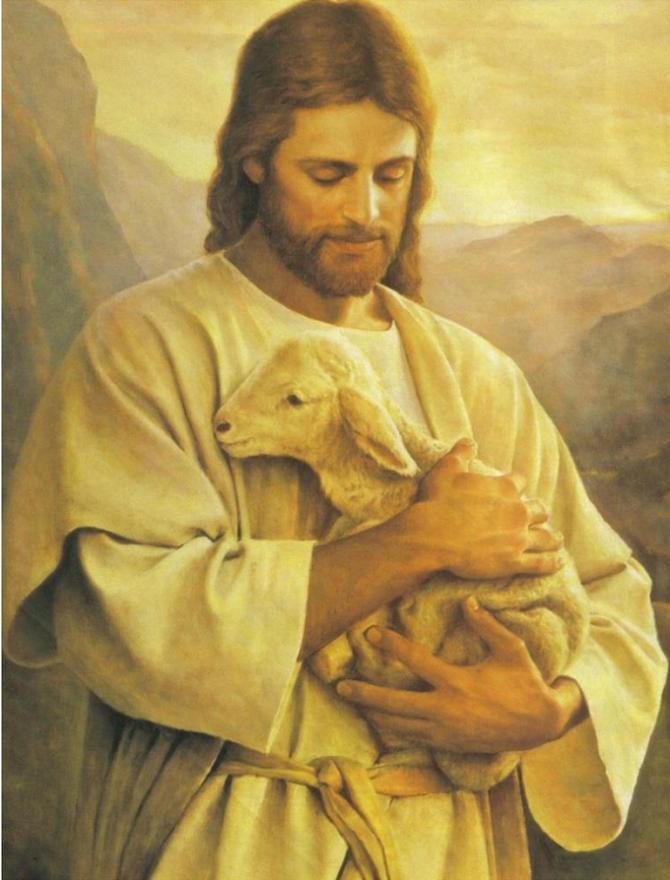


Vocations Icon Resource Booklet



Thank you for offering to pray for vocations.
We encourage you to share this practice with others.

Fall, 2016 rev. 1

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Please use this booklet to help your family pray for vocations during the week. Consider spending 5 minutes each day as a household answering the questions of the day. Each weekday also has an optional activity to complete. This booklet also includes many resources in the back for learning more about vocations and fostering vocations with your family and our community. Thank you for participating in this valuable ministry!

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After your week of prayers, please return the Vocation Icon at any Mass of the following weekend. Simply place the Icon on the table with the white crystal bowls (behind the last row of pews inside the main sanctuary doors).

You may also give the Icon to one of the Vocation Team members in the narthex (they are often holding an icon for promotion). If you are not able to attend Mass the following weekend, you may return the Icon to the parish office. We hope that having the Vocation Icon in your home is a blessing for your family and we thank you for participating in this valuable ministry of prayer for Church vocations.

A copy of this booklet can be found at www.gsc.net/vocations

SUNDAY

Isaiah 6:8

Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send?
Who will go for us?" "Here I am;" I said; "send me!"

Questions

- 1) When have you heard the voice of the Lord speaking to you?
- 2) When is a time that you have responded to the voice of God?
How did you respond?

Please pray today for our seminarian from GSCC: **Eric Flores**.

Lord Jesus, you are the Good Shepherd, who cares for and raises up men and women to follow your lead as priests and consecrated religious. Grace our parish with many new church vocations, granting courage and generosity to our young people in response to the promptings of your Holy Spirit. May they know the support of their families and our community. Strengthen too those who have already responded to you as priests, deacons, religious and seminarians. May they constantly be strengthened by our prayers and support for them. We thank you Jesus for your continual faithfulness in all our lives. Amen.



Mr. Eric Flores
St. Joseph Seminary College
75376 River Road
St. Benedict, LA 70459

MONDAY

Jeremiah 1: 4-8

The word of the Lord came to me thus: Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I dedicated you, a prophet to the nations I appointed you. "Ah, Lord God!" I said, "I know not how to speak; I am too young." But the Lord answered me, Say not, "I am too young," To whomever I send you, you shall go; whatever I command you, you shall speak. Have no fear before them, because I am with you to deliver you, says the Lord.

