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Issue:
6



"You are my servant; I have chosen you, and have not rejected you.
Do not be afraid, for I am with you" Isaiah 41:9-10



ARMY

Army Roman Catholic Newsletter



Current topics >>>



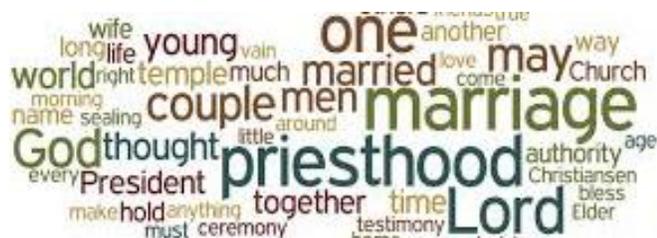
Welcome

From

The Revd Fr Paschal J Hanrahan CF
Principal Roman Catholic Chaplain (Army)



This month our main article is about vocations. The concept of vocation is multi-faceted however, I was called by God to serve Christ and the Church and I became a priest. That is my vocation. In listening with an open heart, I discovered my calling. I pray that there are many who will do the same and come to accept theirs.



= VOCATION

We often hear the word vocation and what immediately springs to mind, is the church and God calling people to the religious life or priesthood. Indeed, the Catholic Church defines vocation as a calling. Its more generic meaning is a strong feeling of suitability to a particular career pathway or job. This begs the question, what therefore is the difference between professional and vocational? The person that follows the professional vocation generally will be required to get extensive training, acquire specific skills, and qualifications to carry out the professional employment they have chosen, whereas, vocational is a person's innate ability towards a particular occupation. In other words, not learned behaviours but instinctive behaviours.

There are several significant things to consider regarding vocation:

- **Vocation is by invitation:** The word vocation comes from the Latin *vocare* which means 'to call'. God calls or invites you to a particular vocation: marriage, priesthood or religious life. Although each of us must make a decision about our vocation, that choice is a response to an invitation from God. As such, Pope Francis has commented: "to become priests, religious is not primarily our choice. I don't trust the seminarian, the novice who says: 'I have chosen this path.' I don't like this. It's not right! But it is the response to a call and to a call of love" (*Vatican City, 9 July 2013*).



- **God calls you personally:** God is interested in you personally and he calls you personally. Many times in scripture we see God calling individual men and women such as Noah (*Genesis 6:8-22*), Abraham (*Genesis 12:1-30*), Sarah (*Genesis 17:15-16*), Moses (*Exodus 3:1-4:14*), Samuel (*1 Samuel 3:1-18*), Mary (*Luke 1:26-38*), the Samaritan woman (*John 4:1-42*) and Peter (*Matthew 4:18-20*). Pope Francis has commented on this personal aspect of vocation: "In calling us God says to us: "You are important to me, I love you, I count on you." Jesus says this to each one of us! Joy is born from here, the joy of the moment in which Jesus looked at me. To understand and to feel this is the secret of our joy. To feel loved by God, to feel that for Him we are not numbers, but persons; and to feel that it is He who calls us" (*Vatican City, 9 July 2013*).



- **Your vocation is an expression of who you are:** "Be who you are meant to be and you will set the whole world on fire": this is a common paraphrase of the words of St Catherine of Siena. It's tempting to think of your vocation as something you *do*. But St Catherine of Siena speaks of vocation in terms of *being*, not *doing*. Vocation is not simply something that you *do* but it is an authentic expression of who you are, of your very identity.
- **God knows us best:** "Which of us knows what will make us happy?" asks Fr Jacques Philippe in *The Way of Trust and Love*. We have all had that experience of getting exactly what we thought we wanted, only to find ourselves still unsatisfied. But God knows us better than we know ourselves; He understands what will bring us real fulfillment, not just fleeting happiness. St Irenaeus had this great insight into vocation when he said: *God did not call me for any service I might render him; God called me because he knew that in his service I would be happy.* (*Against Heresies, IV, 14*) Fr Philippe has explained that "the most beautiful thing in this world is to be led by the hand of God. Not going at it alone when we pursue our interests and goals, but rather taking it on together with Someone who knows and loves us. Not building my life alone, but in a loving and trusting communion with God, the One who knows us better than we know ourselves, who created us with infinite tenderness and who knows which path will lead us to happiness and fruitfulness" (*Community of the Beatitudes, Discerning Your Vocation. A Catholic Guide for Young Adults.*)



