



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

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Part 8: Call to a state in life

God has a plan for each person, to live in a permanent commitment to a stable state of life: dedicated single life or marriage, religious life or priesthood.

God's plan gives direction to how we participate in the mission of Jesus. For example, the mission of a married person is his/her spouse and children, while the mission of a priest is preaching to and sanctifying the wider community.

God's plan guides the practice of holiness, answering the questions: With whom do you live a shared life? To whom do you give the gift of self? For whose benefit do you serve?

Most people, especially young people, ask: What do I want to do (like a job)? But followers of Jesus also ask: What does God want me to be?

What we are to be is more important than what we do. What we do serves who we are; for example, a married person goes to work, not for the work itself, but for the sake of spouse, family, and home.

It is each person's challenge to learn God's plan for their way of life, say "yes" to it, and then live it out to the best of our ability. The payoff is enjoying happiness and fulfillment, and the having the best chance of making the world better.

A vocation is mysterious. People might ask: Why her or him to that state of life? But even if we question it, a vocation is God's will, and as such it is sovereign.

But even though our vocation is God's will, it is still merely an invitation; we are free to say "no" to God's call to a state of life without committing a sin.

The downside of saying "no" to God is enjoying less happiness, and having less influence on changing the world than if we had we said "yes" to God.

What is God calling you to be? Where will you find happiness, fulfillment, and way to make a difference, as a single person or married, a religious or a priest?

Michael Jackels
Archbishop of Dubuque