Questions

- 1) Since you have been dedicated by God who knows you, how do you live out this call in your life?
- 2) Why is it so easy for us to make excuses, convincing ourselves of why we cannot respond to God's invitation in our lives?

Activity

Spend a few minutes browsing around one or more websites related to Church vocations. Below are suggestions, more are listed on page 26.

www.franciscanstor.org
www.franciscansisterstor.org
www.fwdioc.org
www.cmswr.org

Please pray today for religious in formation from GSCC: Rev. Bro. Jonathan Ulrick, OFM Cap., Sr. Mary Avila (AnnElise) Corpany, OP., Bro. Greg Dunn, Nathan Pinto, Michael Ingram.

Lord Jesus, you are the Good Shepherd, who cares for and raises up men and women to follow your lead as priests and consecrated religious. Grace our parish with many new church vocations, granting courage and generosity to our young people in response to the promptings of your Holy Spirit. May they know the support of their families and our community. Strengthen too those who have already responded to you as priests, deacons, religious and seminarians. May they constantly be strengthened by our prayers and support for them. We thank you Jesus for your continual faithfulness in all our lives. Amen.

Address for the above mentioned vocations can be found on page #16. Please feel free to write a short note of encouragement to each of them.

TUESDAY

Luke 4:18

“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
because he has anointed me
to bring glad tidings to the poor.
He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives
and recovery of sight to the blind,
to let the oppressed go free, and to proclaim
a year acceptable to the Lord.”

Questions

- 1) How do you recognize the Spirit of the Lord upon you?
- 2) What gifts of the Holy Spirit do you think you have been given and how can you use these to share the gospel?

Activity

Write a note of encouragement (perhaps send a care package or include a gift card) to one or more seminarians or religious. For addresses, see page 7, 11 or 18.

Please pray today for all seminarians in the Diocese of Fort Worth.
(Addresses in back of booklet pg. 15, bold are from GSCC.)

St. Joseph Seminary

Collin Becker
Ricardo Diaz
Eric Flores
Benjamin Grothouse
Joseph Hoffschwelle
Cody Honkomp
David La Pointe
Brandon LeClair
Harrison Lewis
David Molinar
Jose Morales
Hai Nguyen
Diego Soto-Deniz
Benjamin Vina

Assumption Seminary

Randolph Hopkins
Pedro Martinez
Samuel Maul
Joseph Moreno
Linh Nguyen

Catholic University of America

Jason Allen
Jeffrey Ambreit-Quepons
Jonathan Demma
William Hayes
Austin Hoodenpyle
Brett Metzler
Maurice Moon
Rijo Philip

St. Mary's Seminary

Rev. Mr. Stephen Hauck

**Sacred Heart School of
Theology**

Rev. Mr. John Martin

Pastoral Year

Kevin Hathaway
Thomas Jones

Lord Jesus, you are the Good Shepherd, who cares for and raises up men and women to follow your lead as priests and consecrated religious. Grace our parish with many new church vocations, granting courage and generosity to our young people in response to the promptings of your Holy Spirit. May they know the support of their families and our community. Strengthen too those who have already responded to you as priests, deacons, religious and seminarians. May they constantly be strengthened by our prayers and support for them. We thank you Jesus for your continual faithfulness in all our lives. Amen.

WEDNESDAY

Philippians 1:9-11

And this is my prayer: that your love may increase ever more and more in knowledge and every kind of perception, to discern what is of value, so that you may be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ for the glory and praise of God.

Questions

- 1) St. Paul prays for his readers to increase in love that they may discern what is of value. What people, things or actions do you place a high value on?
- 2) Try making a list of what you value, ranking the most important to the least important.

Activity

Submit to Fr. Jonathan (jmcelhone@gsc.net) one or two names of people from GSCC whom you think may have a vocational call to become a priest or consecrated religious.

Please pray today for the TOR Franciscan Friars, in formation.

