

Hearing the Baptismal Call to Personal Mission

By Sr. Diana Rawlings, ASC

Imagine the people lined up to be baptized by John the Baptist. Under the hot sun, some talk excitedly about this strange prophet. Many think about their lives and all their problems, while others anticipate how good it'll feel to plunge into the cool water and have their sins washed away.

Unnoticed by most is a young, average-looking man waiting quietly for His turn. He's alone and seems to be deep in thought. As Jesus waits for Baptism, I'm guessing He isn't thinking about repentance for sins but how this Baptism will change His life by announcing the start of His public ministry.

After Jesus' Baptism in the Jordan, God spoke very clearly about His Son's identity and mission: "This is my Son, the Beloved, my favor rests on Him." (Matt. 3:17)

What did Jesus do with this message? First, He went on a long retreat (40 days in the desert) and then launched headlong into a very demanding ministry.

Though most of us didn't know it at the time, we also received our identity and mission at our Baptism. The heavens didn't open and a dove didn't come down (if that did happen to you, let me know!) but that's when God started to call us "daughters and sons." God also gave us our mission—or vocation—our call to be holy people as consecrated married, single, religious, or priests.

To get us thinking about our own vocations, as well as how to help others discover theirs, the Church has declared Jan. 8-12, 2007, National Vocation Awareness Week. This week is set aside for us to reflect, recognize and respond to our vocational call from the Lord.

Do you know yet what your mission is? Are you picking up any clues?

Consider the gifts of the Holy Spirit that were given to you at Baptism and Confirmation. How are those gifts being used to serve and build God's kingdom? Could God be calling you to a religious vocation—lay, consecrated, or ordained? Is God calling you to serve as a husband or wife? Will you be a parent? Will you find fulfillment as a single person? As Jesus heard the voice of His Father, let's listen to God's invitation for us.

God calls, but it can be downright difficult to figure out which way we're supposed to respond. To help with vocational discernment, we've developed a program called LifeChoices®. We offer experienced spiritual guides to help people make sense of all the options so they can make choices that are both informed and inspired.

Only you can respond to God's call. But we can listen, answer questions and encourage you in your discernment. We'll help you discover your own true path - one that will resonate in your mind, your heart and your innermost self.

The people in the Baptism line with Jesus didn't know it yet, but they were also being called on a mission: to live changed lives. Listen. God calls you in a very personal way. LifeChoices® can help you hear and respond.

My community, the Adorers of the Blood of Christ invite you to join us in praying more earnestly for all vocations during National Vocation Awareness Week.

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For more information about LifeChoices®, log onto www.adorers.org or call 877-236-7377.

The Adorers of the Blood of Christ is an international congregation founded in Italy by St. Maria De Mattias. Some 1,850 Sisters now minister in 27 nations on all the continents in the areas of education, health care, spiritual development and social justice. Nearly 400 ASC sisters minister in 17 of the United States and in Korea, Bolivia, Guatemala and Rome, making it the largest of the international congregation's nine provinces. U.S. Region headquarters are in St. Louis, Missouri.