



Tools for Promoting Vocations
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Serra SPARK Sampler

5 Tools to Create a Culture of Vocations in Your Community

Adopt A Seminarian

As parish-level efforts, *Adopt a Seminarian* programs are a grassroots means for the faithful to encourage, pray for, and provide for the material needs of priests in training. The programs are a great way for families to get involved in supporting seminarians.

The 31 Club

With decades of history behind it, *The 31 Club* is a simple, easily-established program for parishes to use in their vocations-related efforts. It's an ideal program for the involvement of busy parishioners who want to help with vocations but need to be able to fit it into their schedule.

Traveling Chalice/ Crucifix

With the constant visual reminder of a prominently placed chalice they've taken home from church after Sunday Mass, a family (or individual) prays for vocations during a week-long period of time while also writing down their experiences in prayer.

Priesthood Sunday

Planning for Priesthood Sunday and other major vocations-related events during the liturgical year is easier than you might think. Try these resources for ideas and inspiration!

Holy Hours

A one-hour devotional conducted as Eucharistic adoration before the Blessed Sacrament, this program can be utilized by small or large groups. Includes a template for Holy Hour for Those Called to the Priesthood or Religious Life.

Find these and other tools to promote vocations at serraspark.org

Introduction

The Serra Spark Sampler is a small sampling of tools from SPARK: The Serra Promotion and Resource Kit found at serraspark.org. Built by the US Council of Serra International for Vocation Directors in collaboration with the NCDVD and under the guidance of the USCCB, it is a valuable resource for anyone involved in vocation work both at the diocesan and parish levels. Serra clubs, pastors, and parish vocation ministries can both learn and expand their vocation activities with ideas and tools made available through the Serra Spark Sampler and the original, online version containing more than 20 tools each with numerous resources. All tools can be tailored to meet the specific needs of your community. The online resource is continually growing and being updated so start with the tools in the Sampler but expand your vocation repertoire at serraspark.org. Sign-up for automatic updates at the foot of the home page.

Vocation Tool Types

Distinctions should be made in the process of choosing any vocation tool depending on what the user intends to accomplish. Tools from each of the following areas should be employed to insure your vocation activities are well rounded. Look for the alphabetical designations for each as they correlate to the tools in the table of contents. More than one type may apply to each tool.

Affirmation Tools (A)

These encourage those persons who are currently serving the church in their role as pastor, priest, brother, sister, nun, deacon. They express appreciation to those in church vocations and can offer support and friendship.

Awareness Tools (B)

These are aimed at building a positive culture of vocations. They aim to create an atmosphere conducive for vocations to emerge whether in the community, parish, classroom or household.

Invitation and/or Encouragement Tools (C)

These are intended to help the laity who may or may not have indicated their desire for a vocation in the church openly but who have shown a dedication to church service and a love of the faith. These tools offer appreciation to those who would seem to possess the right qualities for a church vocation and encouragement to remain faithful servants of the Lord in a greater capacity.

Prayer Tools (D)

These tools acknowledge our dependence on God for calling those who will serve in those special roles of serving the church. These “ask the Master of the harvest to send out laborers for His harvest.” Mt. 9:38. Some may encourage communal prayer activities while others encourage family or individual prayers for vocations or persons.



