

Prayer Service for Run 4 Vocations Day in Albany
Saturday, April 24, 2010

Invocation: God of life, you labor with all creation to bring forth the holy. Be with me, with us, as we ponder the life you have called us to.

Psalm 139 Vs. 1-14a

Lord, you have probed me, you know me:
you know when I sit and stand;
you understand my thoughts from afar.

My travels and my rest you mark;
with all my ways you are familiar.

Even before a word is on my tongue,
Lord, you know it all.

Behind and before you encircle me
and rest your hand upon me.

Such knowledge is beyond me,
far too lofty for me to reach.

Where can I hide from your spirit?
From your presence, where can I flee?

If I ascend to the heavens, you are there;
if I lie down in Sheol, you are there too.

If I fly with the wings of dawn
and alight beyond the sea,

Even there your hand will guide me,
your right hand hold me fast.

If I say, "Surely darkness shall hide me,
and night shall be my light" –

Darkness is not dark for you,
and night shines as the day.

Darkness and light are but one.

You formed my inmost being;
you knit me in my mother's womb.

I praise you, so wonderfully you made me;
wonderful are your works!

Prayer of Gratitude

Thank you, God, for gifting each of us with a vocation. Thank you for married persons and parents, for priests, sisters, brothers and deacons, and for committed single persons. Thank you for all who minister in our Church today, striving to make the Gospel alive in our hearts and in our world. Thank you for children, for young adults, for their generosity, their willingness to risk, to make a difference, to be of service.

Creator and loving God, at our Baptism you called each of us by name. You love us. You call us to ongoing conversion of heart, to letting go of selfish ways and living into all that you intend us to be in our world. My prayer today begs for dedicated and generous leaders from among your people who will serve as sisters, priests, brothers, and deacons. We need men and women willing to respond to your call to Church leadership. We pray, especially, for those

presently serving in our Church and for those individuals who are opening their hearts and minds to your call or are already preparing to follow it. May your Word enlighten them, your Spirit guide them and may our prayers encourage and strengthen their commitment to act justly, love tenderly and walk humbly with You.

Send your Spirit to guide and strength all your people that each may know how you want them to love and serve. Help us all to follow the loving example of Jesus in whose name we offer this prayer. Amen

Personal Reflection

The family is, so to speak, the domestic Church. In it parents should, by their word and example, be the first preachers of the faith to their children. They should encourage them in the vocation which is proper to each of them...fostering with special care any religious vocation. (Second Vatican Council)

A vocation is not a once-and-for-all call in young adulthood (to follow this career or enter this particular lifestyle). It is a lifelong conversation with God. Like any rich conversation, it is patterned by periods of spirited exchange, times of strain and argument, and intervals of silence. In such a developmental vision of vocation, fidelity is more than a memory. To be faithful entails more than recalling an early conversion. Our fidelity must be mobile because the conversation continues.

Seasons of Strength, Evelyn and James Whitehead

From the Catechism of the Catholic Church: 1656

In our own time, in a world often alien and even hostile to faith, believing families are of primary importance as centers of living, radiant faith. For this reason, the Second Vatican Council, using an ancient expression, calls the family the *Ecclesia domestica*. It is in the bosom of the family that parents are "by word and example...the first heralds of the faith with regard to their children. They should encourage them in the vocation which is proper to each child, fostering with special care any religious vocation."

- ❖ **As Catholics we are all called to discipleship. How do I exercise my responsibility as a disciple of Christ?**
- ❖ **How might I help others to know of their role as disciples?**

Pause for a moment or two to savor what was heard in your quiet time.

Intercessions

Jesus, your mother Mary is the model for us of loving fidelity to your will. Through her intercession we ask for the same grace.

Mary, you said yes to the angel's word, even though you had no knowledge of the consequences:

~ Help us to say yes to all that God asks of us.

Mary, at Cana you knew that God would listen to your prayer:

~ Help us to do whatever God tells us.

Mary, you stood by the cross and loved with a heart pierced with sorrow:

~ Help us to love with hearts that know no limits.

Mary, you were present in the upper room when the church was born of the life-giving Spirit:

~ Help us to witness to the life of the Spirit in the church and world.

Mary our mother, help us to be attentive to the will of your Son, generous in our response, and loving in our service to those in need. Mary, Mother of Mercy, pray for us. Amen.

Blessing: May the God who dwells beyond us, among us, and who calls to dwell together in peace, bless us now and always. Amen

Prayer service prepared by Sister Ann M. McGovern, RSM, Vocation Minister, Sisters of Mercy Northeast Community. For additional information on the Sisters of Mercy visit our website www.sistersofmercy.org. Sister Ann can be reached at amcgovern@mercyne.org. Perhaps God is calling you, or someone you know, to religious life with the Sisters of Mercy!