

Vocation – Exploring God’s Call

Discussion 3: Listening to Your Life

After people have settled and have had a chance to visit for a short time, invite each person to tell of a time when they had a deeply satisfying experience of contributing their time, gifts or talents to a larger endeavour.

Read: *Vocation* by Frederick Buechner

It comes from the Latin *vocare*, to call, and means the work a person is called to by God.

There are all different kinds of voices calling you to all different kinds of work, and the problem is to find out which the voice of God rather than of Society, say, or the Superego, or Self-interest.

By and large a good rule for finding this out is this: The kind of work God usually calls you to is the kind of work (a) that you need most to do and (b) that the world needs to have done. If you really get a kick out of your work, you’ve probably met requirement (a), but if your work is writing cigarette ads, the chances are you missed requirement (b). On the other hand, if your work is being a doctor in a leper colony, you have probably met requirement (b), but if most of the time you’re bored and depressed by it, the chances are you have not only bypassed (a), but probably aren’t helping your patients much either.

Neither the hair shirt nor the soft berth will do. The place God calls you to is the place where your deep gladness and the world’s deep hunger meet. – *Wishful Thinking*, p. 118-119

Jesus said, “I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly.” John 10:10

Exploring the reading:

- a) How does the Latin meaning of the word “vocation” shape your understanding of that word?
- b) Buechner explores the relationship between the needs of the world and our own joy and passion. How do these two dynamics inform your understanding of vocation?
- c) What do you think Jesus means by abundant life?

Going Deeper:

- a) The word “charity” finds its root in the Greek word *caritas* which means love. Have you experienced the difference between charity in the sense of giving from a sense of duty and giving out of love? Can you share that experience with others?
- b) Take a moment to make a few notes of what gifts you have used in the service of others and the times that has brought you much joy. Keep your notes for a quiet moment of prayer to ask God to make you a channel of God’s peace.

After your discussion, thank everyone for their participation and close with the Lord’s Prayer and the Grace.