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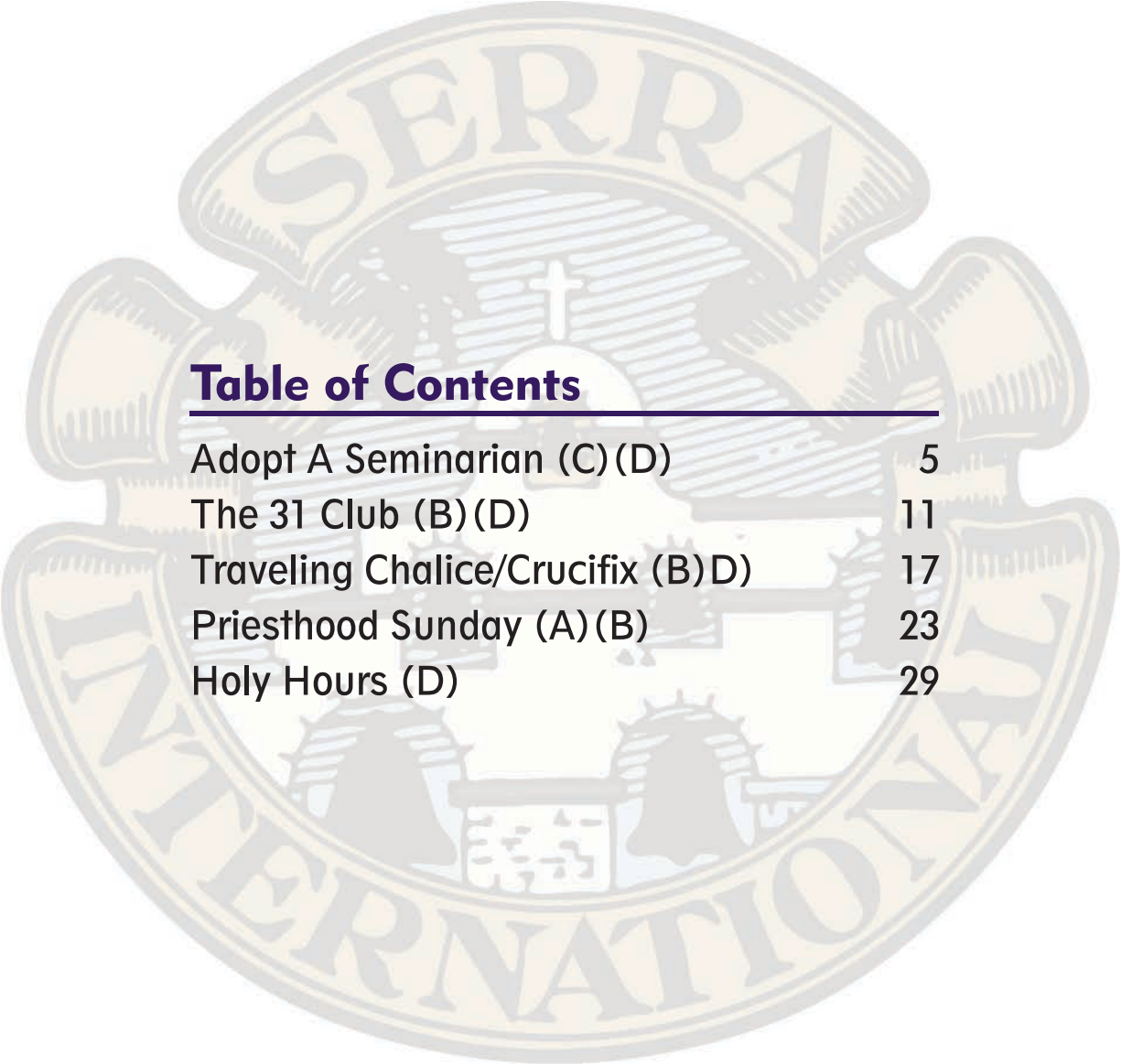


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Adopt a Seminarian



Tools for Vocations

As parish-level efforts, **Adopt a Seminarian** programs are a grassroots means for the faithful to encourage, pray for, and provide for the material needs of priests in training. The programs can be a great way for families to get involved in supporting seminarians.





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Adopt a Seminarian

Summary



Many dioceses around the country have brought about special programs—often called 'Adopt a Seminarian' or some derivation thereof—to accomplish the aim of supporting priests-in-formation at the parish level.

These programs vary in their operational specifics; however, one rather common format involves dioceses asking their respective parishes to encourage their families and schools to pick a seminarian from their diocese for whom to pray and with whom to correspond on a regular basis.

