named Gethsemane, and he said to his disciples, "Sit here while I pray." He took with him Peter, James, and John, and began to be troubled and distressed. Then he said to them, "My soul is sorrowful even to death. Remain here and keep watch." He advanced a little and fell to the ground and prayed that if it were possible the hour might pass by him; he said, "Abba, Father, all things are possible to you. Take this cup away from me, but not what I will but what you will." (Mark 14:32-36)*

Jesus asked His Apostles to pray "that you may not undergo the test." Our Lord knew they needed to pray in order to endure what would soon happen. Let us offer this decade for those men and women whom God is calling to be priests and religious, that they might have a deep and abiding life of prayer. Give to those who hear a call to priesthood and consecrated life the strength and courage to respond to God's will with generosity and love. Our Father, Hail Mary (10x), Glory be...

### **The Scourging at the Pillar**

*Pilate then summoned the chief priests, the rulers, and the people and said to them, "You brought this man to me and accused him of inciting the people to revolt. I have conducted my investigation in your presence and have not found this man guilty of the charges you have brought against him, nor did Herod, for he sent him back to us. So, no capital crime has been committed by him. Therefore, I shall have him flogged and then release him."*  
(Luke 23:13-16)

For our sake Jesus suffered and offered Himself to obtain our salvation. Let us offer this decade, praying for the grace to open the hearts of people, enabling them to offer themselves to God. Lord, we do not always understand the sacrifices made for the sake of the Kingdom. Assist those who are following a vocation to witness to the reign of God, with the courage to endure hardships, and the love necessary to offer their lives generously and willingly to God.  
Our Father, Hail Mary (10x), Glory be...

### **The Crowning with Thorns**

*The soldiers wove a crown out of thorns and placed it on his head, and clothed him in a purple cloak, and they came to him and said, "Hail, King of the Jews!" And they struck him repeatedly. Once more Pilate went out and said to them, "Look, I am bringing him out to you, so that you may know that I find no guilt in him." So Jesus came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple cloak. And he said to them, "Behold, the man!"* (John 19:2-5)

Jesus endured the terrible ridicule and mockery of the soldiers even to the point of accepting the painful crown of thorns. Let us offer this decade for those who find it difficult to say "yes" to God, because of fear or other painful obstacles in their lives. May we hear God's call to serve his people, especially through the witness of our lives.  
Our Father, Hail Mary (10x), Glory be.

# DERRY VOCATIONS

Prayer Booklet

## **Jesus Carries His Cross**

*So, they took Jesus, and carrying the cross himself he went out to what is called the Place of the Skull, in Hebrew, Golgotha. (John 19:16-17).*

On the way to Calvary, our Lord found comfort and assistance from a number of people: Simon of Cyrene, the women of Jerusalem, His Mother, and Veronica. How much those acts of love must have meant to Jesus! Let us offer this decade for the grace to always support, with our prayers and sacrifices, those whom God is calling to serve his people. Our Father, Hail Mary (10x), Glory be...

## **The Crucifixion**

*It was nine o'clock in the morning when they crucified him. The inscription of the charge against him read, "The King of the Jews." With him they crucified two revolutionaries, one on his right and one on his left. (Mark 15:22-27)*

At the foot of the Cross, there came into existence a new type of family. Before Jesus died, He entrusted to the maternal care of Mary all of humanity, represented in the person of the "beloved disciple." Through the New Covenant the notion of family is greatly enlarged, it takes on a different dimension. Let us offer this decade for those who are being called to build up the Christian family. Lord, inspire more young people to respond to your call to service in the Church with lives of total dedication to your people. Our Father, Hail Mary (10x), Glory be...

## **Glorious Mysteries**

### **The Resurrection of the Lord**

*Then the angel said to the women in reply, “Do not be afraid! I know that you are seeking Jesus the crucified. He is not here, for he has been raised just as he said. Come and see the place where he lay. Then go quickly and tell his disciples, ‘He has been raised from the dead, and he is going before you to Galilee; there you will see him.’ Behold, I have told you.” (Matthew 28:1-7)*

Our Lord’s Resurrection brought tremendous joy to His sorrowful followers. Never were their lives to be the same again. Let us offer this decade for an increase in grace in the hearts of those who are being called to share in the mission of the Church. May they experience the immense joy of giving God their entire lives by saying “yes” to His call. Help them to realize that their unselfish response to God will change their lives forever.

