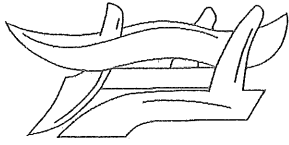


Archdiocese of Cincinnati



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Dear Parents:

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In a recent address to the United States Serra Convention, a group that works to promote diocesan priesthood, Archbishop Timothy Dolan of New York began his remarks on promotion of priestly vocations with an emphasis on vocation to family and married life. It may seem strange to begin a pursuit of priestly and religious vocations with an emphasis on married life, but if we want good and holy men and women to be priests and religious, they must first be formed in the home of good and holy parents.

During this 'Year for Priests,' as called for by Pope Benedict XVI and during the upcoming Vocation Awareness Week, January 10-16, 2010, families in the Archdiocese of Cincinnati are invited to reflect more deeply on fostering a culture of vocations within the house, to help your children come to an understanding of the many great gifts that God has bestowed upon each one of them, and to help them become good and faithful stewards of these gifts, sharing them with the world.

In a particular way this year, we focus on the gift of the priesthood for our Church and for our families. While it is true that the priesthood does involve a life of sacrifice that can sometimes be difficult, as a priest, I have discovered that there are far more blessings that come to one who trusts in the Lord and walks in His ways. Jesus promises that those who forsake wife, husband, children, and lands for His sake and the sake of the Kingdom will be repaid many times over. I can testify that this is certainly the case.

In fact, when asked during a recent survey, nearly 90% of priests acknowledged that they feel a great joy and contentment in their life as priests. This was higher than any other career path among this survey by far. If your son comes to you expressing interest in the priesthood, if your daughter desires to give her life to Christ as a consecrated religious, those blessings are not just bestowed upon him or her, but equally with their home family, for what greater gift could a parent give back to the Lord than a child who has been called to lay down one's life for a friend?

For more information on the priesthood and religious life, see this year's Vocation Awareness Week materials at <http://cincinnati.vocations.org/vaw.shtml>

In Christ,

Fr. Kyle Schnippel
Vocation Director