Adopt a Seminarian programs are not necessarily limited to spiritual support for priests-in-training. In some cases, Adopt a Seminarian programs include means of supporting seminarians both spiritually (prayer) and materially (such basic living needs as toiletries and laundry items). In other cases, similar programs even provide financial assistance to seminarians.



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Adopt A Seminarian

Program Outline

- Adopt-a-Seminarian
- Parish-level programs
 - Designed to support priests-in-formation
- Programs vary in operational details
 - One common format is as follows:
 - Having parish families and schools pick a seminarian and pray for them and correspond with them regularly
- Programs not necessarily limited to spiritual support
 - Some programs support seminarians with material needs and even provide financial assistance



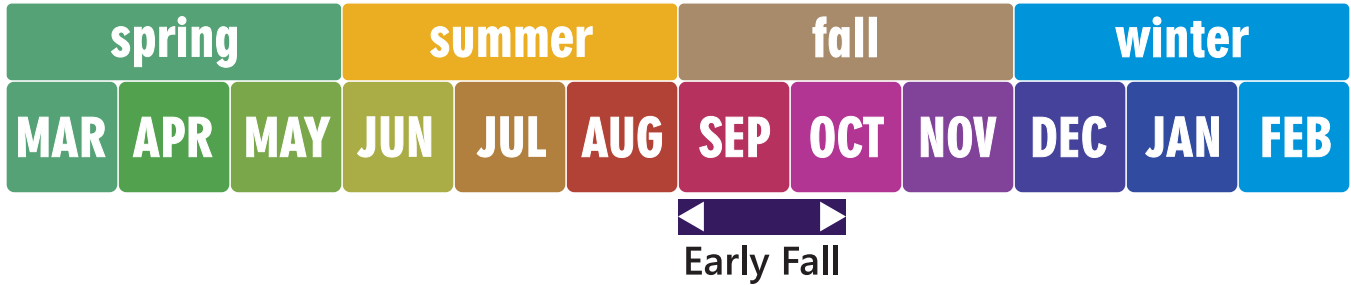
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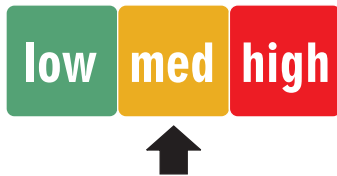
Adopt A Seminarian

Program Outline

Time of Year



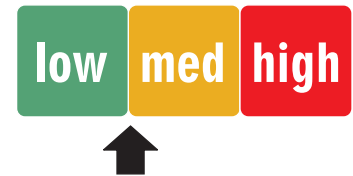
Lead Time



Effort



Cost



Using Serrans / Volunteers

Serrans could be relied upon for such things as purchasing toiletries and laundry items to be sent to seminarians.

Prayer for seminarians is important and volunteers should be solicited for prayer commitments.



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Adopt A Seminarian

Program Outline

Encouraging men who are studying for the priesthood is a key component of supporting vocations. Many dioceses around the country have brought about special programs, often called 'Adopt a Seminarian'—or some derivation thereof—to accomplish this aim.

Adopt a Seminarian programs vary in scope and specifics of operation, but one relatively common way of proceeding in these programs can be seen in the example provided by the Archdiocese of Saint Louis (MO), which encourages all families—and also its parochial elementary schools and secondary schools—to choose a seminarian whom they will “spiritually adopt” and pray for (and also correspond with) on a regular basis.

In tying its 'Adopt a Seminarian' program into its similarly structured 'Adopt a Priest' program, the Archdiocese of Saint Louis (MO) writes the following basic instructions for use in local Catholic schools:

Choose a seminarian and/or priest for each classroom

- Pray daily for your seminarian and for seminarians throughout the world (Mass, rosary, Holy hour, Adoration, our own words, etc.)
- Send a note, picture, or card on special feast days or holidays
- Pray about and ponder your own personal vocational call

Adopt a Seminarian programs are not necessarily limited to spiritual support for priests-in-formation. The program at one particular parish within the Ft. Wayne-South Bend (IN) diocese, for example, provides both spiritual and material bolstering for diocesan seminarians. Interested parishioners would, after attending Mass, receive information sheets for each diocesan seminarian—sheets which would, among other things, list that person's housing-related needs, such as laundry and toiletry items; parishioners could then send the items along to their 'adopted' seminarian at the seminary. In another case, at a parish in Louisiana, the lay faithful invite seminarians into their homes for meals, games, and Christian fellowship. These expansions of the Adopt a Seminarian concept have been warmly received by both the laity and the seminarians of the dioceses involved.

