



The Most Reverend Charles C. Thompson
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Dear Friends in Christ:

The call to discernment and prayer is fundamental to the Christian life. Catholic schools and parish religious education programs are given the great task and privilege of forming young people in holiness. These institutions play a key role in fostering a culture of vocations to the priesthood, diaconate and religious life. By strengthening all vocations, such a culture fosters a revitalization of the Church's mission, helping us to recognize and appreciate the value of priestly and religious vocations in the life of the Church. Giving a young person the tools and guidance to discern one's vocation is a great gift that parents, Catholic schools, and parishes can give to this emerging generation.

To assist the Church's efforts to promote vocations among our young people, the Serra Club of Indianapolis is sponsoring the annual Vocations Essay Contest in cooperation with the Archdiocese's Vocations Office and Office of Catholic Education. The theme for the 2018 Vocations Essay Contest is:

"We need a church capable of walking at people's side, of doing more than simply listening to them; a church that accompanies them on their journey." Pope Francis
How has a priest, deacon, or man or woman in consecrated life accompanied you on your life journey?

It is my hope that the religious educators in our Catholic schools, religious education programs and Catholic home school families will take this as an opportunity to further promote priestly and religious vocations by encouraging their middle and high school students to participate in this contest. Indeed, the invitation to promote priestly and religious vocations is one that is issued to all of us. We are further called to continue deepening each of our own vocational calls, wherever it is that we might be on our journey of faith.

More information on rules, procedures and prizes is enclosed. Thank you and God bless you for your cooperation and assistance, and for the important ministry you provide our young people.

With the assurance of every prayer and blessing, I remain

Sincerely yours in Christ,

+ *Charles C. Thompson*

Most Reverend Charles C. Thompson, D.D., JCL
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