

Lesson 20

Sacraments of Service

The Sacraments of Service are about Love and Vocation.....



The “Sacraments of Service” are one of the three categories of sacraments. There are two sacraments of service: Matrimony and Holy Orders. Both of these sacraments provide a service to both the Church and the world. Matrimony and Holy Orders contribute to the personal salvation of those who receive them. The mission of those who receive these sacraments is service in the Kingdom of God. In Matrimony, the love between married couples is a direct reflection of God’s love for the world. The couple’s love also reflects the love of Christ for his Church. When receiving Holy Orders, men accept an important role in serving the community; they help continue Jesus’ presence on earth, especially through the dispensation of the sacraments.

The Sacraments of Service provide vocations. A “vocation” is the call each of us has in life to be the person God wants us to be. It is through our vocation that we can better serve the Church and the Kingdom of God. There are three vocations: Single Life, Religious Life, and Married Life. The Sacrament of Matrimony allows the couple to enter into the vocation of Married Life. The Sacrament of Holy Orders allows a man to enter the vocation of Religious Life. The vocation of Single Life is for those who are not married and who are not living the vocation of Religious Life.

Matrimony



In Matrimony, a man and woman are united with each other as a sign of unity between Jesus and his Church. Matrimony requires the consent of the couple, as expressed in the marriage promises. Marriage is a natural institution between one man and one woman. The married couple is called to participate with God in His plan of creation. The main mission of the married couple is to create a family and therefore reflect God's great love for the world.

God calls couples to a special vocation through the Sacrament of Matrimony: to live a life of love in a community. In this sacrament, a man and a woman celebrate their commitment to lifelong love for each other. Matrimony builds the people of God, the Church. Matrimony is based on the personal decision of a man and a woman, who promise to dedicate themselves to each other for their entire lives. As a sacrament, the couple's union is a reflection of the love of Christ for his Church.

Because marriage is important in building the Church, the people of God, the celebration of the sacrament takes place in the Church before a clergy member (*bishop, priest, or deacon*). Two other witnesses must be present to confirm that the couple made an exchange of consent. During the ceremony itself, the couple exchanges promises (*consent*) since they are the ministers of the Sacrament of Matrimony. The standard promises that the couple exchanges are as follows:

"I, (name), take you, (name) to be my wife/husband. I promise to be true to you in good times and in bad, in sickness and in health. I will love you and honor you all the days of my life."

Through the Sacrament of Matrimony, couples receive the grace they need to perfect their human love in a way that makes it similar to Christ's love for his Church. In the Sacrament of Matrimony, the Holy Spirit gives the couple the strength of enduring love.

The Holy Spirit also helps the couple build the “domestic church” (*a term referring to the family unit*). In the domestic church, children are introduced to the faith by learning to worship God, to love and forgive, and to work together in a spirit of charity. Cooperating with the Holy Spirit, the family forms a community of grace and prayer where children practice living a holy life and loving one another.



THE TWO EFFECTS OF MATRIMONY



The marriage bond

This bond has been established by God himself in such a way that a marriage between two baptized persons can never be dissolved.



The grace of the sacrament of Matrimony

This grace is intended to perfect the couple's love and to strengthen their indissoluble unity.

THE SEVEN SACRAMENTS  CatholicLink SOURCE: CATHOLIC.NET

The Sacrament of Matrimony produces the following effect: it forms an indissoluble (*unbreakable*) bond between a man and a woman. Hence, through the Sacrament of Matrimony, the husband and wife are no longer two, but rather one (*in heart and mind*).

One of the key virtues of matrimony is purity. This virtue is not selfishness; it is surrender and sacrifice. We see this most clearly in the Sacrament of Matrimony since married life crushes selfishness because it merges two individuals into a corporate life in which

neither individual lives for self, but for the other. Matrimony narrows selfishness because the rearing of children demands sacrifice. A husband and wife may live only for each other, but a father and mother must die to themselves in order to live for their children.

Holy Orders



In Holy Orders, men are ordained as priests to lead the community, as bishops to shepherd the Church, or as deacons to serve the community. The sacrament involves the laying on of hands for all three, and the anointing with Sacred Chrism for bishops and priests. Holy Orders is the sacrament by which men are called by the Holy Spirit to serve the Church.