Rev. Br. James Puglis, TOR
Br. Nathan Meckey, TOR
Br. Vincent Yeager, TOR
Br. David Dodd, TOR
Br. Marius Strom, TOR
Br. Elijah Cleary, TOR
Br. Daniel Klimek, TOR
Br. Joseph Murtha, TOR

Rev. Br. Jason Wooleyhan, TOR
Br. Rufino Corona, TOR
Br. Zackary Burns, TOR
Br. Stephen Waruszewski, TOR
Br. Joseph Marie Krilich, TOR
* **Michael Ingram**
* Tyson Murphy
* Kolbe Spencer

Lord Jesus, you are the Good Shepherd, who cares for and raises up men and women to follow your lead as priests and consecrated religious. Grace our parish with many new church vocations, granting courage and generosity to our young people in response to the promptings of your Holy Spirit. May they know the support of their families and our community. Strengthen too those who have already responded to you as priests, deacons, religious and seminarians. May they constantly be strengthened by our prayers and support for them. We thank you Jesus for your continual faithfulness in all our lives. Amen.

Franciscan Friars, TOR
St. Louis Friary
831 Varnum St. NE.
Washington, DC 20017

Men with * at this address

Bonaventure Hall
P.O. Box 155
Loretto, PA 19540

THURSDAY

Mark 1:17-20

Jesus said to them, “Come after me, and I will make you fishers of men.” Then they left their nets and followed him. He walked along a little farther and saw James, the son of Zebedee, and his brother John. They too were in a boat mending their nets. Then he called them. So they left their father Zebedee in the boat along with the hired men and followed him.

Questions

- 1) How have you heard Jesus calling you to follow him?
- 2) What might you need to leave behind to respond to him?

Activity

Explore the life of one or more saints to learn about their vocation, how God called them, and how they lived out their life.

Bonus: have each household member prepare a few minute presentation for the rest of the members, each sharing about a different saint and what they discovered.

Please pray today for all women and men in religious formation.

Lord Jesus, you are the Good Shepherd, who cares for and raises up men and women to follow your lead as priests and consecrated religious. Grace our parish with many new church vocations, granting courage and generosity to our young people in response to the promptings of your Holy Spirit. May they know the support of their families and our community. Strengthen too those who have already responded to you as priests, deacons, religious and seminarians. May they constantly be strengthened by our prayers and support for them. We thank you Jesus for your continual faithfulness in all our lives. Amen.

FRIDAY

Ephesians 4:1-6

I, then, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to live in a manner worthy of the call you have received, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another through love, striving to preserve the unity of the spirit through the bond of peace: one body and one Spirit, as you were also called to the one hope of your call; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

Questions

- 1) The virtues of humility, gentleness, patience and love help everyone to embrace their own vocation. What are ways that you can foster these virtues?
- 2) St. Paul presents ideals to live by. What ideals can you strive to live by that may help you discover or embrace your own vocation?

Activity

Make a collage composed of priests, brothers and sisters from different religious communities or diocese. Can you name the religious communities they belong to?

Please pray for all Diocesan Priests and Deacons.

Lord Jesus, you are the Good Shepherd, who cares for and raises up men and women to follow your lead as priests and consecrated religious. Grace our parish with many new church vocations, granting courage and generosity to our young people in response to the promptings of your Holy Spirit. May they know the support of their families and our community. Strengthen too those who have already responded to you as priests, deacons, religious and seminarians. May they constantly be strengthened by our prayers and support for them. We thank you Jesus for your continual faithfulness in all our lives. Amen.

* Please contact Fr. Jonathan at jmcelhone@gsc.net or at (817) – 421–1387 with the names of persons from our parish that you believe may have a vocation to the priesthood or diaconate.

SATURDAY

Ephesians 3: 7-10

Of this I became a minister by the gift of God's grace that was granted me in accord with the exercise of his power. To me, the very least of all the holy ones, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the inscrutable riches of Christ, and to bring to light for all what is the plan of the mystery hidden from ages past in God who created all things, so that the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known through the church.

Questions

- 1) Who have you shared your Catholic faith with? How did you share your faith with them?
- 2) Who can you share the light of Christ with? Try to make a plan on how you can do this.

Please pray today for all Consecrated Religious

Lord Jesus, you are the Good Shepherd, who cares for and raises up men and women to follow your lead as priests and consecrated religious. Grace our parish with many new church vocations, granting courage and generosity to our young people in response to the promptings of your Holy Spirit. May they know the support of their families and our community. Strengthen too those who have already responded to you as priests, deacons, religious and seminarians. May they constantly be strengthened by our prayers and support for them. We thank you Jesus for your continual faithfulness in all our lives. Amen.

