

Cycle A Scripture-Based Vocation Homily Topics

This resource provides priests and deacons with vocation-themed homily ideas following the USCCB Cycle A Sunday and weekday readings from Advent 2025 through Christ the King 2026. It is designed to help clergy and lay leaders connect the Word of God to the call to holiness through the priesthood, consecrated life, and sacramental marriage.

Each entry includes:

- The liturgical date and reading (NASB translation)
- A suggested audience (discerners, parents, or all faithful)
- A vocation theme and message for preaching or reflection
- Vocation Day Notes, highlighting national or international days promoting vocations

Priests are encouraged to adapt these ideas for both Sunday Mass and weekday celebrations, especially on designated vocation days.

ADVENT & CHRISTMAS

1st Sunday of Advent – Mark 13:33–37

Date: November 30, 2025

Audience: Discerners

Theme: Watchful for God's Call

Message: Jesus urges His disciples to “be watchful” and “stay awake,” reminding us that God's call often comes quietly and unexpectedly. This passage encourages discerners to keep their hearts open and ready to respond when the Lord speaks.

2nd Sunday of Advent – Matthew 3:1–12

Date: December 7, 2025

Audience: Discerners

Theme: Prepare the Way

Message: John the Baptist's call to repentance is also a call to readiness. Those who seek to follow God's call must have hearts open to hear and respond to His invitation. This reading invites all to clear away obstacles and create space for God's plan to unfold.

3rd Sunday of Advent – Isaiah 35:1–6a, 10 / Matthew 11:2–11

Date: December 14, 2025

Audience: Discerners

Theme: Signs of God's Promise

Message: Jesus affirms John's mission and points to the signs of God's Kingdom breaking through. Discerners are reminded that God works through ordinary lives to reveal His extraordinary hope and promise.

4th Sunday of Advent – Matthew 1:18–24

Date: December 21, 2025

Audience: Parents and Families

Themes: Trusting God's Plan for Our Lives; Sacrifice and Protection in the Call to Fatherhood
Message (Revised): Joseph's willingness to follow God's direction in a dream reminds us that God's plan often unfolds in surprising ways. As protector of the Holy Family, St. Joseph sacrificed for and safeguarded Jesus, the High Priest, modeling the self-giving love that lies at the heart of every vocation. Families, especially fathers, are invited to follow Joseph's example of faith, courage, and generosity in supporting those entrusted to their care.

The Nativity of the Lord (Christmas) – Luke 2:1–14

Date: December 25, 2025

Audience: Everyone

Theme: The Gift of a Savior and the Call to Joy

Message: The birth of Jesus is the ultimate expression of God's love and His invitation into relationship. Every vocation flows from the joy of encountering Christ, who calls us to bring His light to the world.

Feast of the Holy Family – Matthew 2:13–15, 19–23

Date: December 28, 2025

Audience: Parents

Theme: Supporting God's Call within the Family

Message: The Holy Family's trust and obedience to God's plan reveal how families play a critical role in protecting and nurturing a child's vocation. St. Joseph's faith-filled action offers a model for parents to guide their children with courage and trust in God's plan.

Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God – Luke 2:16–21

Date: January 1, 2026

Audience: Everyone

Theme: Mary's Yes and Our Response

Message: Mary's openness to God's will makes her the perfect model for all who are discerning their vocation. Her quiet faith reminds us that saying "yes" to God can transform the world.

Epiphany of the Lord – Matthew 2:1–12

Date: January 4, 2026

Audience: Everyone

Theme: Seeking and Finding God's Call

Message: The Magi followed the light of the star, trusting that it would lead them to Christ. Like them, those discerning must follow the light of faith, confident that God will guide them to their true calling.

Baptism of the Lord – Mark 1:7–11

Date: January 11, 2026

Audience: Discerners

Theme: Called and Beloved

Message: At His baptism, Jesus is publicly affirmed as the beloved Son. Our baptism also marks the beginning of our mission. This is a moment to remind discerners of their identity in Christ and their readiness to follow His call.

LENT & HOLY WEEK

Ash Wednesday – Matthew 6:1–6, 16–18

Date: February 18, 2026

Audience: Everyone

Theme: Returning to the Lord's Call

Message: Lent begins with a call to conversion, reminding us that authentic faith is lived with humility and sincerity. True discernment starts when we turn inward to hear God's quiet voice and respond to His call.

1st Sunday of Lent – Matthew 4:1–11

Date: February 22, 2026

Audience: Discerners

Theme: Strength in Temptation

Message: Jesus faces temptation in the desert yet resists by trusting completely in His Father's will. This passage reminds those discerning a vocation that following God often requires courage, perseverance, and sacrifice. The moments of doubt and struggle are not signs of failure, but opportunities to deepen trust and obedience.