- **A vocation is different from career:** When we speak of Christian vocations, we don't mean a job or a career. Your vocation is the way God invites you to love and give yourself to others. It is not simply the giving of your skills, services and expertise, but the giving of your whole self as a path to holiness.
- **Every vocation is a call to love:** On the surface the vocations of priesthood, religious life and married life, seem quite different. Although there is a beautiful diversity among these vocations, at their heart each shares a common commitment to love. As St John Paul II explained it, "Love is the fundamental and innate vocation of every human being" (*Familiaris Consortio*, 11).
- **God respects your freedom:** God created us with the "dignity of a person who can initiate and control his own actions"; we have the freedom to choose and be responsible. (*CCC 1730*). God does not want to force you to choose a certain path, but to listen to His invitation and respond freely, and so "God does not shout but whispers" (Fulton Sheen). We see this take place in *1 Kings* when Elijah was waiting for God to come to visit him. Elijah experienced "a great and strong wind...but the Lord was not in the wind; and after the wind an earthquake, but the Lord was not in the earthquake; and after the earthquake a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire; and after the fire a still small voice." (*1 Kings 19:11-12*). In order to hear the "still, small voice" like Elijah, we must create a place where we can be quiet, still and attentive.



(<https://www.vocationcentre.org.au/home/what-is-a-vocation/> - accessed 19 Sep 21)



The Catholic Church supports and teaches us that there are many callings but three primary vocations: Marriage, Religious Life and Priesthood.

The vocation of marriage is God's calling for two people to unite spiritually and emotionally - "God himself is that author of marriage" and he has given it a purpose. (*US Conf of Catholic Bishops, Marriage: Love and Life in the Divine Plan p.7*)



The vocation of the Religious Life is God's calling to join a community who love and serve the Lord in a unique way through prayer and service. Monks and nuns usually reside in monasteries and convents. In addition to their ministry of prayer they fulfil the needs of the world by teaching, serving as missionaries, running soup kitchens for the homeless and many other tasks.

The vocation of ordained priesthood is God's calling to serve God and his people by administering the sacraments. He himself receives the sacrament of Holy Orders which enables him to serve. A priest offers the ministry of Jesus Christ to us today. When a priest offers the holy sacrifice of the Mass, it is Christ who offers the sacrifice. When he absolves sins in the Sacrament of Reconciliation, it is Christ who forgives. When he partakes in the mission of the Church to teach and evangelise, it is Christ who speaks through him. When he offers love, comfort and support to God's people, Christ is truly present with them.



For this reason, St John Vianney explained the priesthood in the following terms: "The priest continues the work of redemption on earth ... If we really understood the priest on earth we would not die of fright but of love ... The priest is the love of the heart of Jesus" (*Catechism of the Catholic Church 1589*).

Many people are also called to the Diaconate. A deacon is also an ordained minister of the Catholic Church. He is involved in various liturgical activities. He assists the priest during Mass, he proclaims the Gospel and sometimes will preach. Deacons are enabled to officiate at Baptisms, weddings and funerals.



Did you know that there is a National Office for Vocation?

They can be found at: <https://www.ukvocation.org/>

If you wish to be considered for the priesthood, the person to contact is the Vocations Director of your diocese. A list can be found at:

<https://www.ukpriest.org/vocations-directors> and for permanent diaconate: <http://www.diaconate.org.uk/>



O God, we earnestly ask you to bless our Dioceses with many priests, brothers, sisters and deacons who will love you with their whole mind and heart and gladly spend their entire lives serving your church and making you known and loved. Bless our families, bless our children and choose from our homes those needed for your work. Mary, Queen of Clergy, pray for our priests, religious and deacons. Obtain for us many more. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Chaplain's Spotlight



This month, our Chaplain in the spotlight is Father David Smith who is currently serving at 2ITB in Catterick Garrison. He is also responsible for the faith community at St Joan of Arc's Church, Catterick Garrison.



On the 7th September 2021, Father David celebrated his Silver Jubilee, 25 years of priesthood.

