

Everything I need to know about my faith I learned before Confirmation

by Mary Sharon Moore

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The task is to bring in the numbers, but it feels more like pulling teeth. I'm speaking about parish adult faith formation programs, and I know the agony of the assignment firsthand.

The truth is, we don't know everything we need to know about our Christian faith and the mystery of our life in God.

One serious challenge that affects a parish's efforts to call forth vocations is a widespread notion that the deposit of faith we received in grade school is enough to sustain our complex lives as Christ-centered adults living in a spiritually noisy and complex world.

Not surprisingly, parishioners sometimes feel lost—betrayed, even—and spiritually disoriented when the mystery of God slices through their lives. The intrusion seems so personal—and that is exactly the point.

Vocation, God's personal calling, has everything to do with all of these things—the deposit of faith, the Church's understanding of its role in today's world, the mystery of God slicing through our lives.

Vocation discernment, or the discovery of how God is uniquely and irresistibly calling me to be most fulfilled, most conformed to Christ, most alive in the life of the Holy Trinity, in this time and place, is a process that starts with baptism, for infants, and with the lure and inquiry that leads to baptism for adults.

So the process of vocational awareness comes about in a much more organic way than any program can encompass. As Christian community we pledge to the newly baptized that we will journey with them through this mystery of life.

Coming to vocational awareness is the journey. We do it as a community or we don't do it at all.

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