Additional Resources

Numerous resources are available at serraspark.org, Tool #1, Adopt A Seminarian



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~ 31 CLUB ~
MEMBERS
*Daily Prayer for Vocations**
 (October 2016 to October 2017)



3 Dan Drvol	4 Joleen Kelly	5 Mary Grenier	6 Mary Kay Peirce	7
10 Dolores Carlisle**	11 Jackie Novotny**	12 Evonne Rodriguez Sierra**	13 Jerry & Dorothy Harding	14 Sr Ann Marie Petrylka**
17 Bernie & Mary Alice Pinger	18 Ruth Singleton**	19	20	21

31 Club



Tools for Vocations

With decades of history behind it, the **31 Club** is a simple, easily-established program for parishes to use in their vocations-related efforts. It's an ideal program for the involvement of busy parishioners who want to help with vocations but need to be able to fit it into their schedule.



Summary

One of the easiest—and most direct—ways for the faithful to take part in the overall vocation-promotion effort, the 31 Club has become a mainstay at parishes around America and, indeed, around the world.

After signing up, a member picks any date of the month—from 1 to 31—that suits them; then, they commit to go to Mass or a Holy Hour on that day each month over the following year...and to devote that Mass or prayer to an increase in vocations, and for priests and religious already serving the Church.

The 31 Club does not hold meetings, nor does it require its members to pay dues. Membership is open to all—including parishioners who are homebound and wish to offer their sufferings and prayer for that day.



31 Club

Program Outline

- 31 Club is one of the easiest, most direct ways for churchgoers to help out in the vocations effort—at the parish level
 - Has become a mainstay at parishes around America and around the world
- How it works:
 - Sign up via a simple form
 - Pledge to attend an extra Mass one day a month—on a day chosen by the person signing up
 - Go to Mass or make a Holy Hour on that day each month over the next year
 - Devote that Mass to an increase in vocations and for priests and religious already serving
- Goal is to build enough membership within the parish to cover all 365 days of the year
- No meetings
- No dues
- Open to all parishioners



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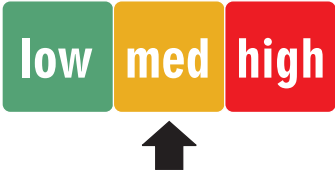
31 Club
Implementation

Time of Year



Any Time

Lead Time



Effort



Cost



Serrans / Volunteers

- Publicizing the effort
- Soliciting participants
- Conducting sign-up and handing our reminder cards



31 Club

Program History, Development, and Additional Resources

The history of the 31 Club goes back to the 1970s in New Zealand. A local priest saw a need for an increase in vocations in addition to a need for support of current vocations, and asked his parishioners to pick one date in the month that did not fall on a Sunday. After choosing the date, they were to attend Mass on that date, and offer it with prayers for priests and religious serving the Church, as well as for an increase in vocations. Thus, they'd attend one extra Mass every month as an offering for vocations initiation and support.

Catholics all over the world now pray for vocations through the 31 Club program. In some cases, parishes are bringing back the program to their locale as part of a renewed effort to promote vocations.

Membership in this club requires one to sign up via a simple form and pledge to attend an extra Mass or make a Holy hour once a month. The person signing up picks any date of the month—from 1 to 31—that suits them; then, they commit to go to Mass on that day each month over the following year...and to devote that Mass to an increase in vocations, and for priests and religious already serving the Church. Club leaders use a special calendar to track the names of members and the days of the month on which they've committed to attend the extra liturgies. Signing up for the 31 Club is often facilitated via sign-up sheets at the entrances of churches and notices placed in parish bulletins.

