



DIOCESE OF YOUNGSTOWN

October 29, 2021

OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

Dear Clergy, Vowed Religious, and Faithful of the Diocese of Youngstown,

This coming week, November 7 thru November 13, 2021, we celebrate National Vocation Awareness Week. This is a time for us to become not only more aware of the importance of vocations for the life of the Church but also to renew our efforts to pray for and promote religious vocations.

In his post apostolic exhortation, "The Joy of the Gospel," Pope Francis writes, "Many places are experiencing a dearth of vocations to the priesthood and consecrated life. This is often due to a lack of contagious apostolic fervor in communities, which results in a cooling of enthusiasm and attractiveness. Wherever there is life, fervor, and a desire to bring Christ to others, genuine vocations will arise. Even in parishes where priests are not particularly committed or joyful, the fraternal life and fervor of the community can awaken in the young a desire to consecrate themselves completely to God and to the preaching of the Gospel." (# 107)

Prayerful and vibrant faith communities are instrumental in the promotion of religious vocations. In fact, some years ago it was noted that parishes with regular Eucharistic Adoration tend to produce an abundance of vocations. I can personally testify to this inasmuch as when I was a pastor, we established a Eucharistic Chapel with regular adoration. Two men have been ordained to the priesthood and two more are in formation.

To that end, and in support of all those living out their religious vocation, I invite every parish and religious community to consider a plan for Eucharistic Adoration. It is imperative that we pray asking the harvest master to send more workers into the vineyard. I believe it is also vital that we live joyfully as missionary disciples.

I wish to thank all those who support the work of vocations under the direction of Fr. Scott Kopp, Vocation Director and his assistant, Mrs. Geri Deane. Of particular note, I am grateful to the Youngstown Vocation Support Society and the Knights of Columbus. I am also appreciative of those faith communities who are truly alive. And I want to say a personal word of thanks to all those living out their religious vocation with joy. Joy can be so inspiring and contagious.

Be assured of a remembrance in my prayers. I hope you will do the same for me. Together, let us pray, "That all may be one."

Sincerely in Christ,

Most Reverend David J. Bonnar
Bishop of Youngstown

144 West Wood Street • Youngstown, Ohio 44503
(330) 744-8451 • Fax: (330) 742-6448 • Email: bbonnar@youngstowndiocese.org