

Vocations Sunday 2021

What would happen if we were to see everything we do as part of our vocations. If you saw everything you did as part of your service to God. We talk about vocational jobs – usually meaning a nurse or a teacher or a Vicar, but would it make a difference to see your job as your vocation? Would it make a difference to think about caring for your family as a vocation? Would it make a difference to think about every conversation you have when out and about as part of your vocation?

In the Catholic Church three levels to vocation are often spoken about which I think is helpful:

1. The Universal Vocation to Holiness. Andreas Widmer “To know, love, and serve God in this life so that you can know, love, and serve him eternally in the next life. Your objective is to cooperate with God in his work to save your soul.”
2. Primary Vocation. Your primary vocation is the way you live out this objective. It is the way of life in which you love and serve God and others. There are four primary vocations: single life, married life, priestly life and consecrated life. We might explore this as our vocation to those who are closed to us, whether that’s to a partner or family or friends.
3. Secondary Vocation. It’s how you use your gifts and talents in service of God and others while living out your universal and primary vocations. This could mean our work or profession, but also applies to community involvement and all the ‘things we do’ in our lives or the way we occupy ourselves. Widmer – could be ‘simply bearing the various crosses and trials that come your way in life. It’s your plan of action for living.”

So three levels of vocation: a universal call to holiness – to get closer to Jesus. A primary call to serve those we are in close relationships with. A secondary vocation to use our gifts and talents in our work – and it may be today you are being called into something new as we reflect on vocation together? Have a think about how best you are using your gifts and talents.

Just one thing to qualify this, I’m not sure I’m entirely happy with the terms primary and secondary here – as clearly these two levels of vocation are equally important and flow out of the universal vocation.

But however we term them, we called to draw close to God, and we are called to serve those we are closest to and follow our vocation in all we do.

So back to those questions: Would it make a difference to see your job as your vocation? Would it make a difference to think about caring for your family as a vocation? Would it make a difference to consciously think about every conversation you have when out and about and everything you do as part of your vocation?

Think about leaving here and the first conversation you have or first thing you do, think about it as very much part of a wider vocation, Laura said we should 'lean into our vocations as Christians to trust in the Holy Spirit.' That is the root of all our callings- each of us, dog collar or not, we all share that universal vocation.

Might that conversation or task be different? If we call upon the Holy Spirit now to strengthen and equip us and continue to call upon the Holy Spirit when we leave here and have that first conversation, and the second conversation, and the third. To remember that we have the empowerment of the Spirit to give us the fruits and gifts we need. The fruits of the Spirit are all too often quoted and the list is enjoyed as celebrated. But what if that first conversation or action and second and third, really was full of love, full of joy, full of peace, full of patience, full of kindness, full of goodness, full of gentleness, faithful to Jesus and tempered with self control?

I might just be speaking for myself, but wouldn't people say something along the lines of 'what has got into you today?!'

And what if our conversations and actions were full of the gifts of the Spirit? If we really received and gave words and pictures and prophecy. Might people want to know more?

²³ And this is his commandment, that we should believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ and love one another, just as he has commanded us. ²⁴ All who obey his commandments abide in him, and he abides in them. And by this we know that he abides in us, by the Spirit that he has given us.

Laura, in her vocation talks about the tug of the Holy Spirit drawing her towards truth and into love. I'll quote her once more 'we have a call to lean into our vocations as Christians. To trust in the Holy Spirit – in it's abundant generosity, so we may be drawn into the truth of God's love and share it with others.'