

Trying to discern one's vocation

Here are some practical points that may help in bringing clarity in your discernment of your vocation. There are many things to consider, but these are some of the major points:

Means to help hear our Lord's call:

Live your faith fully. Live the one vocation of the call to be holy! The closer you come to Christ in a real personal way, the more you will hear Christ calling you to follow him in a particular way:

- frequent the sacraments (going to confession at least monthly and going to Mass, not only every Sunday, but try to go during the week or on Saturday mornings as well). Also, go to the church when they are having adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and spend time in prayer with Christ.
- pray daily and really try to challenge yourself in being generous with God in your prayer
- be generous in your actions with others, especially those around you (family, friends, classmates, etc.). Also volunteer in areas of service (in your parish, or help in a soup kitchen, or hospital, etc.)
- pray the Rosary daily and try to come closer to Mary (she will help you to want to do whatever her Son tells you)
- ask God to help you to see His Will (do God's Will everyday)
- remain in the state of grace always (and if you fall into serious sin, go to confession as soon as possible) and enjoy life.
- have a good priest you trust who you can talk with (who is faithful to Christ and the Church's teachings).
- don't get discouraged – persevere!

Learn about and love every vocation!

Challenges to discernment:

Fear of what God will ask (remember Christ's words: "Be not afraid")

Fear of what others will say or how they will react (pray for them and be the best friend / son / daughter you can be)

Fear of losing your freedom (remember, when you do God's Will you become more free, responsible, and joyful)

Fear of the cross (learn to see the cross as being called to love more, not focusing on the difficulties)

When one gives into immediate wants, this makes us less free and less trusting in God (learn how to say no to pleasures and material things that may be good in and of themselves. Self-denial and mortification is part of the life of a Christian).

Signs of a possible vocation:

In times of prayer, the thought of a particular vocation comes to you in a recurring way. It is something which you sense a certain pull towards deep in your heart. Especially when considering it in your prayer, if you find there is a frequency with which it comes, as well as with a certain intensity.

Others mention in a serious and caring way that they think you would make a great spouse/ priest/ religious sister or brother/ etc..

There is a certain attraction to the vocation, even when you may be afraid that you are being called to it, or if attracted to it and you have not even witnessed a person living that same vocation joyfully.

What are NOT signs of a vocation: Can't get a date – this is not a sign one is called to be celibate or that one is not called to marriage; the Church needs this particular vocation (remember it's God's call, not you choosing it); I want to help people (all of us should want that anyway).