

Dear Father/Secretary,

I hope you are well.

Once again the Northern Dioceses are coming together to host the Diocesan Vocation Retreat weekend in Drumalis (8th-10th March). The retreat will be lead by Fr Ryan Connors, a former legislative aide and speechwriter in the United States Senate in Washington, DC before entering Seminary.

I would be grateful if you would promote the retreat by announcing it at the Sunday Masses and by putting the notice below in your parish bulletin. A digital poster promoting this retreat is attached to this email for those parishes who can promote it on their website or on social media. Please include in your prayers those who will attend the weekend. I have also included sample prayer of the faithful and a prayer for Diocesan Vocations. Your assistance in helping to promote vocations to the priesthood in the diocese is greatly appreciated.

Yours Sincerely,

Conor McGrath

DIOCESAN VOCATION WEEKEND

Have you ever considered the possibility that God is calling you to the priesthood? If so, take this opportunity to gather with other men who are discerning a vocation to the priesthood. This retreat will create the time and space to help you discern God's calling in your life.

The retreat will take place in Drumalis Retreat Centre, from Friday 8th – Sunday 10th March 2024. If you wish to attend this retreat or would like further information contact: Fr Conor McGrath, c.mcgrath@downandconnor.org or 02890654157.

VOCATIONS PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL

First Sunday of Lent -- February 18, 2024

That prayer, penance and almsgiving will enable more men and women to follow the Holy Spirit as He leads them to discover their vocations in Christ, we pray to the Lord.

Second Sunday of Lent – February 25, 2024

That those the Lord is calling to be a priest or consecrated brother or sister will listen to Him, and proclaim His name, we pray to the Lord.

Third Sunday of Lent -- March 3, 2024

For those considering a call to the priesthood or consecrated life, that they will answer the call and proclaim Christ crucified, we pray to the Lord.

Fourth Sunday of Lent – March 10, 2024

For those attending the Diocesan Vocation Retreat this weekend. That Jesus, the Light of the World, may guide them in their discernment and give them the courage to respond to His call, we pray to the Lord.

Fifth Sunday of Lent – March 17, 2024 (St Patrick's Day)

For all those being called to the priesthood and consecrated life in Ireland, that they may deepen their faith in Christ who calls them to glorify God in a profoundly personal way through their vocations, we pray to the Lord.

Palm Sunday of the Lord's Passion – March 24, 2024

For the faithful response of all men and women called to follow Christ and His passion through a vocation to the priesthood or consecrated life, we pray to the Lord.

Easter Sunday – March 31, 2024

That more men and women will joyfully answer the call of the Lord to proclaim His life, death and resurrection as priests and religious brothers and sisters, we pray to the Lord.

Second Sunday of Easter (Divine Mercy Sunday) -- April 7, 2024 -

For all our priests whom God has sent in the name of Jesus to serve the people, that they are blessed with continued faithfulness to Him and inspire many more to consider a vocation to the priesthood, we pray to the Lord.

Third Sunday of Easter -- April 14, 2024

For an increased awareness among our young people of the closeness of the Lord while they discern their vocation, we pray to the Lord.

Fourth Sunday of Easter -- April 21, 2024 - World Day of Prayer for Vocations

For an increase in vocations to the priesthood for our Church in Down and Connor, that God will raise up good shepherds in our midst, we pray to the Lord.

DIOCESAN VOCATIONS PRAYER

God our Father,

at the very beginning of your Church your Son Jesus chose twelve apostles to continue the work he had begun.

By the power of your Holy Spirit, they continued to bring the Good News of your love to our world.

Send that same Holy Spirit into the hearts of those you are calling to serve as priests for your people in our diocese.

Fill them with your gifts of wisdom, understanding, piety and knowledge as they discern your will.

Give them the gifts of right judgment and courage in following their call.

Through the outpouring of your grace may many come to the joy of knowing and responding to the invitation of Jesus to 'Come, Follow Me!' Amen