

December, 2007

Dear Friend:

As we approach *National Vocation Awareness Week* once again this year on January 13-19, 2008, we focus on 'Discernment' as the process of following where God leads each member of the faithful to live out the call to '*Come, follow me!*'

Discernment is that process of prayer, education and response that marks the life of the Christian faithful. It is a process that is life long, but one that starts even at a very early age. As the Christian disciple grows, we are called to continue to refine the call that we have been given, to take into account how we have already begun the response to Jesus' invitation, and how we are to take up that invitation anew once again this year.

This year's packet for the Archdiocese of Cincinnati is geared towards shifting the fundamental question of vocation in a person's life from: "What do *I* want to do?" towards the ultimately more fulfilling: "What does *God* want me to do?" In order to answer this second question, the person has to focus on the gifts that God has given, and how God might be asking them to share those gifts with the world. These are all steps in the process of discernment, these are all steps that every Catholic Christian should address during their process of "growing in wisdom, age and grace."

National Vocation Awareness Week is also set aside to specifically pray for vocations to the priesthood and religious life. To that end, we also include suggestions for liturgy and Eucharistic Holy Hours for the parish to gather in prayer to "ask the Master of the Harvest to send more laborers to His fields." It is my hope that these periods of prayer during this specific week are an inspiration that draws people closer to God throughout the year.

In his Apostolic Exhortation *Sacramentum Caritatis*, Pope Benedict XVI clearly connects the living of the faith in the Eucharist with the grace to find one's vocation, be that as a priest, deacon, religious, married or single. During this week of prayer for vocations, let us all be renewed to our own particular vocation that we may inspire today's young people to radically embrace the call of Christ to "Come, follow me!"

In Christ,

Fr. Kyle Schnippel
Vocation Director