



Dear Diocese of Lansing Educators:

You have been on my heart and mind since I have taken this position as Vocation Coordinator for the diocese. I feel a call to reach out to you and encourage you in the beautiful and important mission you have, educating our children.

The mission of fostering vocations starts first in the home and second in the classroom. After parents, teachers are the #2 educators of our children. Teachers have a great influence on children's lives. Regarding the education and fostering vocations, we, in the vocations office, are supporters/encouragers of your mission to teach, guide, and foster your children's relationship with God and help them respond to His calling.

In light of this, I share a few thoughts regarding the ways in which you can foster a culture of vocations in your school:

- 1) *Your* example of living your vocation, of prayer, of listening and being obedient to God's will is the greatest witness you have to give them.
- 2) Encourage and teach them to pray and to be truly open to the call of the Lord. Fear not His voice since His will leads us to the greatest joy of our hearts.
- 3) Let them know that you support and encourage whatever the call of the Lord may be for them, that you also desire it. It is extremely hard for a child to walk freely towards his/her vocation without the positive support of their parents and adult influences.
- 4) Foster dialogue and questions they may have regarding vocations to married life, the priesthood, religious life, and consecrated life.
- 5) Encourage interaction with priests and consecrated religious, invite them to your class and to events at school. Consider contacting us here at the vocation's office to give presentations on vocations.
- 6) Pray as a class for vocations: for those in vocations to be faithful beautiful witnesses to us all (possibly naming some specific families, priests, religious, etc) and for those discerning vocations.
- 7) Encourage them to live the faith, faithfully participating in the Sacraments, church events, and live pure lives according to the Lord and His commandments.
- 8) Blessed John Paul II said that *our children belong first to God*; they are a gift. We are called to be stewards of this gift and work according to the will of the Lord, giving our

children back to God to be instruments of His love in the world whatever His calling may be for them.

9) Have your class pray for seminarians of the diocese or novices entering religious orders.

I thank you and encourage you, dear teachers. In dedicating yourselves to the beautiful mission of education, you walk with and guide the youth. I leave you with encouragement from Blessed John Paul II who speaks to families but also applies to all of us as the family of God:

*“The family that cultivates a missionary spirit in its lifestyle and in education itself, prepares good soil for the seed of the divine call and, at the same time, strengthens the loving ties and Christian virtues of its members.” (Pope John Paul II, May 22, 1994)*

If you would like more support regarding fostering a culture of vocations, feel free to contact me at any time.

God bless you!

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