

What advice do you have for nurturing vocations in the family home?

"Pray! Pray for a vocation in your family. A family that prays and a good parish that prays is important."

~ Fr. John Manno

"John didn't go to Catholic school, but we went to Mass every Sunday and holy day. He was adamant about being an altar boy at age eight."

"I would say, encourage your children to be what they want, what will make them happy. If priesthood is what he wants, encourage him!"

"I remember before John was ordained a deacon, I said, 'Is that what you really want to do? Are you sure?' and he said, 'Yes,' so we were behind him all the way."

~ Mrs. Mary Manno

"Be strong in your faith. Trust in the Lord. Be there for your kids."

~ Mr. Gary Kreinheder

"We weren't a super duper 'holy' family. I think the thing that influenced Greg were visits to older family and friends once a month, where we would bring lunch, where we were doing something for others. We were active in Marriage Encounters too. We gave talks, and Greg saw this. We knew priests and would have them over for dinner. Priests had our respect and Greg knew that."

~ Mrs. Kathy Kreinheder

"It's the parents' responsibility to foster a relationship with Christ, who is the primary vocations promoter. Also, parents need to teach by example."

~ Fr. Greg Kreinheder

"Go to church every week and be active in parish organizations. Keep Christmas traditions. For us, Catholic school was important too."

~ Mr. Ken Galuppi

"Number one is going to church regularly. My family went every Sunday, even on vacation. My parents didn't talk explicitly about their faith, but they lived their faith. Also, if you see a priest on a regular basis, his life may not seem so 'foreign.' Invite the priest to your home, maybe for dinner, and you see him in a different light."

~ Fr. Michael Galuppi

Other thoughts or comments?

"My parents said to me, 'We want you to be happy, and if you want to be a priest, go for it, embrace it.'"

"I think many parents want their kids to get a good education and then get a lucrative job and be happy. We may need to let go of some expectations of what happiness is. Jesus said, 'If you want to be the greatest, you have to be the least.' There is real joy in service."

~ Fr. John Manno

"The most important thing is that parents want their children to be happy – and the priesthood can be a joyful, satisfying, fulfilling life, if they're called to it."

"Lots of people are unsure what they want to do in life or who to marry. Ultimately, the important thing for me is knowing that I'm doing what I'm supposed to do. I'm confident that I'm where I'm supposed to be."

~ Fr. Greg Kreinheder

"If your son wants to be a priest, listen to him! And watch out – you're in for a wild ride – but it's wonderful. You'll get to experience things you never would have otherwise. You'll meet many more people, and more doors will open for you."

~ Mr. Gary Kreinheder

"We're very proud of our son. I'll never forget the day he told me he wanted to be a priest. I was cooking supper and said to him, 'Joe, you haven't made any plans about what you'll do after high school, plans for college or anything. You have to start planning.' And he said, 'Mom, I've got to tell you something,' and told me he wanted to be a priest. I was really surprised. He was always with our priest, serving Mass and weddings and funerals, but many others were doing that too. I said to him, 'As long as you're happy, that's fine.' Supper was kind of quiet that night!"

~ Mrs. Edna Scardella

For more information regarding Religious Vocations or help with discerning Priesthood, contact:

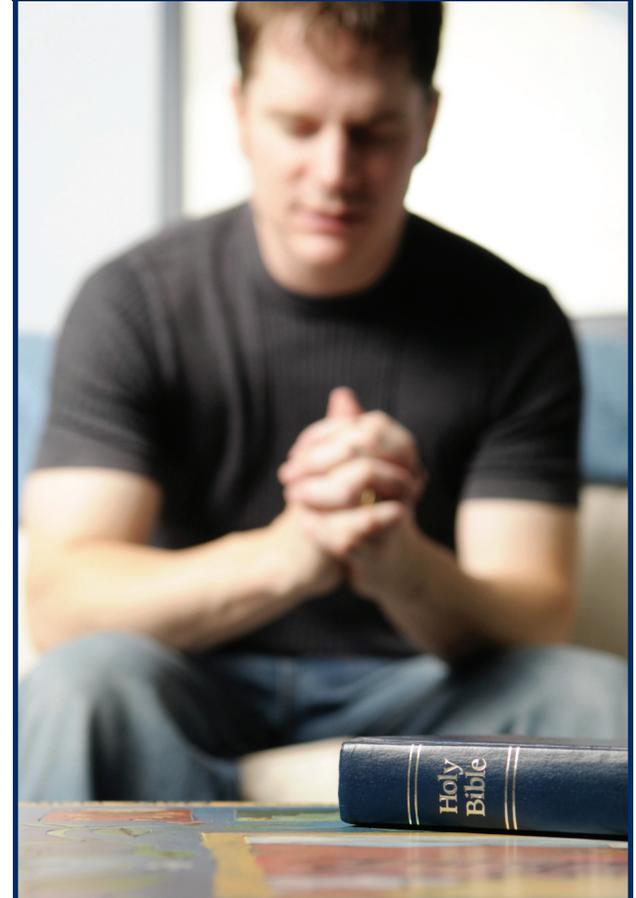
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My Son, A Priest?