The goal, within a given parish, is to build up enough membership to cover all 365 days of the year.

The 31 Club does not hold meetings, nor does it require its members to pay dues.

31 Club membership is open to all—including parishioners who are homebound.

Additional Resources

Numerous resources are available at serraspark.org, Tool #14, The 31 Club




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Traveling Chalice/Crucifix Program for the Parish



Tools for Vocations

With the constant visual reminder of a prominently placed chalice they've taken home from church after Sunday Mass, a family (or individual) prays for vocations during a week-long period of time while also writing down their experiences in prayer.

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Traveling Chalice/Crucifix Program for the Parish

Summary



The Traveling Chalice Program is a simple, effective way to get parishioners directly involved in the vocations effort. (It should be noted that the program can also be done using a crucifix; we shall refer to a chalice here for the purposes of explaining how the program is implemented.)

On Sunday, an individual—or a couple or family—takes the chalice. This can be done in different ways. The priest can present the chalice at the end of Mass or the chalice can be picked up in the sacristy after Mass. The recipient(s) would then take the chalice home with them, put it in a prominent place within their home, and pray every day for vocations over one week's time. Those participating utilize a 'memory book' to write down their experiences of that week, as well as the prayers that come about as a result; the book then becomes a source for possible members of a special parish vocation team.

A given week's recipient should be reminded to return the chalice to the parish on the Friday following pick-up—or to simply return it before to the correct Mass time on Sunday. The succeeding recipient should be prompted as to when their turn is coming.



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Traveling Chalice/Crucifix Program for the Parish

Program Outline

- Traveling Chalice Program is simple, effective way to get parishioners directly involved in vocations effort
- How it is implemented:
 - At a Sunday Mass, individual (or couple or family) receives chalice
 - Recipient(s) take(s) chalice home with them, put in prominent place, and pray every day for vocations that week
 - 'Memory book' is used to write down their experiences during the week / prayers that come about as result
 - Book becomes source for possible members of parish vocation team
 - The chalice should be returned to parish office on Friday or to sacristy before Mass on Sunday



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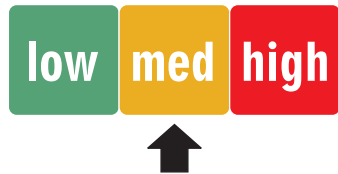
Traveling Chalice/Crucifix Program for the Parish
Implementation

Time of Year

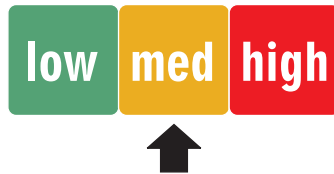


Any Time

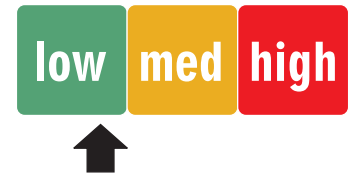
Lead Time



Effort



Cost



Serrans / Volunteers

- Secure chalice and kit
- Schedule families to take the kit
- Prompting the next family that it's their turn to take the chalice and memory book



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Traveling Chalice/Crucifix Program for the Parish

Program History, Development, and Additional Resources

A vocations-promotion endeavor that's been popular for years within parishes around the country, the Traveling Chalice or Crucifix Program is a simple, effective way to get parishioners directly involved in the vocations effort. It can also be a great way to encourage families to pray together at home.

After Sunday Mass, an individual—or a couple or family—takes the chalice. Some parishes fasten the chalice in an attractive wood tabernacle to keep it sacred. The priest can present the chalice at the end of Mass or the chalice can be picked up in the sacristy after Mass. (It should be noted that the program can also be done using a crucifix; we shall refer to a chalice here for the purposes of explaining how the program is implemented.) The recipient(s) would then take the chalice home with them, put it in a prominent place within the home, and pray every day for vocations over one week's time. It may represent the first time the topic of vocations has been explored by the recipient(s), and be an important week for the recipient(s). It presents a good opportunity to invite family and friends to join in sharing and prayer.

