Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church

Week Of Prayer For Vocations To Priestly Ministry And Consecrated Life

November 21–27, 2026 A.D.

Parish Youth Meeting

WITH THAT, THEIR EYES WERE OPENED

Luke 24:31

Manual Guide for Priests and Youth Leaders



01 A PAUSE ALONG THE WAY

Purpose of the Meeting

This parish youth meeting is an opportunity to help young people reflect prayerfully on the meaning of **Christian vocation**.

The goal is not to pressure young people to choose a particular state of life. Rather, the purpose is to help them recognize that **God has a plan and a mission for every person** and that each of us is called to listen, discern, and respond.

The meeting should help young people:

- recognize that every Christian has a vocation;
- understand the universal call to holiness;
- discover their God-given gifts and talents;
- reflect on how God may be calling them to serve others;
- develop a deeper life of prayer and listening to God;
- understand the different Christian vocations;
- become open to the possibility of priesthood, religious life, marriage, or consecrated/single life;
- identify people who can accompany them in vocational discernment;
- take one concrete step toward discovering God's call.

Important principle for the priest/leader

The purpose is not to ask, "What career do you want?" but rather, "Lord, what are You calling me to become, and how do You want me to serve?"

02 A PAUSE ALONG THE WAY

Opening Prayer

Opening Prayer: **Heavenly King...**

Allow a brief moment of silence after the prayer.

The priest or youth leader may introduce the meeting:

> Today we are going to talk about something that concerns every one of us: our vocation. God did not create us by accident. Each of us has been given life, gifts, relationships, and opportunities through which God invites us to participate in His work.
>
> Our vocation is not simply a job or a career. It is the answer to the question: **"Lord, who are You calling me to become?"**
>
> Today we will walk with the disciples on the road to Emmaus and ask the Lord to open our eyes, our minds, and our hearts so that we may recognize His presence and hear His call.

03 A PAUSE ALONG THE WAY

Scripture: The Road to Emmaus (Luke 24:12-35)

Have one of the young people read the Gospel passage aloud.

After the reading, allow one or **two minutes of silence**.

Then invite the young people to consider:

The disciples were walking along a road. They were disappointed, confused, and uncertain about what had happened. Jesus joined them, but at first they did not recognize Him.

Their journey changed when they listened to Jesus, opened their hearts, and finally recognized Him.

Our vocational journey can be similar. Sometimes we do not immediately understand where God is leading us. We may have questions, fears, disappointments, or competing plans. But Christ walks with us.

Vocational discernment begins when we learn to walk with Jesus and listen to Him.

04 A PAUSE ALONG THE WAY

What Is a Vocation?

Explain to the young people:A vocation is more than choosing a profession.

> A career asks: **“What do I want to do?”**
>
> A Christian vocation asks: **“Who is God calling me to become?”**
>
> and: **“How is God calling me to love and serve?”**

Every Christian vocation is rooted in **Baptism and the call to holiness.**

God calls each person to use his or her gifts for the good of others and for the building of His Kingdom.

Vocation can be lived through different states of life, including:

- marriage and family life;
- priesthood;
- religious life;
- consecrated life;
- dedicated single life;
- professional and missionary service;
- service to the Church and society.

The particular vocation of each person is unique.

05 A PAUSE ALONG THE WAY

First Vocation: The Call to Holiness

Before asking young people whether God is calling them to marriage, priesthood, religious life, or another state of life, begin with the most fundamental vocation:

> **"God calls every person to holiness."**
> Holiness begins with friendship with Jesus.

It means learning to live as:

- a beloved child of God the Father;
- a friend and disciple of Jesus Christ;
- a temple of the Holy Spirit;
- a brother or sister to others.

Explain: Holiness is not simply about doing more religious things. It is about allowing Christ to transform who we are and how we live.

The question is not only, "What am I going to do with my life?" but also, "What kind of person is Jesus calling me to become?"

06 A PAUSE ALONG THE WAY

Personal Reflection: Who Am I Before God?

Give each young person several minutes of silence.

Invite them to write their answers privately.

Questions for Personal Reflection

- Who am I in God's eyes?
- What gifts and talents has God given me?
- What qualities do other people recognize in me?
- What brings me genuine joy?
- What needs in the world touch my heart most deeply?
- When do I feel closest to God?
- What am I passionate about?
- What are some of my fears about the future?
- What kind of person do I want to become?
- How might God want to use my gifts to help others?

