BISHOP'S REFLECTION ON PRIESTHOOD

In his Pastoral Letter for Good Shepherd Sunday, a day of prayer for priests, Bishop Peter asked the question: where do priests come from? He told us that they come from among us, among a community striving to hear the voice of the Good Shepherd in their lives.

He explained that it is God who calls men to be priests through the Church: His choices are not our choices. More often than not, he chooses the weak to confound the strong. He shared, "for me a reasonable base line for looking at potential vocations is that a man is healthy in mind and body, reasonably intelligent, and loves God and the Church. As the men currently in training will testify, we all need a period of support and gentle discernment. That continues once the formal training for the priesthood begins".

Where should someone begin when the thought of the priesthood keeps popping up?

Bishop Peter explained the process involves talking with the parish priest, meeting the Diocesan Vocations Director, attending information weekends, and finally making an application for selection. Depending on the outcome of all that, the young man would be invite to begin formal training.

Bishop Peter described it as "a wonderful vocation" and went on to say, "as we heard in the Preface of the Chrism Mass, "With a brother's love Christ chooses men to become sharers of his sacred ministry". The priest renews in Christ's name the sacrifice of our redemption as he celebrates Mass. He is called to lead God's holy people, in charity, and to nourish them with the Word and strengthen them with the sacraments. It is from among you, the community of faith, that God calls priests. And priests are essential to the community of faith in our Diocese. It is they who will lead us in the key themes. That is only possible with our good priests now and in the future". Bishop Peter asks everyone to pray with him for our priests, and for those training for the priesthood, and for those whom God is calling to the priesthoods.

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