There are three Offices (*Degrees or kinds of participation*) in the Sacrament of Holy Orders:

- 1. Order of Bishop**

A bishop receives the fullness of the Sacrament of Holy Orders. He is head of a local church called a diocese. He is also part of the episcopal college, the group of bishops who, with the pope, guide the Church. Bishops are successors of the apostles with the fullness of Christ's priesthood.

- 2. Order of Priest**

Priests serve the community in various ways, such as presiding at liturgies, preaching, celebrating the sacraments, and teaching. Priests are co-workers of the bishop.

- 3. Order of Deacon**

Deacons serve the needs of the community, proclaim the Gospel, teach, baptize, witness marriages, and assist the bishop and priests at Mass. There are two types of Deacon: Transitional Deacon and Permanent Deacon. A Transitional Deacon is studying to become a Priest. Whereas, the Permanent Deacon is called to remain a deacon for life. Permanent Deacons are usually

married before becoming deacons since once they enter into the office of deacon, they can no longer get married.

The Sacrament of Holy Orders produces the following effects:

1. The sacrament imparts an indelible mark.
2. It gives the grace of the Holy Spirit to administer the sacraments, to teach, and to shepherd God's people.
3. Holy Orders confers the office of bishop, priest, or deacon.

Men receive the Sacrament of Holy Orders in the Rite of Ordination, by which the bishop, through the laying on of hands, prays a prayer asking the Holy Spirit to give candidates the ability to minister to the Church. Through this rite these men receive a permanent spiritual mark (*indelible mark*) marking them as representing Jesus' presence in the Church.

Only bishops can ordain men to the Sacrament of Holy Orders by the laying on of hands and the prayer of consecration. During the ordination to the diaconate, the deacon makes a promise of celibacy (*they won't get married*), prayer, and obedience to the bishop and his successors. At a priesthood ordination, the priest's hands are anointed with the Sacred Chrism. During the ordination of a bishop, the new bishop's head is anointed with Sacred Chrism.

Consecrated Life

There is a difference between those who received the Sacrament of Holy Orders and those who choose to live the consecrated life. The following questions are designed to present a clear picture of consecrated life and what it entails.

What is consecrated life?

In responding to their baptismal call, some men and women join religious communities in order to consecrate their lives to God as a way of seeking holiness. To consecrate something means to set it aside or devote it to a holy purpose. When a man or woman decides to accept Christ's invitation to leave everything and follow him in a more radical way, they make vows to live like Jesus in poverty, chastity, and obedience. They participate in a ceremony in which they make this commitment, much like a married couple exchanges their vows on their wedding day. They promise Christ that they will live the rest of their lives dedicated exclusively to him. These vows help them to live simply, to be more open with God, and to depend totally on Him.

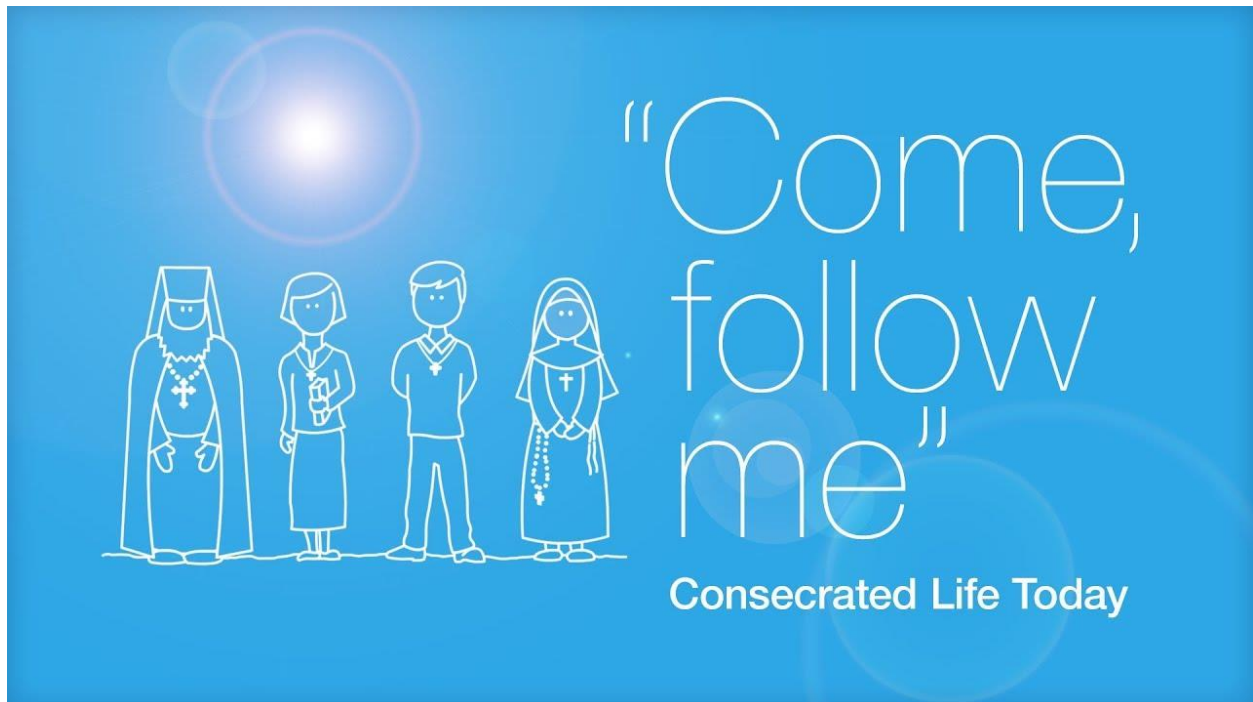
What is a Religious Sister?

