



FIVE STAR PROGRAM

TO ESTABLISH



A CULTURE OF VOCATIONS

IN YOUR PARISH

Many parishes today want to establish a *Culture of Vocations* in their parish but question "How to do it?" We know marriage, single life, priestly and religious vocations are all paths to holiness. Our focus is on religious and priestly vocations as the priest and religious are instrumental in helping the other states of life.

The following **Five Star Program** which has tried and true ideas can accomplish that goal.



STAR ONE: THE TRAVELING CHALICE/CRUCIFIX

The Traveling Chalice or Crucifix Program with accompanying prayers is recommended as the first step. We will refer to the Chalice model but the program can also be done using a crucifix.

The Traveling Chalice Program directly involves the parishioners. At the end of a Sunday Mass, a family, couple or individual receives the Chalice from the priest. They take the Chalice home, place it in a prominent location and pray daily for vocations. It may be the first time this topic has been explored, and may be a very important week for the family. This might be an opportunity to invite family and friends to join in sharing and prayer.

Participants use a Memory Book to comment on their experiences, thoughts and ideas as well as prayers or plans that result from it. The memory book then becomes a source for potential members of a parish vocation team (PVT).

To implement the Program: one, obtain the support of the Pastor and select one "key" individual to administer the Program. Two, purchase or obtain a Chalice from the parish, a case, a Memory Book and vocation prayers and if appropriate, a child's Mass kit for families with young children. Please refer to the Supplement for specific resources.

The key person needs to encourage all parishioners to welcome the chalice into their home. An enthusiastic invitation by the pastor is the best way to get started. Frequent articles in the church bulletin and listing the names of those taking the chalice for the next four weeks are good. Sign-up cards can be placed in the pews and in the church vestibule. Where there is a school, an invitation can be sent home with students.

The prior week's participants should be reminded to return the chalice to the parish office on Friday or to bring it the correct Mass on Sunday. The next recipient should be reminded when they will receive the chalice. Once a rhythm of getting names is established, this is not a challenging job.



STAR TWO: USE THE CHURCH BULLETIN TO ADVANTAGE

A weekly vocation oriented item in the bulletin is a great way to keep the parish praying and thinking about vocations. There are excellent suggested inserts available on serraus.org that you can print or copy and paste into your bulletin. Possible announcements for Five Star activities are also included.



STAR THREE: THE "*31 CLUB*"

The "*31 Club*" is a prayer program built around the concept of people attending Mass and praying for priestly and religious vocations every month on a specific date. Calendars (available from serraus.org or you can enlarge a calendar) can be attached to foam board and displayed along with an attached pen with which people sign up. Reminder cards should be available for those signing up.

After this, all that is needed are invitations in the parish paper (or perhaps reminder notes in the pews), plus occasional reminders by the pastor to join or be faithful to this "no dues, no meetings" club. Simple, but oh so powerful!



STAR FOUR: CELEBRATE PRIESTLY AND RELIGIOUS LIFE

Another way of developing vocation awareness in a parish is to celebrate one or more of the established National Vocation Events throughout the year. The main annual events are Priesthood Sunday, World Day of Prayer for Vocations, World Day for Consecrated Life, and National Vocation Awareness Week. We suggest a parish focus on just one of these the first year, and add more gradually.

Many parishes start with PRIESTHOOD SUNDAY (traditionally celebrated in the fall). This is a great time to show appreciation for our priests, pray for them and celebrate priestly vocations. The Serra website, serraus.org, has a list of good ideas for these four special times each year.



STAR FIVE: A HOLY HOUR FOR VOCATIONS

At least once during the year, the PVT should schedule a Holy Hour for Vocations. (Some parishes do it weekly or monthly!) Review the many options for different programs at serraus.org and move forward with one that meets your needs.

CONCLUSION:

Although these steps can be rearranged to fit your parish, we suggest the Traveling Chalice Program continue for about six months before the "key" person begins to contact people who have had the Chalice in their home, to inquire about their possible membership in a Parish Vocation Team. This begins to build awareness of vocations in a parish.

The Traveling Chalice Program, vocation bulletin announcements and the "31 Club" in the parish at the same time clearly set the tone for a *Culture of Vocations*.

After the year of implementing the **Five Star Program**, we suggest celebrating by having a social time with the pastor, the key person, members of the vocation team and other interested participants.

**Pray hard, work diligently and you will create a
Culture of Vocations in your parish!**

There is also a PowerPoint presentation to introduce this program available through serraus.org.

Resources for the 5 Stars are also available at serraus.org. These include purchasing information for the Chalice, Bulletin Inserts regarding Vocations, Bulletin Announcements, "31 Club" supplies, detailed information for Priesthood Sunday, suggested Scripts for a Holy Hour and more. Please check them out.