* Please contact Fr. Jonathan at jmcelhone@gsc.net or at (817) – 421–1387 with the names of persons from our parish that you believe may have a vocation to the consecrated religious life.

Diocese of Ft. Worth

Vocations Director

Contact: **Rev. James Wilcox** ... FrWilcox@fwdioc.org
... 817-945-9320

Webpage – www.fwdioc.org/vocations-about

Addresses for Ft. Worth Diocesan Seminarians

Assumption Seminary
2600 W. Woodlawn Avenue
San Antonio, TX 78228-5196

St. Mary's Seminary
9845 Memorial Drive
Houston, TX 77024

**Sacred Heart School of
Theology**
7335 S. Highway 100
Hales Corner, WI 53120

Theological College
401 Michigan Avenue, N.E.
Washington, D. C. 20017

St. Joseph Seminary College
75376 River Road
St. Benedict, LA 70459

Franciscan Friars, T. O. R.

Contact: **Fr. Jonathan McElhone, TOR** ... 817-421-1387 ext. 220
... jmcelhone@gsc.net

Contact: **Fr. Benedict Jurchak, TOR (vocations director):**
... vocations@franciscanstor.org
... 814.419.8889

Webpage – www.franciscanstor.org

Addresses for Vocations from GSCC



Rev. Bro. Jonathan Ulrick, OFM Cap.
St. Augustine Friary
221 36th Street
Pittsburgh, PA 15201
([www. Capuchin.com](http://www.Capuchin.com))



Sr. Mary Avila Corpany, OP
Dominican Sisters of Mary, Mother of the Eucharist
4597 Warren Road,
Ann Arbor, MI 48105
([www. Sistersofmary.org](http://www.Sistersofmary.org))



Bro. Greg Dunn, OP
St. Albert the Great Priory
3150 Vince Hagan Drive
Irving, TX 75062
([www. Dominicanfriars.org](http://www.Dominicanfriars.org))



Michael Ingram
Franciscan Friars, TOR
P.O. Box 155
Loretto, PA 19540
(www.Franciscanstor.org)



Nathan Pinto
Creighton Preparatory School
7400 Western Avenue
Omaha, NE 68114-1833
(www.jesuits.org)



Eric Flores
St. Joseph Seminary College
75376 River Road
St. Benedict, LA 70459

CLERGY AND RELIGIOUS STATISTICS

*These facts are for year 2015 unless otherwise noted.

Priests/Religious

There are 37,578 diocesan and religious-order priests in the United States.

- 25,868 diocesan priests.
- 11,710 religious-order priests (Franciscans, Dominicans, Jesuits, etc.)
- 515 new priests ordained in 2015.
- 24,808 active priests and 12,770 retired priests.

There are 48,546 Religious Women and 4,200 Religious Men.

Seminarians

There are 5,098 seminarians enrolled in the United States.

- 3,650 enrolled in diocesan seminaries.
- 1,448 enrolled in religious-order seminaries.

Permanent Deacons

There are 18,082 men who have been ordained as permanent deacons in the United States.

Parishes in the USA

There are 17,337 parishes and about 3,533 of them are without a resident priest. It is estimated that there are about 81,600,000 Catholics in the USA giving an average of 1 priest per 2,200 (in the diocese of Fort Worth it is closer to 1 priest per 7,000 Catholics.)

Sacraments celebrated in the USA (2014)

- Baptisms 803,123.
- First Holy Communion 726,887.
- Confirmations 566,143
- Marriages 148,134
- Funerals 391,131

For Parents - FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is the role of parents in encouraging vocations?

Ultimately you love and support them. The grace that God gives parents is what best nourishes and supports the young person. Thinking always as your son or daughter first is best. Continue to have expectations of him or her.

How can parents talk about Church vocations when their personal experience and knowledge is about married life?

Parents can talk to their children about the importance of discovering God's purpose in their lives. It can be helpful to them to hear how you discovered that you were called to marriage. As Catholics, each of us has a responsibility to learn about each vocation so that we can support others. Parents need to learn about and understand Church vocations as well as marriage and single life. Some resources for doing this are personal contacts with priests and sisters, reading the lives of the Saints, literature about Church vocations, and web sites such as listed on the last page.

How should I react if my son or daughter talks to me about becoming a priest, religious sister or brother?

