

Since Jesus first called the fisherman Simon Peter to become Peter the Apostle, the “fisher of men”, Jesus has continued the call men and women to join him in the proclamation of his Good News. They have wondered about how the call comes to them. Sometimes the call is a persistent thought that will not go away. Sometimes the call is a repeated invitation, by fellow parishioners, family, and friends, who see the gift of ministry in you. Sometimes it is a surprise, like when Jesus appeared to Paul on the road to Damascus. God continues the call to ministry – men and women of faith from every culture, education level, economic level, interests, and personality type. Could God be calling you to ministry?

This question isn't easily answered. However, you aren't alone in this. Others have similar questions regarding God's call. In the Archdiocese of Louisville there are a number of ways to find your answers.

Be not afraid! When Jesus calls you, he always gives you what you need to complete the call. You are being called to answer your questions, to look deeper within yourself, to listen to the Holy Spirit speaking to you, to give yourself in sacrifice and service, to become more like Jesus.

“I remind you to stir into flame the gift of God that you have... For God did not give us a spirit of cowardice but rather of power and love and self control.”

1 Tim 1:6-7

Discernment for Catholic Teens

Those high school teens interested in discerning a call to follow Jesus in ministry in the Church are invited to contact the Vocation Office.

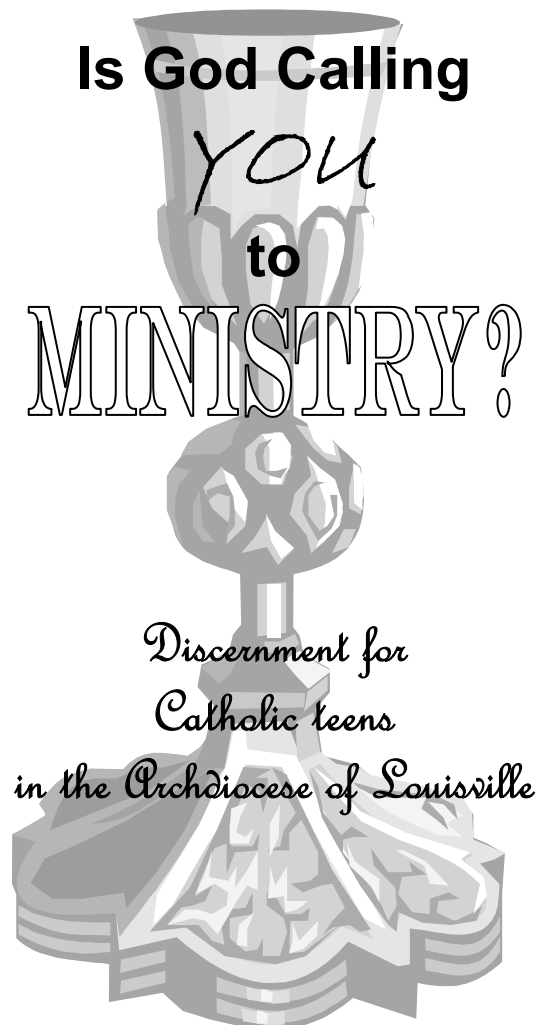
We want to help you in your quest to discover how God is calling you for service to the People of God.



www.archlou.org

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What is a discernment group?"

A discernment group is a gathering of people who are thinking about God's call to ministry in their lives. These people range in age from high school students, college students, and those in their adult years who are involved in their careers.

Getting involved in a discernment group doesn't mean that you are committed to going to the seminary or to the convent. Rather, it means that you are committed to growing in your relationship with Jesus Christ and in building up his kingdom through works of loving service.

Jesus said, "*whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake and that of the gospel will save it.*" (Mk 8:35) Jesus calls you to no less than total commitment to him. Are you willing to let him lead you to your true calling? A discernment group gives you the support to explore your call, whether it be to the priesthood, the religious life, or to another role in the life and mission of the Church.

We have separate groups for men and women according to gender, age, and interest.

Your participation is confidential. No one needs to know that you are involved in a discernment group unless you want them to know.

A Vocation Quiz

Young Men and Women of the Archdiocese, I have a question to ask you. Have you ever wondered if you have a calling to Ministry in the Church?

A religious vocation may be for you. Try the following quiz. Consider all the statements that apply to you.

- a personal relationship with God is important to me
- I feel called to give more of myself to others
- The idea of ministry in the church keeps going through my head.
- People have told me to consider being a priest or a nun.
- I want to help people get closer to God.
- Going to mass and receiving Jesus Christ in the Eucharist is very important to me.
- I've been reluctant to ask questions that might reveal to family and friends that I am interested in ministry. But I want to ask.
- I can imagine myself as in ministry as a sister, brother, priest, or lay minister.
- I want to make a difference in my world.

If you answered, "yes" to four or more of these statements, then God may be calling you to the ministry. It isn't somebody else's vocation from somewhere else. Church ministry is the vocation that comes from men and women in our families in our parishes in this Archdiocese.

Is a religious vocation for you? Do not be afraid to join with the other men and women in our Archdiocese who are discerning God's call in their lives.

What else can I do to find out if I am called by God to ministry?

1. **Get involved in ministry.** There is no better way to find out if you are called to ministry than if you are actually participating in the ministry of your local parish or with an apostolic service program. Make a commitment to regular ministry and share your gifts in Christian service.
2. **Make an appointment with the Vocation Director or Associate Vocation Director.** They can help you decide how to pursue your discernment. They also determine readiness to be involved in a discernment program.
3. **Shadow a church minister for a day.** A number of our Louisville priests, sisters, brothers, deacons, and lay ministers make themselves available for a discernment to see firsthand what daily life in ministry is like.
4. **Visit a Seminary or a Convent.** The seminaries used by the Archdiocese of Louisville and the houses of formation for the religious all provide retreats and other opportunities for you to see what religious life is like.
5. **Make a personal, directed retreat.** There are numerous retreat centers throughout the archdiocese, as well as local seminaries, which offer individual directed retreats.
6. **Spiritual Direction.** A spiritual director is a person who is a spiritual companion. A spiritual director assists the directee in understanding where God is in his life, and what God's call is. The director helps the directee to grow in self-understanding, personal holiness, and knowledge of the faith. They usually meet once monthly.