FOSTERING VOCATIONS

“The Christian family, which is truly a ‘domestic Church’, has always offered favorable conditions for the birth of vocations.” ~ St. Pope John Paul II

Recently, three seminarians of our diocese joined us for a webchat: Ryan Kapavik, Philippe Dubourdieu and Caleb Krischke. In the interview, they each described their personal journey to the seminary, what life is like for them on a daily basis, and how all of us can help promote vocations. As we chatted, I was struck once again by how natural and organic their recommendations were: namely, that a vocation to the priesthood develops in much the same way a vocation to becoming a doctor, lawyer, or teacher develops. Within our homes, it can begin at the earliest ages simply by helping children realize it’s an option for their lives and teaching them about it. If we help our kids see the beauty of the priesthood and religious life, it will help them to consider it. And of course, if we observe any of the “tell tale” signs of a vocation, we need to really encourage them to consider the priesthood further! For example, pretending to celebrate Mass, or having a deep prayer life for a child their age.

Funny enough, as I was preparing to write this newsletter, I stumbled across an old brochure in my home on “Seven Ways Families Can Foster Vocations” printed by Vianney Vocations.

Here, I’d like to re-summarize those seven ways, so all of us can think of one new way we can promote vocations in our homes and with loved ones.

#1: Read stories about the saints. In addition to the usual books kids read, make books about saints one of their usual ones as well. Reading about the adventures of St. Francis of Assisi or St. John Paul II may really inspire them! There are more options than ever nowadays, and these books make great Christmas gifts!

Wednesday Webchats

Caleb Krischke
Ryan Kapavik
Philippe Dubourdieu

SEMINARIAN PANEL

Available on:

Diocese of Victoria Family Evangelization Facebook Page & YouTube Channel
Family Prayer: Lord, help us to be an instrument of your peace. Where there is hatred in our home, let us sow love; darkness, light; and anger, joy. In Jesus’ name we pray. Amen.

#2: Watch movies about the saints. You can find several options on platforms such as formed.org or even Amazon Prime. Show kids how saints are like real-life superheroes in the way they followed Jesus! It’s amazing to see how kids start to find their favorite saints, and even pray to them.

#3: Teach kids the truth. When they encounter messages from the culture that are contrary to our faith, especially about love and sexuality, it’s important that we as parents and mentors correct this. If kids grow up knowing the truth, they will be more likely to seek the truth when older. And if we don’t teach them, society, media, and their peers will be sure to do so. Our kids need us.

#4: Dress them up like saints! My boys love dressing up in costumes—in fact, just yesterday my son dressed up as an astronaut and superhero all within the same day. Why not add a saint’s outfit to kids’ wardrobes, and encourage them to envision life as St. Teresa of Calcutta or St. Don Bosco?

#5: Teach them to pray. Kids oftentimes pray better than us, due to the simplicity of their hearts. One family I know taught their kids how to pray from a very early age, and now one of their sons has discovered a religious vocation in their life. Don’t be afraid to teach your child how to pray from their heart, even from the age when they first begin to speak. If they learn how to talk to God when they are little, they can keep that going for the rest of their lives, and hear His Voice when He calls.

#6: Talk about vocations. Discuss vocations to the priesthood and religious life with your children, just like you do any possible future path they may take. And it’s even better to provide real-life examples for them when we...

#7: Develop friendships with priests & religious. If kids see clergy and religious more often, and develop real relationships with them, they are more likely to pursue a religious vocation. In fact, the amount of time children have the same pastor is a key determinant in whether they have a religious vocation or not! So, if they know a priest from a young age, it’s great for that priest to be a mentor in their life and help them (and you) to see if they might have the calling.

I pray that you and your loved ones can choose at least one of these ideas to implement to help promote vocations in your home. Thankfully, the future of our church is in good hands because we know that God is in control. All we need to do is our part to help make sure those called to lead have the courage, strength, and support to respond with a “yes.”

Serran Prayer for Vocations: O God, Who will not the death of a sinner but rather that he be converted and live, grant we beseech you, through the intercession of the Blessed Mary ever Virgin, Saint Joseph, her spouse, St. Junipero Serra, and all the saints, an increase of laborers for your Church, fellow laborers with Christ to spend and consume themselves for souls through the same Jesus Christ, Your Son, Who lives and reigns with You, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God forever and ever. Amen.