



AMERICAN NATIONAL CATHOLIC CHURCH

May 5, 2017

A PASTORAL LETTER FROM ANCC PRESIDING BISHOP GEORGE R. LUCEY, FCM FOR THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER – GOOD SHEPHERD (VOCATIONS) SUNDAY

+ In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit!

Traditionally, the fourth Sunday of Easter, "Good Shepherd Sunday," is an occasion to remind the faithful of the importance of vocation. Accordingly, I invite all persons in the American National Catholic Church (ANCC) to pray that God might help them fulfill the vocation to which God calls them. As Vatican Council-II reminded us, the fostering of vocations is a task of the entire Christian community, exercised above all by the cultivation of a fully Christian life.

Participation in the community's fostering of vocations can lead some to think and pray about the possibility of ordained ministry. Therefore, the ANCC invites women and men to consider prayerfully if God is calling you to ordained service in the Church.

God invites each of to "go out into the deep." Doing so, as St. Peter and the Apostles discovered, always requires trust, courage, and commitment. Serving God as a priest or deacon in the ANCC especially calls forth these three virtues. Because we are a young and small jurisdiction, following Christ in ordained ministry often must be done without the institutional support of a larger ecclesial body.

Yet the rewards are immense. Precisely because we are small, persons called to ordained ministry have the blessed opportunities to plant parishes from the ground up by seeking out those who hunger, sometimes desperately, for a spiritual home that will welcome them just as they are. There is a spiritual excitement, a sense of holy adventure, which animates ministry in the ANCC, not dissimilar, surely, to the Holy Spirit-inspired exhilaration that the earliest Christians must have felt.

We know from requests for information we receive every week that there is a great longing throughout the nation for more ANCC parishes. As a small jurisdiction, we cannot hope to plant new parishes without dedicated people eager to honor the vocations, ordained or otherwise, to which God calls them. I ask you to pray about how you can use your gifts and talents to build up the jurisdiction, plant new parishes, and continue to witness to the central truth of the inclusive and extravagant love of God at the heart of the Church Catholic.


Most Reverend George Lucey, FCM

Presiding Bishop