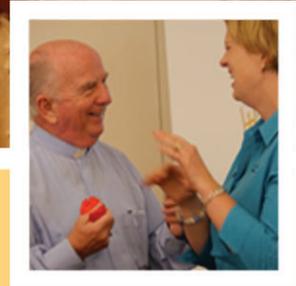
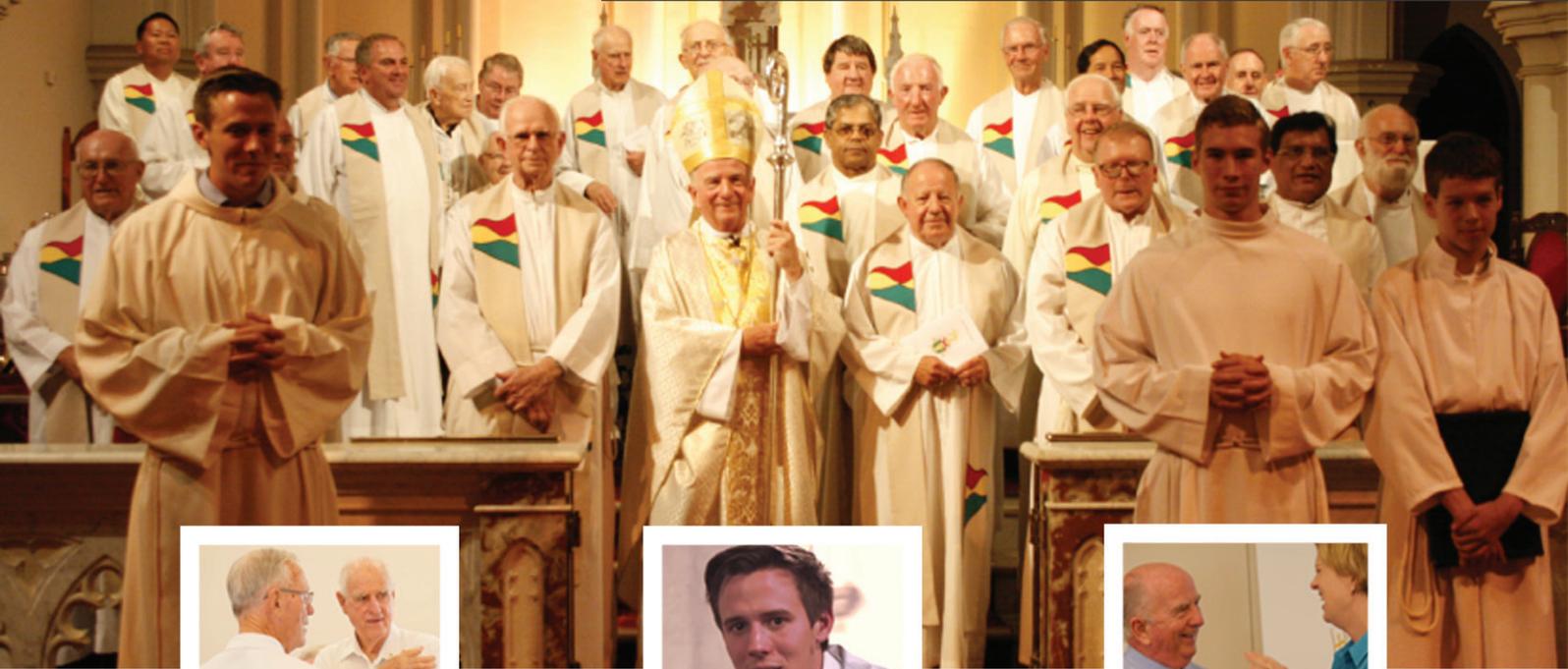


# THE CALL OF YOUNG MEN TO THE PRIESTHOOD

Pastoral Statement by Bishop Robert McGuckin



To young men I say *be receptive to the call to priesthood! Ask yourself are you being called to a life of service in the priesthood for the Diocese of Toowoomba?*

The 4th Sunday of Easter is called *Good Shepherd Sunday* and is World Day of Prayer for Vocations.

***Exodus, a fundamental experience of vocation*** is the title of Pope Francis' Message for this Sunday 26 April 2015.

In the text, the Pope explains that at the root of every Christian vocation there is an exodus that starts from the renouncement of the comfort and inflexibility of the self in order to go forth trustfully, like Abraham, towards the "new land" that God indicates to us. This dynamic is relevant not only to a personal calling, but also to the missionary and evangelical action of all the Church, truly faithful to her Master, "to the extent that she is a Church which 'goes forth', a Church which is less concerned about herself, her structures and successes, and more about her ability to go out and meet God's children wherever they are, to feel compassion (*compassio*) for their hurt and pain". It is a dynamic towards God and towards man that fills life with joy and meaning, as Francis says to the

young, urging them not to let uncertainties obstruct their dreams, and not to be afraid to go forth.

The full text **Message for the 52nd World Day of Prayer for Vocations 2015** can be found on the Vatican website.

2015 is a special year dedicated to Consecrated Life. The Holy Father named the year in the universal Church, so as to promote consecrated life and to encourage religious sisters, brothers and priests to **wake up the world** with their testimony of faith, holiness and hope.

Consecrated men and women are witnesses of communion, of the Joy of the Gospel and are encouraged to go evermore to the peripheries to proclaim the Good News. Religious in a very special way dedicate themselves to seek the perfection of charity in the service of God's Kingdom and are a splendid sign in the Church of the ideal to which we are all called.

We give thanks for the many Religious in our Diocese. We pray for them and pray that many more young men and women will answer the call to Consecrated Life.

There is also a great need for Priests.

The Preface of Priesthood heard at the Chrism Mass includes the following paragraph:

...For Christ not only adorns with a royal priesthood the people he has made his own, but with a brother's kindness he also chooses men to become sharers in his sacred ministry through the laying on of hands...

For the definitive teaching on this I would refer you to Pope Saint John Paul II Apostolic Letter *Ordinatio Sacerdotalis* (22 May 1994) addressed to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on reserving priestly ordination to men alone. Following this Apostolic Letter a question was asked whether this teaching belonged to the Deposit of Faith. In 1995 the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith clearly affirmed the fact that it does (28 October *Doctrine of the Faith*).

Pope Saint John Paul II Apostolic Letter *Motu Proprio Ad Tuendam Fidem* (18 May 1998) explains our obligation to accept the things that make up the deposit of faith.

Again I say ask the young men in our Diocese, ***Are you being called to a life of service in the priesthood for the Diocese of Toowoomba?*** For further details contact me or one of our **Vocation Directors** or contact the **Holy Spirit Seminary**. Visit the **Diocesan website** for the latest contact information. You may also wish to view a **video from Jacob Saal**, one of our Seminarians.

At this year's Chrism Mass I asked everyone to pray for our seminarians as they journey towards priesthood. I also requested prayers so that more young men may answer the call to priestly service. May we all continue to do so.

I wish you every blessing in this Easter Season. Christ is Risen! He is truly Risen!



Bishop Robert McGuckin  
**Bishop of Toowoomba**  
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