Then ask:

If I truly believe that God knows me, loves me, and has a purpose for my life, what difference should that make in the way I make decisions?

07 A PAUSE ALONG THE WAY

The Questions of Vocational Discernment

The following questions can be used for individual reflection or small-group discussion.

The Big Questions

Ask the young people:

- Why was I made?
- Why am I here?
- What is God's plan for my life?
- What am I meant to do?
- Who am I called to become?
- Where might God be calling me to go?
- Whom is God asking me to serve?
- How can I use my gifts for others?
- How can my life make the world a better place?
- Where is God already working in my life?
- What might God be asking me that I am afraid to hear?

08 A PAUSE ALONG THE WAY

Learning to Listen to God

Explain that vocational discernment **requires prayer**.

We cannot discern God's call if we never give ourselves time to listen.

Prayer is not simply telling God what we want. Prayer also means becoming quiet enough to hear what God may be saying.

Discussion Questions

- What does my prayer life look like right now?
- When do I pray?
- What makes prayer difficult for me?
- Have I ever experienced a moment when I felt God was speaking to me?
- How do Scripture, the Eucharist, Confession, silence, and personal prayer help us recognize God's voice?
- What could I change in my prayer life during the next month?
- Who helps me grow in my relationship with Jesus?

Practical challenge

Invite every young person to make one simple commitment:

"This week I will give God ___ minutes of quiet prayer each day and ask: 'Lord, what are You calling me to do with my life?'"

09 A PAUSE ALONG THE WAY

God Calls Us Through Our Gifts

Tell the young people: God does not give us gifts randomly. Our abilities, interests, experiences, compassion, and desires can become instruments through which we serve others.

Discussion

Ask:

What am I good at?

- What do people ask me to help them with?
- What problems in the world make me want to do something?
- Do I enjoy teaching, serving, organizing, encouraging, listening, creating, leading, caring for others, or praying?
- How could these gifts become part of my Christian vocation?

Then ask the deeper question:

> “Lord, how can I use what You have given me for Your glory and for the good of others?”

10 A PAUSE ALONG THE WAY

Specific Discernment: Could God Be Calling Me to Priesthood or Religious Life?

This part of the discussion should be approached **positively and without pressure**.

Introduce it by saying:

> Every Christian should be open to asking whether God may be calling him or her to priesthood or religious life.
>
> This does not mean that everyone is called to these vocations. It means that we should give God the freedom to speak before we make our decision.
>
> Sometimes we ask God, "Lord, what do I want?" Instead, vocational discernment asks, **"Lord, what do You want?"**

Questions for Reflection

- Have I ever seriously considered priesthood or religious life?
- Why have I considered it, or why have I never considered it?
- What attracts me to priesthood or religious life?
- What concerns or fears do I have about these vocations?
- Do I enjoy serving people and accompanying them in their faith?
- Do I have a desire to help people encounter Jesus Christ?
- Do I find meaning in prayer, the Eucharist, Scripture, and the life of the Church?
- Could I imagine giving my life completely to God and to the service of His people?
- What would be difficult for me about priesthood or religious life?
- What would I need to learn before making such a decision?
- Is there a priest, sister, brother, monk, or seminarian whose life inspires me?
- What qualities do I see in that person?
- Could God possibly be inviting me to consider this vocation?
- What would I need to do to discern this possibility honestly?
- Am I willing to pray, “Lord, if You are calling me, help me to recognize Your voice”?

11 A PAUSE ALONG THE WAY

Addressing Common Fears

Youth may hesitate to consider priesthood or religious life because of questions such as:

- “What if I am not good enough?”
- “What if I make the wrong decision?”
- “What will my friends think?”
- “What will my parents think?”
- “Will I be happy?”
- “Will I be lonely?”
- “Will I have a fulfilling life?”
- “Will I have to give up everything I enjoy?”
- “What if God asks too much of me?”

The leader should not provide simplistic answers.

Instead, invite discussion:

Questions

- What fears can prevent a person from responding to God’s call?
- Why do we sometimes think that following God’s will means giving up happiness?
- Can surrendering our lives to God actually become a path to deeper freedom and joy?
- Why is it important to speak with someone who is actually living the vocation we are considering?

12 A PAUSE ALONG THE WAY

Youth Are Not Only the Church of Tomorrow

Emphasize: Young people are not merely the future of the Church. **They are members of the Church today**.

