

5th Sunday in Easter/ May 2, 2021

Gospel of John chapter 15 verses 1-8

Homily by Deacon Tony

Today we have a guest, Saint Joseph. This painting of Saint Joseph is being moved weekly from parish to parish throughout the diocese for two reasons.

First, to get to know Saint Joseph better. If I had to speculate, I would say for most of us our knowledge of Joseph is he is the earthly father of Jesus, he is the husband of Mary, he is a carpenter, and it is his statue you bury in your yard when you want to sell your home. You see now why for the past week our religious education has been talking about Joseph.

The second reason Joseph has come to visit our parish is that he is going to act as our advocate before Our Heavenly Father, because from this day forward we are asked to discern and continue discerning our vocation in life. And the timing could not be better for the liturgical year we have entered into is called, The Year of Vocations.

So right out of the gate let us ask the question, what is the difference between a job and a vocation, and can they overlap one another.

Websters dictionary defines a job as regular work done for payment. That being said all of us have or have had a job to pay the bills, put food on the table and to enjoy all those nice things in life that cost money.

Yet a vocation is different. Websters dictionary defines a vocation as a predisposition or urge to take up a particular type of work. And if I may add to this definition a vocation provides purpose and meaning to one's life. Now when we think of vocations, we typically think of them in terms of a religious calling but that is not so. Let me read to you what Bishop Lucia wrote specifically about this day. He said,

"It is my sincerest wish that all of our efforts during this YEAR OF VOCATIONS will be aimed at creating a culture of vocations throughout our diocese and in our parishes, so lay people can more readily discern and respond

to God's particular call in their life." Nowhere does he say vocations are solely religious callings. Why even Cardinal Dolan echoed the same sentiment when speaking about the disparity in pay regarding Catholic school teachers compared to their counterparts in the Public schools. As those in the public sector tend to make more money. He said for those teachers in the catholic schools, it is not a job it is a vocation.

So, can the two overlap? Can a job also be a vocation? Yes, I believe they can. I believe what I do as a prison guard is my vocation, as I bring Christ into that prison. And I know of teachers and nurses here in the Whitesboro School District, what they do is not a job but a vocation as the kids love them and they love the kids.

So, all of us, all of us have a vocation within. We just have to discern what it is.

So now let us shift directions and speak about vocations to the religious life.

Here on these chairs before you are pictures of our 12 seminarians. Each one of these men has responded to God's call. Their vocation? The priesthood. And how did they know God was calling them to a vocation as a priest?

Yes, time spent on their knees in prayer. But first came developing a relationship with God, as Ben our seminarian did. Through books, retreats, lifestyle changes, frequent reception of the Eucharist, confession, the Rosary and just as important, being part of faith-based community, which loves and supports you.

Then the more you move with Christ the more you can see God's handiwork in your life as you discern God's path for you. These seminarians did just that.

Each of us possess a vocation. A unique call by God to find purpose and meaning in our life. That through discernment we respond to Gods call to Come follow me. And perhaps today there is someone out there right now discerning a call to the priesthood. Well Father Tom has purposely left two of the pictures' blanks as that would be your spot beside the seminarians. So, for all of us discerning and continuing to discern our vocation we ask Saint Joseph...Pray for us.