Our Father, Hail Mary (10x), Glory be ...

### **The Ascension of the Lord**

*When he had said this, as they were looking on, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him from their sight. While they were looking intently at the sky as he was going, suddenly two men dressed in white garments stood beside them. They said, “Men of Galilee, why are you standing there looking at the sky? This Jesus who has been taken up from you into heaven will return in the same way as you have seen him going into heaven.” Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a sabbath day’s journey away. (Acts 1:6-12)*

# DERRY VOCATIONS

Prayer Booklet

Jesus ascended into Heaven, not to abandon us, but to be our hope. He continually intercedes for us before the Father and prepares a place for His faithful followers. Heavenly Father, Jesus has promised to remain with His Church until the end of time. May those who are called to continue His work through the sacraments and holy witness be strengthened to carry out your will for the Church.

Our Father, Hail Mary (10x), Glory be...

## **The Descent of the Holy Spirit**

*When the time for Pentecost was fulfilled, they were all in one place together. And suddenly there came from the sky a noise like a strong driving wind, and it filled the entire house in which they were. Then there appeared to them tongues as of fire, which parted and came to rest on each one of them. And they were all filled with the holy Spirit and began to speak in different tongues, as the Spirit enabled them to proclaim.” (Acts 2:1-7,11)*

The coming of the Holy Spirit transformed the timid apostles into bold witnesses for the Gospel. The Church was sent forth with courage and zeal. Let us offer this decade for the gift of the Holy Spirit to come upon all He has chosen to labour as priests and religious. May they respond boldly to the invitation to lay down their lives for Christ and His Church. May that Holy Spirit always be active in our lives.

Our Father, Hail Mary (10x), Glory be...

## **Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary**

*A great sign appeared in the sky, a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars. She was with child and wailed aloud in pain as she laboured to give birth. (Revelation 12:1)*

The Second Vatican Council reminded us that Mary's role in salvation history did not end with her Assumption into Heaven. She continually intercedes for all of us, her children, as we journey through life. Let us offer this decade asking Mary's intercession. Heavenly Father help us to realise that you have a plan for each of our lives and that our happiness lies in discovering and following that plan.  
Our Father, Hail Mary (10x), Glory be...

**The Coronation of Mary, Queen of Heaven and Earth**

*And Mary said: "My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord; my spirit rejoices in God my saviour. For he has looked upon his handmaid's lowliness; behold, from now on all ages will call me blessed. The Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name. His mercy is from age to age to those who fear him." (Luke 1:46-55)*

This mystery brings before us the faithfulness of Mary, the first disciple of the Lord. She who referred to herself as the "handmaid of the Lord" is now exalted far above even the Angels. The one who said "yes" to God in all things is now the Queen of heaven and earth. Let us offer this decade for those who have been called to serve. Heavenly Father, it is in humility that we discover how truly great our vocation is. Help us to serve you in humble ways so that others may see your light, rather than ours.  
Our Father, Hail Mary (10x), Glory be...

# DERRY VOCATIONS

Prayer Booklet

## Luminous Mysteries

(The Mysteries of Light)

### The Baptism of the Lord

*It happened in those days that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized in the Jordan by John. On coming up out of the water he saw the heavens being torn open and the Spirit, like a dove, descending upon him. And a voice came from the heavens, "You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased." (Mark 1:9-11)*

Lord God, in our Baptism you have given each of us a unique vocation. Help us to live lives of holiness and dedication to you. May we always seek to do your will and be found worthy to hear that you are well pleased with us. Let us offer this decade for those called to the priesthood and religious life but are afraid to answer because of what others may say or think. Grant them courage, O Lord, to accept the mission You are giving them.

Our Father, Hail Mary (10x), Glory be...

