

The Key Players

All God's people! It matters how we talk to one another within the Body of Christ and our words should be those that build up, affirm and encourage.

Parish Clergy or Chaplains: Can also be very important part in an individual's early vocational exploration and development: for example, in talking through their sense of vocation and understanding of ministry; encouraging them in the development of their prayer life and bible reading; making suggestions about suitable reading, etc.. as well as developing and using their gifts.

Vocations: If you, or someone in your parish, is wanting to explore where God might be leading next in terms of lay or ordained ministry then a Diocesan Vocations Adviser would be in a position to assist. There is information about them and their role on the Diocesan website.

The Ministry Department: The Director of Vocations can help with advice about suitable courses and training opportunities. *Pathways to Ministry* is the Diocesan foundation course for people exploring a sense of call to either lay or ordained ministry. The Diocesan Directors of Ordinands can advise particularly about questions of ordained ministry.

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Diocese of Lichfield Ministry Department

Encouraging Vocation



Creating a culture of Vocation in every parish

Vocation! Vocation! Vocation!

Vocation is a way of talking about what God calls us to be and to do, both as individuals and as the body of Christ. Discovering our particular vocation, and responding to it, happens alongside other Christians who help us to identify the gifts God has given us and to discern God's call on our lives.

Some churches are really effective at encouraging their members to develop their gifts and enabling them to find their vocation. This doesn't depend on church tradition or social context, and it's not the product of complex strategies or processes. In these churches, a culture of vocation has become an integral part of their life together. Vocation - exploring the role God has for each of us in the world and church - is in the bloodstream of a healthy, growing church.

The Local Church's Role

The local church has a crucial role in fostering the vocations of all God's people to ministry. God calls people to a wide range of roles both lay and ordained, in the Church and in the home, the family, the world of work and in the wider community. Encouraging vocations is both essential and simple ~ *ABC*



A

Affirm: The local Church should be a place where members naturally encourage each other in the gifts they have and help each other identify their strengths. Affirming the gifts of others helps to build confidence as well as making us more aware of all the blessings we have from God.

B

Build up: A culture of learning and growing in discipleship. Taking up training for discipleship and ministry should be part of the life and agenda of every parish. The Local Ministry department provide a range of resources and events so support parishes in building up a culture of learning.

C

Call: The local church should actively 'call out' those whose gifts have been identified for ministry. The discernment of a particular vocation within the Church is a shared task and is an interaction between the individual's own inner sense of call, the 'calling out' of the local Church, together with, in the case of authorised ministries a process of Diocesan discernment as well as national discernment in the case of a vocation to ordained ministry.

