

# Signs of a Vocation



*Do you...*

***Have a DESIRE for it?*** Some people choose a way of life because they feel an obligation. They feel an obligation to marry or enter seminary, religious life, or the permanent diaconate, perhaps from friends or family. At the same time, some people may ignore a call from God because of family obligation or pressure. A vocation does not mean to "Bite the Bullet" until you get to heaven. Any way of life will have its undesirable moments, but they should not be the basic movement of your affectivity. You should not feel, "I am only doing this because God wants me to." ***When God calls you to something, God gives you the desire. Responding to a vocation is responding to the deepest desire of your heart.***

***Have some ABILITY to accomplish the responsibilities of that state in life?*** You don't have to be perfect or even at the top in your field. If you constantly are under pressure and cannot meet the ordinary demands when exploring that way of life, you should discern another lifestyle and see if that might be a better fit. ***Consider the gifts and talents given to you by God and discern how God is directing you to use those.***

***See signs of personal GROWTH?*** If you are stagnant and in a rut, centered only on your own needs, then it could be time for renewal or a new direction in your life. This is not to be confused with getting out of a commitment when things become ordinary or routine. Regular, ordinary days can tell us something about ourselves as well as times of crisis. ***Growth means finding deeper commitment in your life's choice and becoming more and more a reflection of your true self.*** Integrating personal needs and the responsibilities of your state in life is a sign of growth.

***Experience a CALL from God?*** This is the inner drawing that you know you haven't given to yourself. This is the feeling that ***"this is God's idea, not mine."***

**Recognize the EVENTS of your life as fitting a pattern and pointing to a certain life choice?** Do circumstances keep leading you in a certain direction?

**Have PEACE about the decision although tension may exist around you?**

**Have STRUGGLES and DOUBTS?** Anyone who is afraid to question might be seeking security rather than a life's choice that has uncertainties. Any way of life has unknown events, both good and bad. If you experience doubts, it doesn't necessarily mean that you are in the wrong lifestyle. Rather, it could mean you fully understand the depth of commitment that life demands. Someone who buries her or his head in the sand will never know doubt, but will never know reality either. **By continuing forward, even despite struggles and doubts, you will better understand God's plan for you.**

**Have some FEAR?** When you live as if you are in control, you don't fear as much. In your mind, you can do it all. (So You Think!) When God came close to Moses and Mary, they were afraid. The angel said to Mary, "**Be not afraid.**" Letting God take over your life is frightening. **When you let go of fear, you are open to embracing all God has to offer.**

**Have the feeling that it FITS?** After all is said and done, many times we know something is right for us, and we don't have all the words to say it. That's fine. **You don't need to be able to explain God's will, just accept it.**

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**Any vocation in life needs certain basic human qualities.**

*Are you...*

**Called by God—and your sisters and brothers—to this vocation?**

**Available, free at this point and time in your life to choose for or against a vocation? Are you free to choose to commit to the priesthood, religious life, or any other vocation?**

**Capable of Dedication, of being able to stay with a decision or task, even when it gets difficult?**

**Able to do the work, the ministry, the day-to-day aspects of the priesthood, religious life or any other vocation?**

**Selfless, able to give of yourself to God and others?**

These are only some of the valuable characteristics for which we should strive, regardless of which lifestyle we have chosen. No particular vocation—or life—choice automatically makes us a holy and whole person.