### The Wedding at Cana

*On the third day there was a wedding in Cana in Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. Jesus and his disciples were also invited to the wedding. When the wine ran short, the mother of Jesus said to him, "They have no wine." and Jesus said to her, "Woman, how does your concern affect me? My hour has not yet come." His mother said to the servers, "Do whatever he tells you." (John 2:1-3)*

Through the intercession of Mary, Jesus transforms ordinary water into extraordinary wine. What incredible things God's grace can do in our lives! Let us offer this decade for those who are being called but doubt that they have much to offer. May they trust in the power of God to bring all things to completion, and say "yes" to His call.

Our Father, Hail Mary (10x), Glory be...

**The Proclamation of the Kingdom**

*After John had been arrested, Jesus came to Galilee proclaiming the gospel of God: "This is the time of fulfillment. The kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel." (Mark 1:14-15)*

Our Lord begins His public ministry by announcing the arrival of the Kingdom of God. What joyous news this is for all humanity to hear! Let us offer this decade for an increase in vocations that there might be many more women and men who will joyfully proclaim this truth and bear witness to it with their lives.

Our Father, Hail Mary (10x), Glory be...

**The Transfiguration of the Lord**

*After six days Jesus took Peter, James, and John and led them up a high mountain apart by themselves. And he was transfigured before them, and his clothes became dazzlingly whiter than any fuller on earth could bleach them... Then a cloud came, casting a shadow over them; then from the cloud came a voice, "This is my beloved Son. Listen to him." (Mark 9:2-8)*

Let us offer this decade for all those who are being called that they may have the grace to recognize God's call in the midst of their lives and courageously accept their call to pick up their cross and follow Him their Lord and their God.

Our Father, Hail Mary (10x), Glory be...

# DERRY VOCATIONS

Prayer Booklet

## **The Institution of the Eucharist**

*While they were eating, he took bread, said the blessing, broke it, and gave it to them, and said, "Take it; this is my body."  
Then he took a cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them, and they all drank from it. He said to them, "This is my blood of the covenant, which will be shed for many. Amen, I say to you, I shall not drink the fruit of the vine again until the day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God." (Mark 14:22-25)*

In the Eucharist we receive the fullness of God's life and love; We ask God to send more faithful servants of this mystery to serve in the Church, and raise up new priests to renew this Sacrament of love. May God call many more to share in the Priesthood and may they respond generously.  
Our Father, Hail Mary (10x), Glory be...  
Hail Holy Queen...

## **Concluding Prayer**

Let us pray: O God, whose only-begotten Son, by his life, death and resurrection, has purchased for us the rewards of eternal life, grant, we beseech Thee, that by meditating on these holy mysteries of the Most Holy Rosary of the Blessed Virgin Mary, we may both imitate what they contain and obtain what they promise, through the same Christ our Lord. Amen.

## **Daily Examen**

More than four hundred years ago, St. Ignatius of Loyola, created the Daily Examen as a way of bringing each day before God. The Examen invites us to reflect on how God has been present in each day, especially through the events we experience and the people we meet. This is our chance to realise that God is not relegated to the far beyond but can be found in the middle of our lives. There is nothing too great or too small that we cannot bring before God. Prayer is a time to reconnect with God, to come face to face with the God who loves us. As we recognise how Jesus walks with us, we confess our hopes and dreams, our hurts and failings. This time of prayer is a chance to ask ourselves how we have honestly responded to God's invitation to use our time, talents and personality to answer his call and walk the path, which helps us to become the person God created us to be.

1. Beginning Prayer
2. Thanksgiving
3. Pray for a "Spirit of truth."
4. Review
5. Forgiveness & Renewal

# DERRY VOCATIONS

Prayer Booklet

## 1. Beginning Prayer.

*I have set the LORD always before me. Because he is at my right hand, I will not be shaken. (Psalm 16:8)*

Take a few moments to rest easy and quiet down, to discover how God has walked with you every step of the way during this day, and to open yourself to God's friendship. Can you accept that each day is a gift from God, a time and space to grow, to love, and to wrestle with your hopes and dreams. Remember, God who is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit wants you to know the joy of being truly loved and accepted for who you are. *'God's love is boundless... All our life is placed under the gaze of the God who loves us. How many pages of the Sacred Scriptures speak to us of God's presence, closeness and tenderness for every person, especially for the smallest, the poor and the troubled! The greater our need, the more His gaze upon us is filled with mercy. He feels compassion and pity towards us because He knows our weaknesses.'* - Pope Francis