Ask:

- How am I already serving the Church?
- How can I bring Christ to my school or workplace?
- How can I be a witness to Christ among my friends?
- How can I respond to loneliness, anxiety, hatred, division, or suffering around me?
- How can I bring hope to others?
- What does Christian leadership look like among young people today?
- Where is the Holy Spirit already working through young people?

Key message

Every young person already has a mission.

Vocation is not something that begins after graduation or after a major life decision. We begin living our Christian vocation today.

13 A PAUSE ALONG THE WAY

The Emmaus Connection

Return to **Luke 24**.

The leader asks:

What happened to the disciples on the road to Emmaus?

Allow the young people to identify the stages.

1. They were walking.
Our vocation is a journey.

2. Jesus joined them.
Christ accompanies us even when we do not recognize Him.

3. They listened.
Discernment requires listening.

4. Their hearts began to burn.
God can awaken desires within us.

5. Their eyes were opened.
Discernment helps us recognize God's presence and call.

6. They returned to Jerusalem.
An encounter with Christ sends us toward mission.

Then ask:

> Where am I on my own Emmaus journey?

14 A PAUSE ALONG THE WAY

Small-Group Discussion

Divide the young people into groups of approximately 5-8.

Ask each group to discuss **three or four** questions rather than attempting all of them.

Suggested Questions

- What does the word “vocation” mean to you?
- What makes it difficult for young people to hear God’s call today?
- What helps young people hear God’s voice?
- What gifts do young people have that the Church needs today?
- Why might someone consider priesthood or religious life?
- What are some misconceptions young people have about priesthood or religious life?
- What makes a person happy in life?
- How can we distinguish God’s call from our own desires?
- Who has helped you grow closer to Christ?
- What could our parish do to help young people discern their vocations?

15 A PAUSE ALONG THE WAY

Personal Commitment

After the small-group discussion, return to prayerful silence.

Give each person a card or piece of paper.

Ask them to complete:

My Next Step

Lord Jesus, I ask You to help me discover Your call for my life. This week I will:

- ☐ Spend more time in prayer
- ☐ Read Scripture regularly
- ☐ Attend Divine Liturgy more intentionally
- ☐ Go to Confession
- ☐ Speak with a priest
- ☐ Speak with a religious sister/brother
- ☐ Speak with my parents or a trusted mentor
- ☐ Learn more about priesthood
- ☐ Learn more about religious life
- ☐ Serve someone in need
- ☐ Spend time in silent prayer
- ☐ Other: _____

Then ask them to write one personal prayer:

"Jesus, I believe You know me and love me. Help me to recognize Your call and give me the courage to follow You."

They do not need to share this prayer with anyone.

16 A PAUSE ALONG THE WAY

Final Reflection

Return to the words of the Gospel: **“With that, their eyes were opened.”, Luke 24:31**

The priest or leader may say:

Perhaps God is already walking with you, just as Jesus walked with the disciples on the road to Emmaus.

Perhaps you do not yet know where He is leading you. That is okay.

You do not have to know your entire future today.

Your task is to take the next step with Jesus.

Pray. Listen. Ask questions. Seek advice.
Serve others. Remain open.

And when the Lord shows you the path,
have the courage to follow Him.

17 A PAUSE ALONG THE WAY

Closing Prayer for Vocations

Priest/Leader:

Lord Jesus Christ, You walked with the disciples on the road to Emmaus and opened their eyes to recognize You. Let us recognize you in your lives. Let us be open to our vocation in life. Let us pray for those who discern call to priesthood and religious life.

Ukrainian Catholic Church Prayer for Vocations

For Parishes

Lord Jesus Christ, heavenly Teacher and Master of our life, You invite each of us to discipleship with the words, "Follow Me!" and "Come and see!" In every generation, from among Your disciples, men and women, You call some to special service in Your vineyard: to consecrated life and the priestly ministry.

We beseech You: open our hearts, that we may know Your will for our lives and hear Your invitation to serve in the community of the Church and in this world. Choose from among us faithful men and women, boys and girls, who will become willing instruments in Your hands and examples of faith and Gospel living: zealous sisters, brothers, deacons, and priests devoted to prayer and service for Your glory and the good of Your people.

Bless with holiness, joy, and perseverance those whom You have called: those who have answered Your call and serve among us.

For You are holy, O our God, and we give glory to You: to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and forever. Amen.



Patriarchal Commission for the Clergy
Patriarchal Commission for Monastic Life

2026