



A message to the faithful of the archdiocese from Archbishop Michael Jackels

4 December 2019, 9:00 AM

Part 21: Helps for discernment: Service

Service of others is helpful when you are trying to learn if God is calling you to be a single person or married, a religious or a priest.

Service is helpful for that purpose if for no other reason because any and every authentic call from God is in some way plugged into living to give to others.

The measure of whether or not we respond to the call to holiness, and grow in holiness is not how many prayers we say, or how long we spend in church, but how our love for others is played out in service.

We can't possibly respond to the call to mission without serving someone, or some cause, say, in our parish, our community, our school, or at home.

And every call to a state of life involves living a shared life of self-gift in service, the only variation being who is served and how.

Without living to give to another, our personal prayer, or our public worship, or our obedience to commandments is incomplete.

While at university, I returned to the practice of my Catholic Faith, making a daily holy hour, going to daily Mass, trying to obey the Commandments, and going to Confession frequently.

After a while I told the Pastor of the student parish, who was also the vocation director, that I wanted to apply to the seminary and be a priest.

He responded with these words: I wouldn't take you if you were the last man on earth!

He went on to explain why, that while I was faithful to worship and sacraments, I always refused requests to serve in one way or another.

He said that I was dead weight on the Body of Christ, that the Church needs prayerful and hard-working priests, generous to every request to serve.

After I got over myself, I threw myself into every opportunity to serve, entered the seminary the next fall, and the rest is history.

Will you serve now? Can it be said that there is no one or no service that is beneath your dignity? If you will serve now, chances are you will serve a spouse or a parish.

Michael Jackels

Archbishop of Dubuque