



# DIOCESE OF NOTTINGHAM DISCERNMENT

**DISCERNMENT** is about asking God to reveal his plan for your life.

Your call may be to married life or the single life. Your call may be to priesthood or to live religious life in community. There are so many options to choose and so many influences crowding in on us that it can be difficult to know at first what God's plan is for us. What is my calling, my vocation? How do you decide? **Here are a few guidelines to help you.**

## **PRAY**

Pray for guidance in discovering your vocation in life. Share your thoughts with God in prayer. Sit in silence and be open to God's gentle voice. Do you hear his call? Do you feel a yearning in your heart to be part of God's plan and do his will?

Reading passages from the Bible in a prayerful, thoughtful way can help us to become aware of God in our lives and hear his call more clearly. For example, have a look at: Known by God - Psalm 139:1-18; The call of Samuel - 1 Samuel 3; The Wedding in Cana - John 2:1-10; Called to be disciples - Mark 1:14-20; Women disciples - Luke 8: 1-3; Martha & Mary - Luke 10: 38-42; Chosen - John 15: 15-17; Instructions on the Mass - 1 Corinthians 11: 17-34; Called to serve - Matthew 20: 25-28.

## **SELF AWARENESS**

The more we reflect on our lives and become more self-aware, the more it will help us to discover God's plan for our lives. Ask yourself questions like: How strong is my Catholic Faith? How am I involved in the Catholic Church? Do I feel the need to help others? Do I relate well with others, including those who are different from me? What are my talents and skills? How can I best use these talents to help others - in marriage, as a priest, as a religious sister or a religious brother, by remaining single?

## **INFORM**

Inform yourself about marriage, about being single, about priesthood and about religious life. Look up appropriate websites: [www.nottinghamvocations.co.uk](http://www.nottinghamvocations.co.uk); [www.ukvocations.org](http://www.ukvocations.org). Here you will find articles, information, reading lists, and details of events which you will find useful to attend to help you in your discernment.

## **SEEK ADVICE**

Eventually you will need to talk to someone. Seek reliable advice from people you trust. Sometimes we can be struggling for a long time with our discernment, but once we share our

thoughts and questions with a friend, a family member or a well-informed person, our thoughts soon clarify and become focused ... and the other person may not have said a word! Just a listening ear!

In the Diocese of Nottingham, we have a Discernment Centre, where our Diocesan Directors of Vocation and the Diocesan Vocations Team are on hand to advise and support you. Here we have regular events to support people in discerning their vocation, especially to priesthood and religious life. You can contact them at: The Vocations Team, The Old Friary, 247, Gordon Road, Thorneywood, Nottingham, NG3 2LG. Or [vocations@dioceseofnottingham.uk](mailto:vocations@dioceseofnottingham.uk); Telephone: 0115 950 1064.

## ENCOURAGE

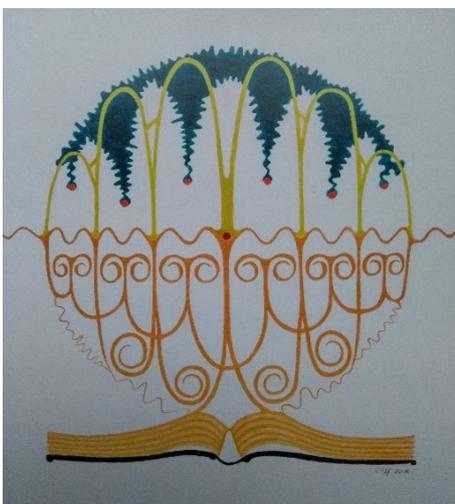
Finally, whatever **your** calling is in life, please encourage others in **their** vocation in the life of the Church. Share with them some of the insights you have read above or on the various websites or from people you have spoken to. There is a Diocesan Prayer for Vocations available from your parish or from the Diocesan Directors of Vocations mentioned above. Add this prayer to your own prayers and pass it on to others.

Above all...

**Keep on listening for the gentle invitation from God  
to follow his will in your life.**

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*'O that today you would listen to his voice. Harden not your hearts.'*  
*Psalm 95:7,8; Hebrews 3:7.*



The sound wave is the geometrical structure of the design. The sound wave is woven into the Tree of Life which takes its form from those magnificent trees with clusters of aerial roots in arid zones.

The aerial roots emerge through the soil from their source of nourishment - the Bible, from whence emanates The Word.

The tree's canopy holds seven pieces of fruit, one of which has ripened and fallen into the centre of The Tree.

This purple piece of fruit is Love - the heart of Christ's teaching.

Cliff Moughtin - October 2018