



The process of making a decision about your life with the help of the Holy Spirit is called "discernment." It is a process of discovering God's will for you.

In this process you deal with two persons: you and God. During the process, you will get to know both better. As you begin, remember that both you and God ultimately desire the same thing – your happiness. You want to make a decision about your life that will bring you happiness. Therefore, you and God are not working at cross-purpose, but for the same goal.

The discernment process, though often a struggle, is not complicated. It consists of four steps.

The Bible on ... the call, vocation & choices

Old Testament

Abraham	Gen. 12:1-4a
Moses	Ex. 3:10-12; 4:1, 10-12
Amos	Am 7:14-15
Isaiah	Is 6:8
Jeremiah	Jer 1:4-8
Ezekiel	Ez 3:1-4
Kings	1 Kings 10

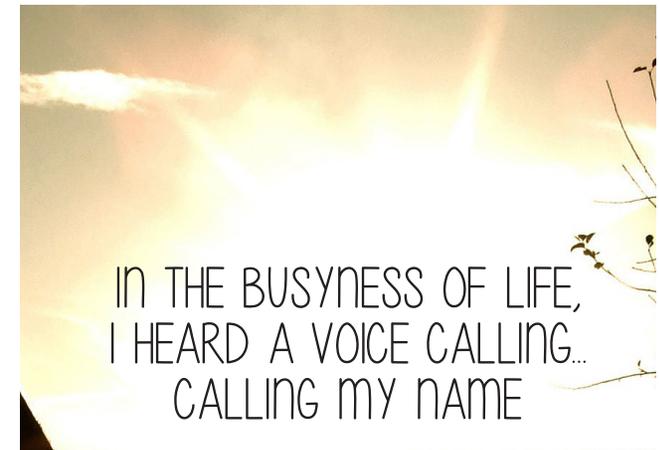
New Testament

Night in Prayer	Lk 6:12-15
The Twelve	Mk 3:13-15
Rich Young Man	Lk 18:15-30
Requirements	Lk 9:57-62
The Cross	Mt 16:24-28
Few Chosen	Mt 22:1-14
Temptations	Lk 4:1-13
Martha & Mary	Lk 10:38-42
Seek First	Lk 12:22-31
What Matters	Phil 1:9-10
All Things	Rom 8:26-31

"I don't know what your destiny will be, but one thing I know, the only ones among you who will be really happy are those who have sought and found how to serve."

- A. Schweitzer

Vocations Office
12716 Oriole Ave.
Grand Terrace, Ca 92313
909-783-1305
vocations@sbdiocese.org
<http://vocations.sbdiocese.cc>



IN THE BUSYNESS OF LIFE,
I HEARD A VOICE CALLING...
CALLING MY NAME



DISCERNMENT

- guide -

DIOCESE OF SAN BERNARDINO
Office of Vocations

The discernment process

step 1

Be in touch with yourself. Know your likes and dislikes, your fears and dreams, your hopes and interest, your abilities and limitations. Get to know how you work under stress, what kind of leadership you respond to, how much structure you need in your life.

See how others view you in work situations, under stress, and at leisure. Reflect how you view others. Are you able to accept others, to work with them?

One way to look at a call from the Lord is to see Him acting all through your life. He created you with a unique personality and allowed you to experience a personal history. Your personality and personal history are part of your call. As you get to know yourself, accept what you find. You might want to change some aspects of yourself in the future, but begin by accepting yourself as you are.

Self-discovery Tips

- Keep a journal
- Find a spiritual director

step 2

Be in touch with the Lord. Develop a prayer life, not just in times of crisis, but regularly. No relationship develops between persons unless they listen to each other. You must learn to listen to the Lord in prayers and not merely ask Him to listen to you. You have to spend time with Him, listen to Him, be honest with Him, and occasionally be willing to wait on Him.

Prayer is a highly personal response to a personal love that God has for you individually. Because you are unique, your prayer response is going to be unique.

Prayer Tips

- Experiment with various types of prayer
- Read: You – Prayer for Beginners and Those Who Have Forgotten How by Mark Link, S.J., Argus Communications.

Look for traces of the Lord in nature, in circumstances of your life, in other people. He is active in all. The better you get to know Him, the more you will be able to perceive His activity.

step 3

The decision-making process. As you become more in touch with yourself and with the Lord, prayerfully gather the facts about your decision. Consider alternatives. Write out the pros and cons of each alternative. Try to project what effect each alternative will have on you five and 10 years from now.

As you gather the facts about the alternative life choices open for you, be particularly attentive to your feelings. If you have been open and honest with yourself in step 1 and with the Lord in step 2, you can trust your feelings. Choose what appears to be best for you and what appears to be God's will.

Decision Tips

- Considering religious life? search out information about various religious communities.
- Consider other careers which might fit you.
- Weigh advantages and disadvantages of each
- Talk to priests, sisters, brothers and to people in other careers.

step 4

Confirm your decision. After you have made your decision, spend time in prayer for an extended period to see if the decision still seems right. If it is, there should be a continuation of inner peace and satisfaction. This period of confirmation should go on for an extended interval, several weeks or more, to be sure that the peace you feel is true tranquility and not simply the relief that follows a difficult decision.