Although originally born and brought up in Hexham, Northumberland, Father David became a priest within the Diocese of East Anglia. He was ordained on 7th September 1996 in Norwich Roman Catholic Cathedral and spent his first 6 years as an assistant priest in Ipswich, Suffolk and later as a hospital chaplain. The late Archbishop Peter Smith suggested that he might like to become an army chaplain. Father David commissioned into the RChD on 23rd September 2002. His 19 years within the army has seen him serve 2 operational tours on Op Telic in Iraq, postings in Northern Ireland, Kosovo, a further 2 operational tours in Afghanistan, the Army Foundation College, Harrogate, Lichfield, Royal Centre for Defence Medicine and latterly

Catterick Garrison. As well as being a Military Chaplain, Father David is currently studying for a PhD in Moral Injury. "Moral injury is the suffering people experience when we are in high stakes situations, things go wrong, and harm results that challenges our deepest moral codes and ability to trust in others or ourselves. The harm may be something we did, something we witnessed, or something that was done to us. It results in moral emotions such as shame, guilt, self-condemnation, outrage, and sorrow." (The Shay Moral Injury Centre, Sep, 2021). He hopes to complete his studies next year.

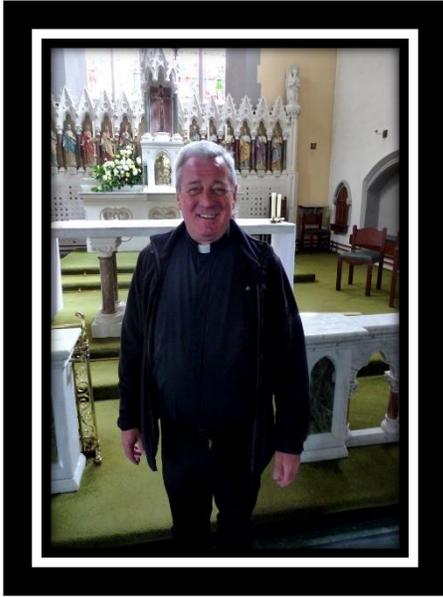
When asked how he felt about the last 25 years, Father David stated: " I knew from a young age I wanted to become a priest. It has been an absolute whirlwind! I never thought I would be a military priest but God gives us the strength and grace to do it."



We wish Father David many congratulations on his 25 years of ministry and thank him for his service.

Veterans Corner – Retired Army RC Chaplains

This Issue, in Veteran's Corner, we reflect on those who have previously served as military chaplains and find out a bit about them and what they are doing now.



Former Army Chaplain: Fr Tom Butler

I was born and brought up in Cleator Moor, near Whitehaven, in West Cumbria. I knew from a very early age that I wished to become a priest, that it was the right thing for me. At the age of sixteen I went to Ireland to begin studies for the priesthood at Mount Melleray Seminary in County Waterford, where I spent two years before moving to St John's College, Waterford City.

I was ordained a priest in 1981 at St Mary's, Cleator, the church I attended as a child. My first parish was St Columba's, Walney Island, Barrow-in-Furness, and I subsequently served at St Joseph's, Preston before becoming Bishop John Brewer's Secretary. My roles have included Chaplain at HM Prison Preston, HM Prison The Castle

Lancaster and HMYOI Lancaster Farms.

