



## Path to Jesus

by Fr. Martin Pable

Part of our understanding of the Sacrament of Baptism in the Catholic Church is that God calls each of us. God calls us, through the Sacrament, to be a new person – a person of the Kingdom. No longer are we to find our path in the ways of this world, but along the path of God. This call is given to each person who is baptized. When God calls, a response is requested.

We answer that call by the way we live – by the lifestyle we choose. If we answer that call as a single person, then we follow the single person's way of life. If we answer that call as a married person, we follow the married person's way of life. By our words, actions, and attitudes, we show to others that we belong to Christ and that we have decided to walk his path – no matter where the ways of the world may try to lead us. All through our life, we try to grow in our response to God's call. Just as our faith grows during our life, so must our own response to God.

But the call to Religious Life and/or priesthood is a different kind of call. It is not just a call to answer more deeply our Baptismal invitation – it is a call to another way of living – a way in which not all baptized Christians are called to live. Through professed vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience, a vowed religious lives another lifestyle that is decidedly not part of this world. While the ways of this world draw us toward money, sex, and power, the call to religious life draws us toward the opposite of these: to poverty, to chastity, and to obedience. By responding in this way, a priest, brother, or sister, gives witness to the world of another way of life. By their vows, those in religious life and priestly ministry give us an example that is drawn toward a world beyond this one. The goal of the priest and religious is no longer rooted in the path of this world, but in the path of God's Kingdom.

*Spirit of God, You bathed me in the image of Jesus Christ, and you call me to live the Gospel through the life-giving waters of Baptism. Enflame my heart and guide me with wisdom that I may know the path of life which best calls forth the gifts which God has given me. Breathe in me your peace that strengthens and refreshes the heart. Bless me with the courage to say "YES" to God's call for my future.*

For more information on this or any questions you might have, contact Father Mark O'Donnell, Vocation Office, Diocese of Norwich, 201 Broadway, Norwich, CT 06360 (860) 887-9294, or you can e-mail him at: [vocations@norwichdiocese.org](mailto:vocations@norwichdiocese.org). Visit the web site at [www.God-calls.org](http://www.God-calls.org)