Those participating may use a 'memory book' to write down their experiences; the book becomes a source for possible members of a parish vocation team.

A given week's recipient should be reminded to return the chalice to the parish on the Friday following pick-up—or to simply bring it to the sacristy before the scheduled Mass on Sunday. The succeeding recipient should be prompted as to when their turn is coming.

Establishing a Traveling Chalice Program in your parish is a straightforward matter. First, obtain the support of the pastor and select a leader to administer the program. Second, purchase a chalice or obtain a chalice from the parish. Third, purchase a memory book and vocation prayers—and, if appropriate, a child's Mass kit for families with young children.

An enthusiastic invitation by the pastor is the best way to actually get parishioners started with the program. The program leader needs to encourage all parishioners to welcome the chalice into their homes. Sign-up cards can be placed in the pews and in the church vestibule or passed out on donut Sunday. Where there is a school, an invitation can be sent home with students. Frequent articles in the church bulletin, a post on the parish website, and a listing in the bulletin of the names of those taking the chalice over the next four weeks are all good steps to keep the program moving forward.

Additional Resources

Numerous resources are available at serraspark.org, Tool #4, The Traveling Chalice/Crucifix Program for the Parish



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Planning Resources: Priesthood Sunday, World Day of Prayer for Vocations, National Vocation Awareness Week & World Day for Consecrated Life



Tools for Vocations

Planning for Priesthood Sunday and other major vocations-related events during the liturgical year is easier than you might think. Try these resources for ideas and inspiration!

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**Planning Resources: Priesthood Sunday,
World Day of Prayer for Vocations,
National Vocation Awareness Week
& World Day for Consecrated Life**

Summary



Several times a year, the Church provides opportunities for the faithful to celebrate vocations. Four such events are World Day of Prayer for Vocations, National Vocation Awareness Week, World Day for Consecrated Life, and Priesthood Sunday.

Thanks to the efforts of lay groups—such as Serra—and the USCCB, there are numerous 'planning kits' available online which can streamline the process of planning for these events.

Typically, these kits include such items as prayers, liturgy planning guides, bulletin announcements, and cards. They're often available in downloadable format as ready-to-print PDFs.



Serra Promotion and Resource Kit

Program Outline

- Several times each year, the faithful are afforded by the Church the chance to celebrate vocations
 - World Day of Prayer for Vocations (held in the spring)
 - National Vocation Awareness Week (held in the fall)
 - World Day for Consecrated Life (held in late winter)
- Priesthood Sunday (held in the fall)
- Planning for your parish's participation in these events can be made easier through the use of various 'planning kits'
 - Available online
 - Typically include items such as...
 - Prayers
 - Liturgy planning guides
 - Bulletin announcements
 - Cards
 - Often available in PDF form



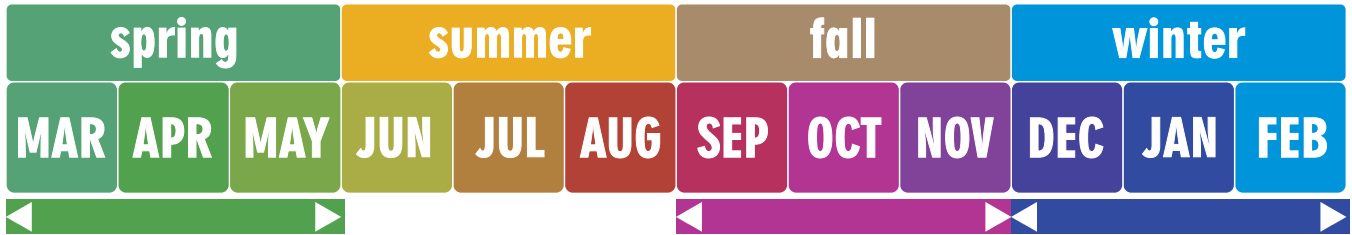
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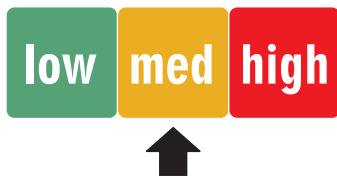
Planning Resources: Priesthood Sunday...