A woman religious is a member of a religious congregation who shares in a particular apostolate (*type of work or mission*). After a period of promising simple vows, the sister makes perpetual simple vows for life. These vows are poverty, chastity and obedience. Most of the institutes whose members are called "Sisters" were established since the

nineteenth century. Congregations of sisters typically live and are active in the world. They serve in a variety of active ministries reaching out into the world to assist the Church in a variety of areas: health, schools, parishes, etc.

What is the difference between a Religious Sister and a Religious Nun?

While the titles are often used interchangeably there is a difference. Nuns take solemn vows of poverty, chastity and obedience and live a contemplative lifestyle most often in a cloistered environment. They live a life of silence and prayer. They engage in some work to help support themselves.



What is a Religious Brother?

A brother is a single, Catholic layman who lives his baptismal commitment by joining a religious community of vowed members dedicated to serving God and those around them. Religious brothers profess the evangelical counsels (vows) of poverty, chastity, and obedience. They also commit themselves to a life of ministry, prayer, and Gospel witness within the context of community.

What is the difference between a Religious Brother and a Religious Priest?

A brother lives in a religious community and works in nearly any ministry: teacher, cook, lawyer, etc. Brothers do not feel called by God to the ordained ministry as priests and deacons are. Thus, since brothers are not ordained, they are not sacramental ministers. A religious priest takes the same vows as a brother and may also work in a variety of positions, but he is also ordained to the priesthood and serves as a sacramental minister.

What is the difference between a Diocesan Priest and a Religious Priest?

A diocesan priest ordinarily serves the Church within a geographic area called a Diocese. He ordinarily serves the people as a parish priest, but he may also be involved in many other forms of ministry like teaching, hospital ministry, campus ministry, or prison ministry. Diocesan priests make promises of celibacy as well as obedience to their bishop. They do not make a vow of poverty, but are to live simply so they can be of service to God's people.