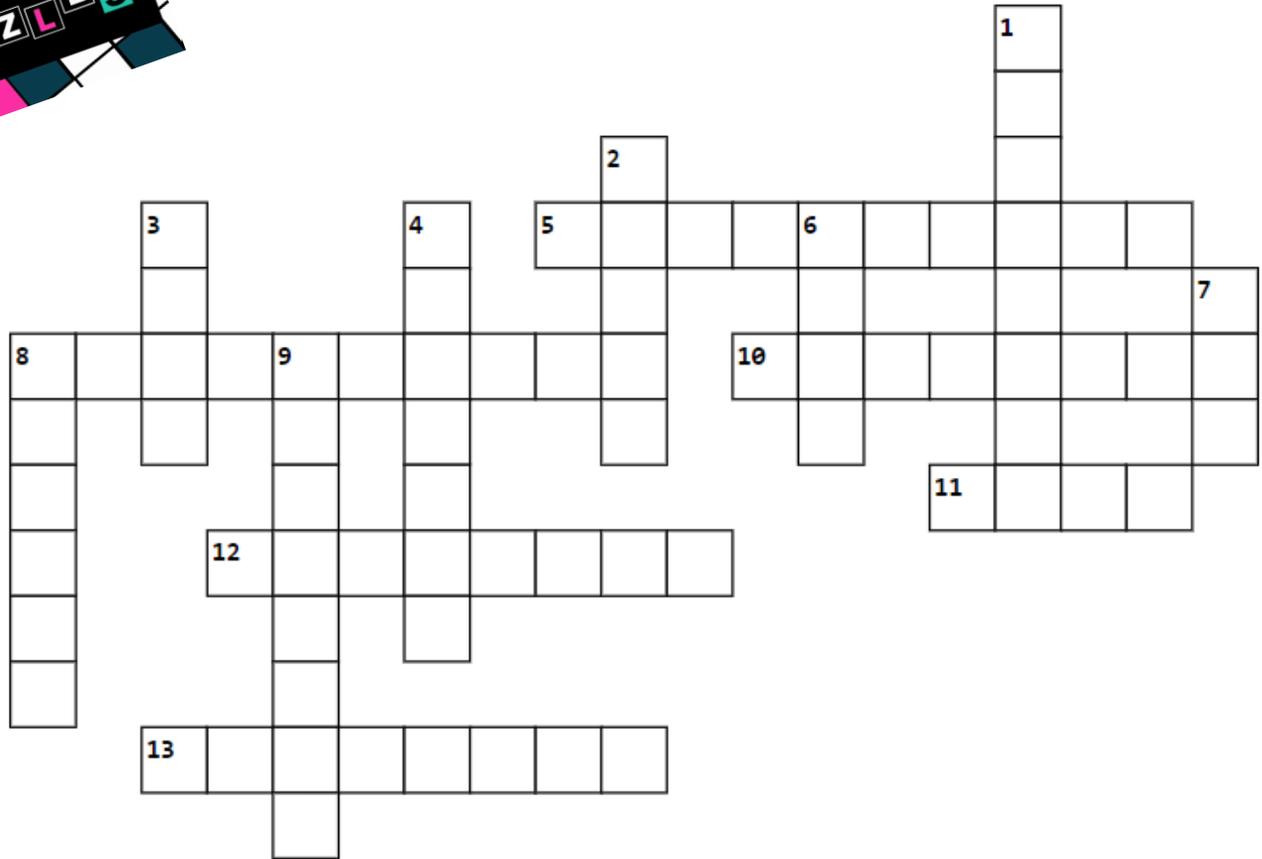
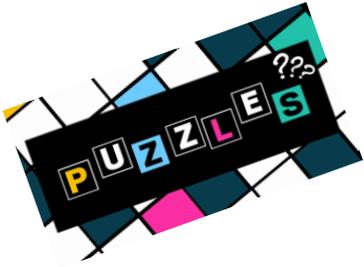
In 1995 I was asked by the Bishop to become an army chaplain, a role I carried out for the next eighteen years. I was mainly based in Germany, serving with many regiments and brigades, and went on operational tours to Bosnia, Kosovo, Northern Ireland and Iraq, on exercises to Oman, Jordan and Canada, and spent some time in Catterick and Chatham. My job was to be chaplain to the people in those postings and to the people supporting them. It was an enjoyable yet challenging time, one I feel glad to have had the opportunity to carry out.

I finally retired from the army eight years ago, returning to the Diocese of Lancaster and taking responsibility for the parishes of Maryport, Silloth and Wigton.

In March 2016 Bishop Michael Campbell asked me to move to Garstang and take responsibility for St Mary and St Michael's parish. I was there for three and a half years. My ministry now, is as a supply priest covering many parishes within the Lancaster Diocese.

In my spare time I enjoy a bit of light reading, watching television and walking by the sea - in the army I had to do a fair amount of walking as part of my work, but now it is lovely to walk for pleasure.

