

Answering "That" Question!

By Father John Regan



"*What do I want to do with my life?*" When I asked that question as I was entering the University of Notre Dame, two things came to mind. I was always good at math and felt I could help others be good at math, so naturally I thought of being a math teacher. I also thought that if I wanted to make more money then I would work in the business field in computers. So I pursued and earned a degree in math and computers.

God, however, touched my heart with a different question during my sophomore year in college. I realized how small it was of me to think that life was all about me and my needs. The far more important question for me to answer with my life became, "*Who does God need me to be?*" That really is *the* vocation question. Some things helped me answer that question. I grew up in Peotone and am the youngest of four children. I went to public schools through high school. Faith and being a part of church, however, were very important to me. My family passed on the faith in such a way that it lifted me up and gave my life meaning. They provided the atmosphere in which I could listen to God's call.

I also had the opportunity to serve in the church. I served and read at Mass, became a Eucharistic minister, helped teach religious education classes, planned Masses, and even helped at a home for handicapped children. When I began thinking about these experiences, I realized I found more joy and happiness in loving and serving others than when I envisioned myself working 40 to 60 hours per week in business or teaching in a classroom.

I also was invited to priesthood. The pastor of my home parish mentioned to me when I was a senior in high school, "John, if you ever think of priesthood, I think you would be good." That was it, nothing more. I said as many 17-year-olds might say, "Thanks, Father, but no thanks! I know what I want to do with my life. I know what I want to study and where I want to go." I was dating at the time and felt priesthood wasn't for me. A seed was planted, though, and it emerged a few years later when in college the question came to me, "*Who does God need me to be?*" After struggling with God in prayer and talking with some priests and friends, I knew in my heart I needed to give God a chance and look seriously at priesthood. I entered the Seminary in 1985 and was ordained in 1989.

Priesthood is a joyful and meaningful life for me. I can't imagine a life that would give me more happiness. I especially enjoy the moments when I can celebrate Christ present in our lives through sacrament and Christian friendship. It's a privilege for me to help people say "Yes" to God with their lives and answering the question, "*Who does God need you to be?*" Is He calling you to be a Priest, Sister, Brother or Deacon?

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