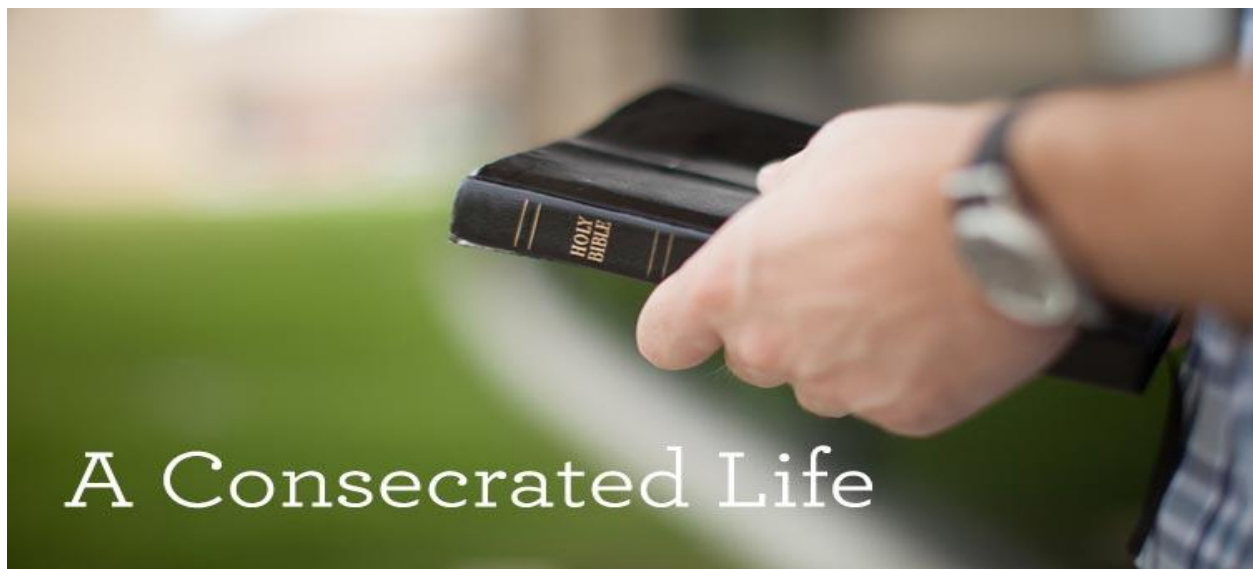
A religious priest is a member of a religious congregation whose ministry goes beyond the geographic limits of any diocese. A religious priest seeks to live a life of poverty, chastity, and obedience within a community of men. The community shares a common vision and spirituality and often emphasizes a particular type of ministry.

What is a religious community?

Groups of men or women who live under a religious rule and who publicly profess vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience form a religious community. They are referred to as an order or congregation who are recognized by Church authority. Religious communities typically follow the rule of their founder, which can be apostolic and characterized by working in the world, or contemplative, which is characterized by a life of solitude and prayer. One way to identify an individual's connection to a specific order or congregation is by the initials following their name, which identifies the order to which they belong.

What are vows and what do they mean?

A vow is a public sacred promise or commitment made to God with the approval of the Church. The vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience are also known as evangelical counsels; they may be taken for one, two, or three years, depending upon the decision of the community and the individual. These promises are renewable for up to nine years. As soon as three years after making temporary vows, a person can make a promise to live the vows for life.

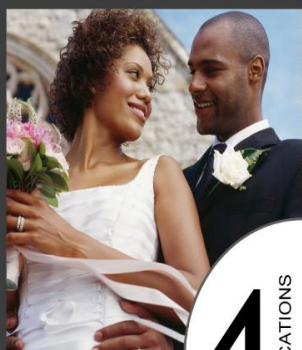


HOLINESS IS THE FIRST
VOCATION.

HOLINESS MEANS TRYING
TO BE LIKE JESUS.

Most people are called to marriage—to wholeheartedly love their spouse and to joyfully welcome children. The purpose of marriage is for a man and woman to help each other get to heaven, and to teach their children to do the same. Like any vocation, marriage must be discerned, not assumed.

MARRIAGE



PRIESTHOOD



A priest's job is to bring Jesus to people and people to Jesus—primarily through preaching the Gospel and administering the sacraments. Priests are ordained for this ministry by a bishop, who himself was ordained by a bishop, on and on for two thousand years. We call this unbroken tradition "apostolic succession."

Both men and women can join religious orders such as the Franciscans, Dominicans, Benedictines, etc. The life and work of religious orders varies greatly—from communities that dedicate themselves to lives of prayer, to those who work actively in schools, hospitals, orphanages, etc. The "glue" that holds together religious life are the vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience.

RELIGIOUS LIFE



SINGLE LIFE



Some people are called to serve God as single people, without marrying or taking special vows, but nonetheless serving the Church in a meaningful way. Single people "contribute greatly to the good of the human family" (CCC 2231). "Some live their situation in the spirit of the Beatitudes, serving God and neighbor in exemplary fashion." (CCC 1658).

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MAIN VOCATIONS

HOW
IS GOD
CALLING
YOU?

ASIDE FROM YOUR DECISION
TO FOLLOW JESUS,

YOUR VOCATION IS LIFE'S
MOST IMPORTANT DECISION.