If this hasn't happened yet, maybe you ought to ask yourself how you or your spouse might react. Would it be shock? Concern? Skepticism? Would this be a dream come true for you or your worst nightmare? Knowing and understanding your own feelings and your reasons for them is an important step in knowing how to respond to your son or daughter. The vast majority of teens today feel that if they told their parents they were even "just thinking" about priesthood or religious life, their parents would be completely opposed to the idea, laugh at them, or in some other way not take them seriously.

A vocation is quite simply a call from God. God gives each one of us a vocation and has blessed us with certain abilities and talents. Some of us are called to be married. Others are called to be single.

Still others are called to the priesthood or to religious life. One vocation is not better than another. We hope that if your child shows an interest in religious life or the priesthood you will be supportive and encouraging.

What if I object to my child pursuing a church vocation because I have always wanted or dreamed of grandchildren?

It is true that pursuing a church vocation of either becoming a priest or consecrated religious will not result in grandchildren as some parents have imagined. However, many parents of priests and consecrated religious have discovered an incredible joy in the many ‘adopted’ grandchildren they receive when they realize the enormous family their child looks after and ministers to. Some parents look at all the people in the parish where their son is a priest as being their ‘grandchildren.’

Activities to help promote Vocations

- Sit down with (your) children and talk about Church vocations, letting them know that considering becoming a priest or consecrated religious is a noble thing.
- Have parents share their own story of how they came to know that they were called to married life.
- Join the GSCC Church Vocations Team or the Northeast Serra Club, both of which help promote vocations of priesthood and Consecrated Religious Life. Contact Joyce Fisher 817-488-4843 for more information.
- Write a letter of encouragement to a priest or religious.
- Write a letter of encouragement to a seminarian (addresses provided on page 15).
- Pray daily for priests and religious (by name if you can).
- Visit a religious community or a seminary.
- Invite a priest or religious over for a meal and ask them to share their vocation story.
- Browse vocation websites to learn more about discernment.
- Browse religious community websites to discover about their charism and ministries.

Practical Tips for Fostering Vocations in the Home.

Try the Alphabet! The ABCs of Fostering, Supporting and Nurturing Vocations within the Home.

Apostles: From the very beginning, help your children see that a Christian is meant to make a difference in the world around him, we are Christ's ambassadors. Light of the world and salt of the earth. Make them aware that their faith is a gift and talent to share.

Answer your children's questions about priesthood or religious life; never discourage them or ridicule them if they bring it up.

Baptism: Celebrate each one's Baptism Day as well as birthday – and yours too. Build family traditions around the celebration... a specially decorated Baptism Candle that you light for the occasion with a special prayer..., displaying photos of their baptism..., writing a card or saying a prayer for the priest who baptized them....

Bring your family to an Ordination Mass or prayer vigil for religious.

Catechism: Teach, explain, challenge and have them memorize. Always connect it with life. Challenge your teenagers with Church History and Apologetics. Make them proud of their faith, give them answers, encourage discussion.

Confirmation: Be counter-cultural, make Confirmation the real beginning of personal and mature practice of the faith!

Challenge teens and young adults to consider a Church-related vocation. Tell them the gifts for ministry you see in them. Encourage them to participate in at least one special vocation event (ordination, vocation retreat, Focus 11, etc.).

Discuss your own vocation to family life, explaining that God calls some people to priesthood or religious life, some to marriage, and some to life as single laypeople. You can talk about vocations firsthand!

Eucharist: Need we say more?

Encourage your children to be involved in the liturgical life of the parish as servers, lectors, musicians, etc. (and get them there on time!)

Explore the feelings you might experience should one of your children choose to give his or her life to God and discuss them with your spouse.

Find opportunities to affirm the gifts and talents of your children, and help them relate their gifts to various career and life choices (including priesthood and religious life).

Gratitude. Make this a major element of all family prayer, cultivate their awareness of all God's gifts, both spiritual and material.

Generosity: Lead by example and teach your children to repay God's gifts by loving others and being generous to others as He is with us.

Have a priest come and bless your home.

Have your younger children make a cross to hang in each bedroom in your home.

Include the diocesan vocation prayer in your personal and family prayer.

Invite a priest, brother, sister or lay consecrated person to your home.

