



"Once, while I was rector of the North American College in Rome, I was interviewing one of our new seminarians.

'Why do you want to be a priest?' I asked him.

He looked at me a bit confused. 'Pardon me, Father, but my personal interests have nothing to do with it. I want to be a priest only because I have been discerning—in prayer, listening to my heart and talking with people I trust—that the Lord wants me as His priest. The only reason why I want to be a priest is because I believe He wants me to.'

Bravo! That's it! That's the way it should be!"

(Testimony of His Eminence Timothy Cardinal Dolan, Archbishop of New York)

WHY?



This is what it's all about, my friend.

The deciding factor is God. Spouse, family, the "I wants", the "I don't likes", the "it's not for me", etc., fade away into the background. Everything else, as great or attractive as it may be, is secondary.

Now, don't forget:

A religious vocation is determined mainly by a person's aptitudes, a sincere intention and confirmation on behalf of the Church—a confessor, a spiritual director.

But first, God puts you in a setting or situation that makes it possible for the seed to be planted: perhaps a religious movement, a parish or a campus ministry.



However, there is one primary, decisive condition: **GENEROSITY!**

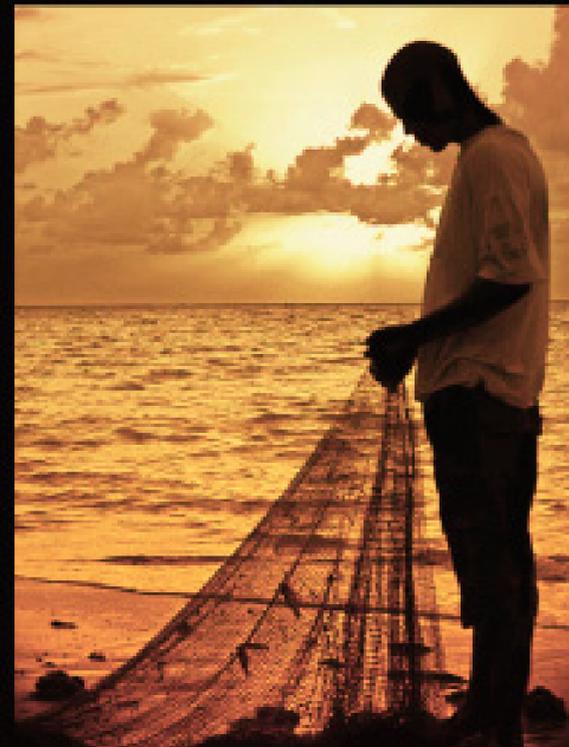
God's call can be persistent and can come in many different ways but you can also say NO and frustrate His plans. That's why you need to ask Him to make you more generous; to enable you to take a step forward, and, even if it scares you, to offer your whole self. Because BEING CALLED is the most natural, normal, beautiful and gratifying thing in the world.

We have turned it into something awful, complicated and practically taboo.

So, my friend, it is not that God is failing to call young men to the priesthood; the problem is that you aren't listening! You've created too much noise inside and outside yourself.

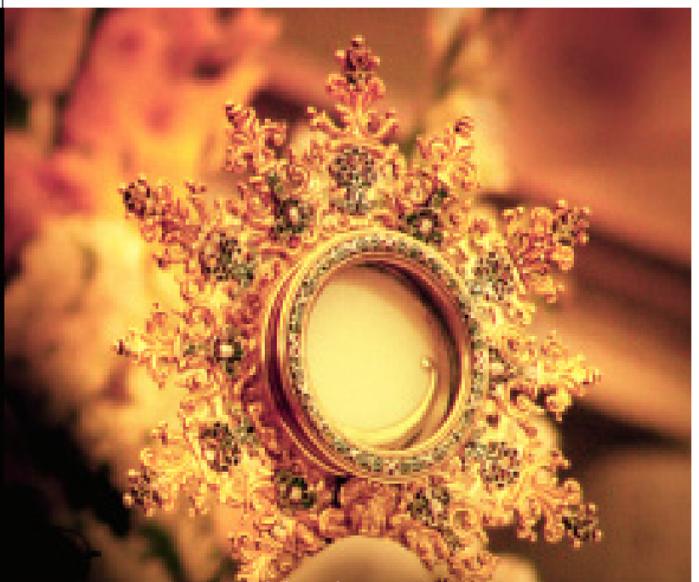
So what should you do then?

Turn to Him so that you can listen. Don't stop praying. Visit him in the Blessed Sacrament. Entrust yourself to Our Lady through the rosary. Be honest with your spiritual director. Practice being braver. Face your fears and cowardice and make the Gospel the most important book in your life, every day.



"Follow me."
John 21:22

These words were not said just for the people who were around two thousand years ago. They are also for today. For our time. And, to be clear: for you, my friend.



I invite you to offer this prayer every day:

Lord Jesus, here I am, fearful and hopeful! I beg You to help me make an offering of myself, to tell You "yes" forever. Ignite my heart and enlighten my mind to follow You with all my strength, especially now, when You have such a need for more priests.

If there have been shadows and deception, I want to give light and consistency. Commending myself to the Blessed Virgin Mary with modesty, courage and humility I say to You: Lord, here I am!



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