*Common Concerns about
Priesthood addressed by
Priests of the Diocese of Syracuse
and their parents*

Am I losing my son?

"Absolutely not! If anything, it draws a tighter bond between parents and son. Sunday afternoons I spend with my mother. We have dinner together with my siblings."

~ Fr. John Manno

"No, you're not! You're going to have more of them, because all their friends become your friends too. They all came to our house and called us mom and dad."

~ Mrs. Edna Scardella

"My relationship with my parents has grown stronger since I've become a priest."

~ Fr. Greg Kreinheder

"At night when I go to bed, I thank God for letting me be a part of (my son Michael's) life. We had 500-plus people at his ordination! Since he's been a priest, he's opened more doors for me than I have for him. I couldn't have been a luckier person."

~ Mr. Ken Galuppi

Will he be happy living a celibate life?

"Absolutely, yes. There's no question that we experience times of loneliness, but we're part of so many people's lives."

~ Fr. John Manno

"I'm not unhappy. I know I'm doing what I'm supposed to be doing. The sense of fulfillment precludes any sense of loss. Marriage isn't easy either."

~ Fr. Michael Galuppi

"He's happy in what he's doing. We all have our challenges, but it's a blessed life."

~ Mr. Gary Kreinheder

"My experience is that a celibate life can be a very happy life. If God calls, He gives the grace to live out the lifestyle. Any life has its sacrifices."

~ Fr. Greg Kreinheder

"I look at how he grew up, the time he spent traveling all through Europe on his own, the girlfriends he had in college, and when he came home and told me that he was going to be a priest, I thought 'Whatever way the Lord presented himself to my son, he was willing to make the sacrifice.' From what I can see, he's entirely happy living a celibate life."

~ Mr. Ken Galuppi

He won't know the joy of having children.

"I can't say that I miss it, because I'm involved with many families and I take great joy in their children. I'm also a godfather to two boys and one girl and I've watched them grow up. Also, being a spiritual father to hundreds of people is very fulfilling."

~ Fr. Joseph Scardella

"I look at families in the parish, and I have a sense of joy seeing them. I have friends who have families and I love being with them and their children. One has kids ages one, three and five. I'm godfather to one. I love the rough and tumble play and reading stories to them. I may not have my own kids, but overall, there is a sense of fulfillment in a ministry that's unique and rewarding. That takes the day."

~ Fr. Michael Galuppi

"When I see him with the little kids around the altar and being with the confirmation kids, I think it's as fulfilling as having his own. Instead of having just his own children, he has hundreds of children!"

~ Mr. Ken Galuppi

I won't have grandchildren.

"If parents see their son happy and active, it may fulfill their desire."

~ Fr. John Manno

"The joy I have in the fact that he's called to be a priest supersedes the joy of grandchildren. I have other grandchildren too."

~ Mrs. Kathy Kreinheder

"As for having grandchildren, he's my only child, so it's a loss. I'm not going to be experiencing (grandchildren). That void I fill with him, and the rest of the family, my nieces and nephews and all their children."

~ Mr. Ken Galuppi

"We do have other grandchildren, but in the grand scheme of things, that's not really important to me. For some people, having grandchildren is a selfish thing. They want to carry on their lineage in this world, rather than do something for the next. There's a greater good. Now (our son) is helping more people than just one small family of his own. His 'family' is much bigger."

~ Mr. Gary Kreinheder

Is he ready to commit to this forever?

"It's important to realize that it's not an immediate commitment. I went to college seminary after high school, Wadhams Hall, the last graduating class ('02) before it closed. I had nine years to discern if this is a commitment I can make for life."

~ Fr. Greg Kreinheder

"When you go to seminary, you don't sign a bottom line to become a priest. It's an opportunity to discern, and you have several years to do it."

"Seminary has excellent preparation for the vocation; your spiritual director, mentors, brother seminarians all help you discern; they ask tough questions and make observations."

~ Fr. Michael Galuppi

"If the man is not sure, he can go to college and go on in the world and see if the call persists. One priest I know left seminary several times and came back several times and then came back and stayed. He knew nothing else would make him as happy."

"Nine years is a lot of preparation. They have time to discern."

~ Mrs. Kathy Kreinheder

There is a diminished image of the priesthood today.

"My experience has been that, while there is some sense of negativity that's come about, the majority of people love their priests very much. If anything, it has taken us down from that pedestal. We're real people."

"I think the 'diminished image' calls priests to be respected not just for their title (of Father) but for giving their lives and serving as priests."

~ Fr. Greg Kreinheder

"There's an overall diminished sense of respect for anybody in a role of authority today – police officers, fire fighters, and across the board. But anybody who gives their lives in service to others deserves the utmost respect. To serve people and the joy you experience from that makes it all worthwhile. You're always open to scrutiny but you have to go forward."

~ Fr. John Manno

"You don't look back on what has been done, you make your own life and reputation."

~ Mrs. Edna Scardella