Jesus: From their earliest age, help them enter into a personal relationship with Jesus as their best friend. Encourage simple, direct prayer, a sense of his presence in everything they do.

Join together in prayer as a family; include a short vocations prayer when you pray before meals

Keep an eye open for TV shows and movies that present Gospel-centered role models. Watch them with your children and engage in a discussion.

Let your children see your own attitude of openness to and love for God's will.

Look for appropriate times to read and discuss with your children stories of calls in Scripture (e.g. Mary's response to God in Luke 1:26-39, Jesus' calling the Apostles in Mt 4:18-22, etc.).

Matrimony: Your marriage is one of the greatest keys to your children's individual vocations. Share with them the story of your own vocation, especially on your wedding anniversary, how you met, how you "knew", how you made your decision and the importance of faith in your life, all that you have to be thankful for.

Make time for teenagers in your life: your children and their friends, nieces and nephews, etc.

Never discourage

Open their minds. Be sure your children learn. Foster their curiosity and love for creation and culture.

Patron saint: Help your children grow in their knowledge and devotion to their patron saint. The saints come from all walks of life and made a positive difference in the world--a goal as real today as it was in their time.

Play: Give sports and adventure their place.

Purity. Both the virtue of purity and consecrated celibacy require the positive appreciation of the gift of sexuality, as well as the awareness of our natural weakness in this area. Communication, timely instruction, good habits, your example, proper vigilance are all key.

Pray for the seminarians of your diocese by name (you can get their names, bios, and birthdays from the diocesan website. Even "spiritually adopt" one of them.

Pray as a couple for the specific vocation of each one of your children.

Prudence and **Patience**. Pray fervently for these gifts, so as to respect God’s work and God’s timing in the life of your child, and not to have any personal agenda beyond what is truly best for them. Children, not only parents, make mistakes!

Queen: Enthroned Mary as Queen of your home, form a prayer-chain with other families.

Reconciliation, or the Sacrament of Penance. We all need it. Lead by example.

Remember in prayer by name those who minister to your family and include in your family prayers petitions for those called to priesthood and consecrated life

Scripture: Pull it out, read it actively as a family – commenting on it, applying it to life. Look for appropriate times to read and discuss with your children stories of calls in Scripture (e.g. Samuel, the Annunciation, Jesus calling the Apostles, etc.).

Service: Together as a family, do things that serve others, especially those in most need. Seek out those in need and find ways to care for them (GRACE, Catholic Charities, etc.).

Support and participate in any school or parish vocation activities.

Talk about your family’s ethnic or cultural heritage and its values.

Talk positively about the priests, sisters, brothers, and deacons in your parish and share with your children the stories of the priests or sisters who have inspired you and how (e.g. priest at your wedding, or baptized your children, priests or religious from school, etc.).

Use books and videos to familiarize your children with saints who are priests or vowed religious. Use these lives of the saints as a springboard for discussion on these lifestyles.

Visit: Christ in the Eucharist. Work in a visit to some shrine or famous church while on vacation and offer prayers together as a family.

Witness to your own vocation in your love and care for each other.

X, In Greek it’s the first letter of “Christos”, Christ, the Anointed One. Anointing is used in Baptism, Confirmation, Ordination and the Sacrament of the Sick.

You. Help your children grow out of the Me-mode and into the You-mode. Where “you” is God and neighbor.

Z, The last letter of the alphabet. The last letter in Greek is Omega, and Christ is the Alpha and the Omega. Make him the Beginning and End in everything you do.

Other Related Websites

Franciscanstor.org
Franciscansisterstor.org
fwdioc.org
uscgb.org (find vocations under teaching and beliefs)
cmswr.org
religiouslife.com
vocation.com
vocationboom.com
www.facebook.com/ImagineSisters
vocationnetwork.org
Capuchin.com
carmelitesistersocd.com
Dominicanfriars.org
Sistersofmary.org (Dominican Sisters)
Jesuits.org (Jesuits)

Recommended Reading

Sacred Scripture
Catechism of the Catholic Church
Discerning the Will of God, Timothy M Gallagher OMV
The Meaning of Vocation in the words of St. John Paul II
To Save a Thousand Souls, Fr. Brett Brannen
Vita Consecrata (On the Consecrated Life), St. John Paul II
What Does God Want, Fr. Michael Scanlan, T.O.R.