Implementation

Time of Year (See Notes Below)



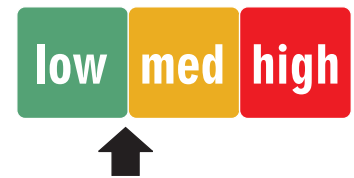
Lead Time



Effort



Cost



Time:

- Spring (World Day of Prayer for Vocations)
- Fall (National Vocation Awareness Week and Priesthood Sunday)
- Winter (World Day for Consecrated Life)

Serrans / Volunteers

- Planning, organizing, and carrying out events
- Working with parish officials regarding events
- Underwriting events



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Planning Resources: Priesthood Sunday...

Program History, Development, and Additional Resources

Celebrating vocations is an important part of community life in the Church.

World Day of Prayer for Vocations, National Vocation Awareness Week, World Day for Consecrated Life, and Priesthood Sunday are all events through which the Church provides opportunities for the faithful to celebrate vocations. Some of these events are rather new, while others go back decades—for example, observance of National Vocation Awareness Week started in 1976.

Thanks to the efforts of lay groups and the USCCB, there are several 'planning kits' available online. Using these kits can streamline the planning process.

These kits are often available in downloadable format as ready-to-print PDFs. They typically include such items as prayers, liturgy planning guides, bulletin announcements, and cards.

Additional Resources

Numerous resources are available at serraspark.org, Tool #11, Planning Resources for Priesthood Sunday



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Holy Hours



Tools for Vocations

A one-hour devotional conducted as Eucharistic adoration before the Blessed Sacrament, this program can be utilized by small or large groups. Includes a template for Holy Hour for Those Called to the Priesthood or Religious Life.

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Summary



The Catholic devotional tradition of Holy Hour has taken on a new dimension with the increasing popularity of priestly vocations as a main intention.

Praying a Holy Hour for an increase in vocations has found some prominent advocates, from associations devoted to Eucharistic adoration to high-ranking Church leaders. What's more, reports from various dioceses have told of parallels between the growth in frequency of Eucharistic adoration and the growth in the number of vocations.

The USCCB encourages Catholics to engage in Holy Hour with the intention of an increase in vocations to their respective dioceses and around the world. Serra has its own customized resources to provide guidance on this to members within their respective clubs—and these resources can also be utilized by any other lay organization within the Church.



Holy Hours

Program Outline

- One-hour devotional
- Conducted as Eucharistic adoration in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament
- For small or large groups
- Holy Hour includes...
 - Songs
 - Readings
 - Time for silent prayer
 - Time for silent meditation and adoration
 - Time for silent reflection
- Holy Hour for vocations is a popular devotion whose effectiveness has been lauded by Church leaders



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**Holy Hours
Implementation**

Time of Year



Serrans / Volunteers

- Contacting parish officials to get approval for Holy Hour at church
- Publicizing the Holy Hour for Vocations
- Preparing Holy Hour leader and participant guide
- Organizing and leading Holy Hour at church

Holy Hours

Program History, Development, and Additional Resources

Holy Hour is a Catholic devotional tradition that dates back to the 17th century and St. Margaret Mary Alacoque of France. Over the years, there have appeared numerous variations on intentions to be prayed for within the hour-long devotion, which is undertaken by spending an hour in Eucharistic adoration.

The power of such prayer has been extolled throughout the Church; as applied to vocations, Holy Hour has found some prominent advocates. The Pope John Paul II Eucharistic Adoration Association holds that, "Grace through group prayer puts a great resource within our midst...inspiration from the Holy Spirit guides us to help channel some of this prayerful energy to support our ordained clergy and seminarians, as well as amplifying the call to vocations."