Crossword Number:3 'Things in Church'



Across:

5. The bowl used when a priest washes his fingers (6,4)
8. A vessel exposing the Blessed Sacrament (10)
10. The room where priests and servers prepare for services (8)
11. The reading desk where priests proclaim the readings from the bible (4)
12. A cross with the figure of Jesus on it (8)
13. The sleeved top garment worn by a Deacon (8)

Down:

1. The container for the bread, before or after the consecration (8)
2. A thin metal plate on which is sometimes placed the bread for consecration (5)
3. A water container used at baptism (4)
4. The cup that contains the precious blood (7)
6. A container for incense (4)
7. A container for the consecrated bread (3)
8. The book from which the prayers of the Mass are read (6)
9. The container for the burning charcoal and incense (8)

Answers to Newsletter Issue 5, Crossword No:2 - Across: 2. Paul, 7. House of Bread, 8. Solomon, 11. Martha, 13. The Lord Saves, 15. Seven, Down: 1. Peace, 3. Lydia, 4. Son of God, 5. Noah, 6. Lot, 9. Goliath, 10. Murder, 12. Noah, 14. Eleven

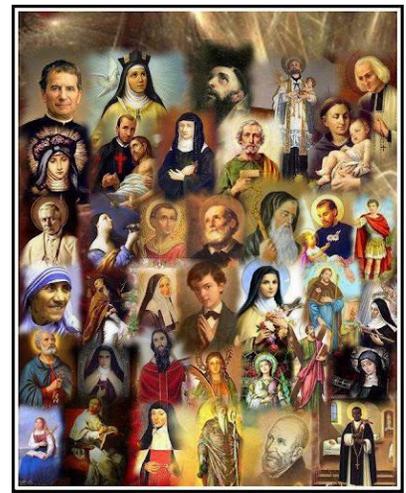
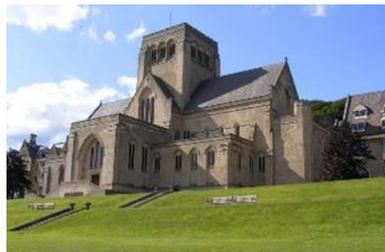
Answers to Newsletter Issue 6 will be published in Issue 7 or email Karen at: ArmyRCPAA21@gmail.com

Events >>>

Bishopric of The Forces Retreats 2021

Are you in need of stillness and sanctuary? Scripture gives us many examples of our Lord Jesus withdrawing from noise and bustle to pray and to gain respite (Mark 3:7, Luke 5:16). Subject to Government restrictions, there is the opportunity to find that same peace at one of the Bishopric of the Forces Retreats planned for 2021:

Worth Abbey, Sussex 4 - 7 Oct 21 Ampleforth Abbey, North Yorkshire
29 Nov- 2 Dec 21 DIN Reference 2020DIN01-124 gives more details. In the meantime, to express an interest or to receive an application form, contact Caroline.Routledge475@mod.gov.uk or rafprccpastoralassistant457@outlook.com



Key Dates in October & November

St John Henry Newman – 9th October
St Luke, Evangelist – 18th October
Ss Simon and Jude, Apostles – 28th October
All Saints – 31st October
All Souls – 2nd November
The Dedication of the Lateran Basilica –
9th November
Remembrance Sunday – 14th November
Our Lord Jesus Christ King of the Universe –
21st November
1st Sunday of Advent – 28th November
St Andrew, Apostle, Patron of Scotland –
30th November

An excellent website with weekly reflections on all the upcoming Sunday readings can be found at:
<https://www.tarsus.ie/>

CATHOLIC MILITARY ASSOCIATION the official network for Defence Catholics



We exist to support Catholics in the UK Armed Forces.

We are a lay association of the faithful whose members cooperate to support Catholicism in the UK Armed Forces.

We strive to inspire one-another in the Faith, to grow through prayer and the sacraments, and to offer up our sufferings, persevering together in the universal call to holiness.

We are the official Defence Catholic Association, formally approved by the Right Reverend Paul Mason, Bishop of the Forces. We are a member of the Defence Christian Network.

We are serving personnel, helping others. Find us at: <https://www.catholicmilitaryassociation.org.uk/>

Information.....

If you wish to know more about Roman Catholic matters within the Army Faith Community, please contact: **Mrs Karen Horn MBE** Pastoral Administrative Assistant (PAA) to PRCC(A) at: ArmyRCPAA21@gmail.com