

Spirituality of Stewardship

Danny Boehm's pulpit talk on Vocations

Thank you Msgr.,

Good Morning, I have been asked to speak to you this morning about vocations and to give witness to my journey in answering God's call. I grew up in Hallettsville, Texas in an average Catholic home, I am the second oldest of six children. My family belonged to Sacred Heart Parish and I attended Sacred Heart Catholic School from kindergarten to the 12th grade. My parents were active in our parish, and we attended mass every Sunday, no excuses. At the end of each Mass, our parish said a prayer for vocations, and because of this I spent time thinking about what God was calling me to do. I felt that God was calling me to the married life, and prayed that if this were His plan, to send me a woman to love and cherish. My prayers were answered when I met Jennifer, and in 1994 we were married.

I still had the feeling that God had more in store for me, but I wasn't sure what that could be. Our parish in Hallettsville had two deacons, and I remember thinking "is this what God is asking of me?" Yet, I didn't feel worthy to do what these men did. God had planted the seeds in me, but I let myself get in the way of his watering can. I have since learned that nothing can outdo God's patience as he waits for us.

In 1999, Jennifer and I moved to Rockport and became members of this parish family. I eventually became a member of the Knights of Columbus, which helped me learn to be of service to others in our parish and community. In January of 2005, I attended my first ACTS retreat. During this weekend, I learned ways to deepen my prayer life, to quiet myself, and to listen. I heard God calling me to service, and left the weekend with the question in my head, "Do You want me to become a deacon?"

After that weekend, a chain of small events began to happen in my life that kept pointing me to the diaconate. One such event was a magazine article reporting that many of my brother Knights were called to service as Permanent Deacons. As I read this article, I could not believe how similar my story was to the stories of those men who had recently been ordained. I also had many conversations about vocations with Fr. Peter Stanley during his pastoral year here in Rockport. In hearing of the events in his life that led him to the seminary, I was assured that I was on the right track. During this time I was also experiencing a pull to the altar from the center of my being that had become so strong, I could no longer

ignore it. I visited with Msgr. about my experiences, and to find out more information about the Permanent Diaconate. This was the beginning of my journey, which God willing, will lead to ordination in 2012.

In today's Gospel we read that Jesus was in prayer when the Holy Spirit descended upon Him and He heard God's voice. In following Jesus' example, it is our time spent in prayer that allows us to hear God's call. It is the willingness to empty ourselves and allow God to work in our lives, putting our trust in Him as we take a step out in faith. It is living out our Baptismal call as the beloved children of God.

I ask you to pray for Jennifer and me as we continue our journey, and for those in our parish who are considering a vocation to the ordained ministry and consecrated life.

Thank you and may God Bless you.