

## Vocations

We give thanks to God that men in our parish have over the years offered themselves in service to Christ and his Church through the sacrament of Holy Orders. While the Church is in constant need of engaged and faithful Catholics to live out the mission of the common priesthood in daily life, it also requires ordained men to serve in the ministerial priesthood. For example, five of the seven sacraments require the involvement of a priest or bishop and this becomes six when a marriage includes Nuptial Mass. As the pinnacle of our spiritual lives the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass would be impossible in the absence of a priest.

In common with many parishes in Ireland and across Europe, our own could greatly benefit from the pastoral presence of more priests. God of course continues to call men of all ages and, although it may be difficult to hear amidst the increasing distractions of contemporary society, we hope and pray that there are men in our community who have the faith in Christ to respond generously. We ask that the faithful in our parish pray for more vocations and offer support to those considering this form of service.

Â Remember that the reception of the sacrament of Holy Orders is not a right for any baptized male Catholic. If you feel called by God to serve his Church in this capacity then you must humbly submit your desire to the authorities of the Church. Only after thorough assessment will Christ, through his Church, invite you to receive this immeasurable gift.

### Â CONTACTS

If you feel a calling to receive the sacrament of Holy Orders you should contact one of the priests. They will be happy to discuss the matter of discerning God's will for you. Bear in mind the following important considerations:

#### Priesthood

- You must be a baptized male Catholic. Our Lord chose men to form the college of the twelve apostles and the latter did the same when they chose collaborators. The Church recognizes herself bound by the choice made by the Lord. Women may not therefore be ordained but they participate equally with men in the common priesthood.

- You must be a man of faith living a celibate life who intends to remain celibate. This is "for the sake of the kingdom of heaven". Although often portrayed as a restriction, celibacy should be embraced with a joyous heart as a form of undivided dedication to God. Viewed thus it is a beautiful gift of service to others.

#### Diaconate

- You must be a baptized male Catholic. The ordination of women is not possible for the reasons above.

- You must be a man of faith but celibacy is not a requirement. Married men may be ordained to this degree. However, a celibate person entering the diaconate may not thereafter marry.