More generally, the role of laypeople in engaging regularly in prayer for vocations has been emphasized strongly by Church leaders. In a homily to the faithful of his Archdiocese, Bishop Raymond Goedert of Chicago once remarked, "You have been called to be leaders. Pray for an increase of vocations to the priesthood and religious life. You, the laity, have the power to save the Church!"

Some Serra clubs' members gather in fellowship monthly praying for vocations in silent adoration where a Holy Hour is already established. They reserve their prepared and elaborately planned Holy Hours for special occasions such as World Day of Prayer for Vocations. Every club should have a monthly Holy Hour for vocations in some form.

Continued...



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Holy Hours

Holy Hour of Prayer for Those Called to Priesthood and Religious Life:

A Holy Hour: The Rite of Eucharistic Exposition with Benediction

The Priest or Deacon presiding wears the humeral veil to reposition the Blessed Sacrament from the tabernacle to the Monstrance. [The opening hymn is sung once the Blessed Sacrament becomes visible in the Monstrance. All kneel.]

Opening Hymn: O Salutaris Hostia [The presider incenses the Blessed Sacrament]

Opening Prayer- Lord Jesus Christ, you gave us the Eucharist as the memorial of your suffering and death. May our worship of this sacrament of your body and blood help us to experience the salvation you won for us and the peace of the kingdom where you live with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

All Respond: Amen

Individual and/or Communal Prayer Begins

Silent reflective prayer time can begin here for a portion of the hour but not necessarily all in one block of time. Additionally, a reading, reflection, rosary, communal prayer and/or singing is acceptable and encouraged to direct the attention of the faithful to the worship of Christ while maintaining a good balance with silent prayer and reflection time. Communal prayers related to vocations are those of thanksgiving for the gift of current priestly and religious vocations and petitions for more of the faithful to answer the Lord's call to such vocations in the future.

Tantum Ergo is sung while the presider kneels and incenses the Blessed Sacrament.

Presider: Let us Pray: Lord, may this sacrament of new life warm our hearts with your love and make us eager for the eternal joy of your kingdom. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

All Respond: Amen

Continued...



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Holy Hours

Holy Hour of Prayer for Those Called to Priesthood and Religious Life:

Benediction- The assembly silently kneels during Benediction which is the Blessing of the assembly with the Blessed Sacrament in the Monstrance. The priest, wearing the humeral veil, makes the sign of the cross with the monstrance.

The Divine Praises [The assembly recites in unison with the presider]

Blessed be God

Blessed be His Holy Name

Blessed be Jesus Christ, true God and true Man

Blessed be the Name of Jesus

Blessed be His Most Sacred Heart

Blessed be His Most Precious Blood

Blessed be Jesus in the Most Holy Sacrament of the Alter

Blessed be the Holy Spirit, the Paraclete

Blessed be the great Mother of God, Mary most Holy

Blessed be her Holy and Immaculate Conception

Blessed be her Glorious Assumption

Blessed be the name of Mary, Virgin and Mother

Blessed be St. Joseph her most chaste spouse

Blessed be God in His Angels and in His Saints

The Presider repositions the Blessed Sacrament in the Tabernacle

The humeral veil is removed.

Closing Hymn: Holy God We Praise Thy Name [All stand, the presider processes out]



Additional Resources

Eucharistic Hymns: O Salutaris Hostia and Tantum Ergo can be found at serraspark.org, Tool #20, with other samples of Holy Hours, prayers, and devotions dedicated to increase vocations.



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Visit us at serraspark.org

Using these vocation activities is a good way to start a Parish Vocation Ministry. Participants from the activities may be the nucleus of a new ministry. PLEASE go to serraspark.org and check out the Parish Vocation Ministry, Tool #10.



SPARK
Tools for Vocations

For more information about
Serra Vocations Tools, visit us at
SerraSpark.org
Or write us at
Spark@serraus.org
Phone 312-201-6549