## 2. Thanksgiving.

*Hope in God; for I shall again praise him, my salvation and my God (Psalm 42:11).*

Reflect, moment by moment, and hour by hour, recognising the opportunities and challenges, which moulded your day. Can you give thanks for the people and encounters which have shaped your day? Ask yourself: What do you notice? Are you aware of how God worked in and around you today? How have you responded to God's voice calling you? Can you pray for help to hear and answer the voice of the Spirit speaking through the routine of each day? Can you also learn to appreciate the wonder of the person God created you to be? *"You learn to speak by speaking, to study by studying, to run by running, to work by working, and just so, you learn to love by loving. All those who think to learn in any other way deceive themselves."* - St. Francis de Sales.

**3. Pray for a “Spirit of truth.”**

*“The Lord is close to the broken-hearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit.” (Psalm 34:18)*

Pray for honesty as you recall the past day and recall your words and actions. Think about where you experienced God’s presence during this time. What thoughts and feelings did you experience in your dealings with others: peace, love, joy, compassion, anger, frustration, hurt, kindness or forgiveness? You might ask: How are you feeling right now? Why? What are you thinking, right now? Why? Is this leading you to God or away from God? Where was God present to you today?

*‘Christ be with me, Christ within me, Christ behind me, Christ before me, Christ beside me, Christ to win me, Christ to comfort and restore me, Christ beneath me, Christ above me, Christ in quiet, Christ in danger, Christ in hearts of all that love me, Christ in mouth of friend and stranger.’ - St. Patrick*

**4. Review.**

*God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble” (Psalm 46:1).*

In light of what you experienced today, ask how have you tried to respond to God’s presence? In this light, what got you down, what made you happy? Recognise the occasions when you got frustrated or times when you felt contented. Can you name the times and occasions when you were there for others, when you reached out to help and dared to offer a word of kindness or an act of generosity? What barriers prevented you from helping others, from respecting others or yourself? For what do you need to express sorrow? Where have you struggled to be helpful or patient? In the heat of the day were you able to recognise God’s presence and appreciate all his gifts?

*To your enemy — forgiveness. To your opponent — tolerance.  
To a friend — your heart. To a customer — service.  
To all people — charity. To every child — a good example  
To yourself — respect. - Unknown.*

# DERRY VOCATIONS

Prayer Booklet

## 5. Forgiveness & Renewal.

*‘He heals the broken-hearted and binds up their wounds’ (Psalm 147:3).*

Aware of what’s happening in your life, conscious of your thoughts and feelings, mindful of your successes or failings, image having a face-to-face exchange with Jesus. What would you say to him, what would you ask for? Would it be forgiveness, support or reassurance? What do you need to hear from Jesus? A word of guidance, a sense of acceptance and healing, an awareness of his ever-caring presence? Can you place yourself and all the people you’ll meet today in God’s hands, allowing Jesus to guide you towards true happiness and peace? You are loved as a child of God and precious in his sight; listen to his voice calling you to become the person you were created to be.

*Each new day is a new beginning -  
to learn more about ourselves,  
to care more about others,  
to laugh more than we did,  
to accomplish more than we thought we could,  
and be more than we were before.  
- Unknown.*

**Acknowledge-  
ments  
Vocation  
Week  
2021**

**God's-call.com**

(Rosary reflections adapted from God's-call.com)

**Integrated Catholic Life.org**

**Maryknoll Book of Inspiration, Readings for Every Day of the Year, Michael Leach and Doris Goodnough, Editors, Orbis Books, New York, 2010.**

National Vocations Office. vocations.org

**Patris Corde”**

(‘With a Father’s heart.’) Reflections by Fr Pat O’Hagan PP.

**The Holy See. vatican.va**

**Today’s Catholic Teacher by Holy Spirit School, Annandale, Virginia.**

**ukvocation.org**

**USCCB - Unites States Conference of Catholic Bishops**

[www.derryvocations.org](http://www.derryvocations.org)  
[www.derrydiocese.org](http://www.derrydiocese.org)

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