

Vocational Guide Formation Workshop

*A one-day workshop and practicum,
with support materials.*

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Prerequisites for the workshop

- The “Awakening Vocations” workshop,
and
- The “Called and Gifted” workshop
*(available on CD from the Catherine of Siena
Institute, www.siena.org).*

Also desirable are

- Participation in the life of the parish;
- A personal orientation toward vocational discernment;
- Ability to recognize and discern charisms; and
- A prayer life reflective of mature Christian faith.

Charisms most helpful in vocational guidance

- Wisdom;
- Encouragement;
- Evangelism.

Vocational guides are able to

- Competently help young adults, neophytes, and those at change points in life to address the questions:
 - To what *lifestyle* might God be calling me to best *become* the person God most desires?
 - To what *ministry or mission* might God be calling and gifting me to *participate* in the Church's mission?

- Listen to the Holy Spirit within those discerning God's calling;
- Be able to explain the basic principles of vocational discernment, applied to lifestyle and ministry or mission;
- Identify and call forth charisms within individuals for further development; and
- Help participants, especially young adults, to stay with the process and not focus on "career."

Vocational guides

- Do *not* provide spiritual direction;
- *Do* provide listening, insight, and encouragement in a fellow parishioner's vocational discernment process.

Vocational guides are

- Persons of prayer;
- Persons of mature Christian faith;
- Persons already sought out for their experience, insight, and counsel;
- Persons who protect confidential material under all circumstances.

Vocational guides optimally are gifted in

- *Wisdom*: The capacity to see the situation of another from that person's perspective, to see the piece that is missing or needing to be addressed, and to suggest the practical means to meet the need.

- *Encouragement*: The capacity to see when another is not at ease or not free to be their fullest self, and sets the other person at ease through words of encouragement and presence.

- *Evangelism*: The capacity to perceive how another is to be challenged to take relationship with God and with Jesus Christ more seriously, in a way that moves the other to deepen that relationship and orient one's life toward that relationship.

2. PRACTICUM

What we will cover . . .

- Points to remember in a discernment session;
- Seven questions of vocational discernment;
- Process for the discernment session
- Behind the discernment questions;
- Suggested room set-up and format;
- Tips for deeper listening;
- Vocational guide support group.

Points to remember

- I am *not* helping a fellow parishioner to “decide” on a vocation.
- I am *not* here to “give answers.”

- I *am* here to help a fellow parishioner to ask the right questions, and to act, discern, and listen faithfully.
- I *am* here to provide insight, encouragement, and a fresh kindling of faith.

- What this person shares is strictly confidential.
- I am committed to supporting this fellow parishioner in prayer in this discernment of the mystery of God's calling.

Seven questions of vocational discernment

1. The vocational lifestyle, or ministry or mission, that I am discerning . . .
2. Where I am with it in process . . .
3. Where I am with it spiritually . . .
4. How this discernment shapes my prayer . . .

- For the first session, begin with Question 1 on the “Seven Steps in My Vocational Discernment” sheet.
- For subsequent sessions, briefly recap what you have covered in the previous meeting; ask if there is anything further the individual would like to add, and then continue with the next question.

Vocational Guide group support

- The parish's vocational discernment team may wish to meet occasionally for:
 - Prayer and spiritual enrichment,
 - Guided conversation,
 - Ongoing formation, and
 - Mutual encouragement.

Elements of the gathering may include

- Welcome by the gathering's leader and a brief "check in" on how each member is doing.
- *Lectio divina* (a slow, repeated reading and silent savoring of a small portion of Scripture, plus a sharing of a meaningful word or image) .

(Note: Again, Matthew 10:19-20 can be helpful.)