



*"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future." – Jeremiah 29:11*

As we begin National Vocations Awareness Week, celebrated November 5th-11th, these words remind us that all people have a call, a vocation, from God. Life is a precious gift, given to us by God, and we are here for a reason. The prophet's words are an affirmation that God invites us to collaborate with Him so that, through us, He can affect the lives of others.

When we think of a vocation, black collars and veils may quickly come to mind. But vocations take many paths; doctors, teachers, nurses, scientists, those who are married or single, and yes, those in the priesthood, permanent diaconate, or consecrated or religious life, are all forms of a vocation. Pope Francis said in his message on the World Day of Prayer for Vocations that, "This Day is a precious opportunity for recalling with wonder that the Lord's call is grace, complete gift, and at the same time a commitment to bring the Gospel to others. We are called to a faith that bears witness, one that closely connects the life of grace, as experienced in the sacraments and ecclesial communion, to our apostolate in the world."

Through our vocations, whether that is a call to the priesthood, religious life, marriage, consecrated life, the diaconate or single life, we are all called to let go of ourselves, setting aside what we want, in order to do the work the Lord has called us to.

In my short time as the Bishop of Harrisburg, I have spoken to and witnessed the faithfulness of our wonderful priests, deacons, seminarians, and religious brothers and sisters. These men and women speak freely of the joy and graces they have received from God by following the call, the vocation, He placed on their hearts.

As daughters and sons of Christ, each of us have a call to holiness and a specific vocation to make us a witness to God's love, which may be a call to the priesthood or consecrated life. During this National Vocations Awareness Week, I encourage the faithful of the Diocese to spend a little extra time with our Lord, discerning what your vocation may be. I also ask all people of the Diocese to continue praying for vocations to the priesthood and consecrated life.

My God bless you, your families, the clergy and religious of our Diocese, and may He guide us as we discern His plan for our lives.

Sincerely in Christ,

Most Reverend Timothy C. Senior  
Bishop of Harrisburg