2nd Sunday of Lent – Matthew 17:1–9 (The Transfiguration)

Date: March 1, 2026

Audience: Discerners

Theme: Seeing with the Eyes of Faith

Message: On the mountain, the disciples witness Christ's glory and hear the Father's voice: "This is My beloved Son... listen to Him." This encounter reveals the transformative power of God's call. Discerners are reminded that a vocation is not a one-time decision, but a lifelong journey of listening to and trusting the voice of Christ.

3rd Sunday of Lent – John 4:5–42 (The Woman at the Well)

Date: March 8, 2026

Audience: Everyone

Theme: Encounter That Changes Everything

Message: The Samaritan woman's encounter with Jesus transforms her life and makes her a missionary of His message. Every vocation begins with a personal encounter, a realization that Christ knows us fully and calls us into His mission. This Gospel invites each believer to see their life as a response to that same divine invitation.

4th Sunday of Lent – Luke 15:1–3, 11–32 (The Prodigal Son)

Date: March 15, 2026

Audience: Everyone

Theme: Returning to God's Call

Message: The parable of the Prodigal Son beautifully reflects God's mercy and the joy of reconciliation. Like the Father who welcomes his son home, God continually calls us back to our true vocation: to live as His beloved children. For those who have drifted or hesitated in following their call, this reading assures them of God's patience and steadfast love.

5th Sunday of Lent – John 11:1–45 (The Raising of Lazarus)

Date: March 22, 2026

Audience: Discerners

Theme: Called from Death to New Life

Message: Jesus calls Lazarus from the tomb, bringing life where there was death. In every vocation, God calls us out of fear, sin, and self-doubt into freedom and purpose. This Gospel invites discerners to hear Christ's voice saying, "Come out," and trust that His call brings renewal and life.

Palm Sunday – Philippians 2:5–11 / Mark 14:1–15:47

Date: March 29, 2026

Audience: Discerners and Laity

Theme: The Call to Self-Giving

Message: As we enter Holy Week, Christ's humility and obedience unto death model the heart of every vocation. Each person who follows the Lord must learn to serve and give of themselves. In this Gospel, Jesus reminds us that true greatness is found in surrender and love for others, no matter the cost.

Holy Thursday – John 13:1–15 (The Washing of the Disciples' Feet)

Date: April 2, 2026

Audience: Discerners, Laity, and Parents

Theme: Servant Leadership in Vocation

Message: On this sacred night, Jesus humbly washes His disciples' feet and institutes the Eucharist and the priesthood—two gifts that sustain the Church. His actions remind us that true leadership is rooted in service. Whether discerning a call, supporting vocations, or raising

children in faith, all are called to reflect Christ's love by serving others and fostering a culture where vocations can grow.

Vocation Day Note: World Priesthood Appreciation — Reflect on the institution of the Eucharist and the priesthood. Encourage prayers for priests and an increase in vocations.

Good Friday – John 18:1–19:42 (The Passion of the Lord)

Date: April 3, 2026

Audience: Everyone

Theme: The Ultimate Yes to God's Call

Message: On the cross, Jesus fulfills His mission with complete obedience and love. Every vocation mirrors this act of surrender, saying "yes" to God's will even when it demands sacrifice. Good Friday invites all of us to reflect on how Christ's love gives meaning to their own calling to serve and give of themselves.

Holy Saturday (Easter Vigil) – Romans 6:3–11 / Mark 16:1–7

Date: April 4, 2026

Audience: Discerners

Theme: New Life in God's Call

Message: The Resurrection marks the triumph of life over death and light over darkness. Those discerning a vocation can find courage in knowing that following Christ always leads to new beginnings. The Easter Vigil reminds the faithful that every vocation is rooted in the Paschal Mystery, dying to oneself and rising to new life in Christ.

Easter Sunday – John 20:1–9

Date: April 5, 2026

Audience: Everyone

Theme: New Life, New Mission

Message: The Resurrection proclaims hope and new purpose for all who follow Christ. Jesus' victory over death gives meaning to every vocation, for it shows that no sacrifice made for God is ever lost. This joyful day reminds us that each call, to priesthood, consecrated life, or marriage, is a participation in the Risen Lord's mission to bring life to the world.

EASTER SEASON

Divine Mercy Sunday (2nd Sunday of Easter) – John 20:19–31

Date: April 12, 2026

Audience: Discerners, Laity, and Parents

Theme: Trusting in God's Mercy in Our Vocation

Message: When Jesus appears to the disciples after the Resurrection, He offers peace and mercy, dispelling their fears. Trusting in God's mercy allows us to move forward in our vocational

journey, even when doubts arise. By surrendering our fears and relying on His grace, we open ourselves to discern His call more clearly and support others in doing the same.

Vocation Day Note: Divine Mercy Sunday: Encourage reflection on God's mercy as an essential part of discerning and living one's vocation.

3rd Sunday of Easter – Luke 24:13–35 (The Road to Emmaus)

Date: April 19, 2026

Audience: Discerners and Parents

Theme: Recognizing Christ in the Journey

Message: The disciples' eyes are opened in the breaking of the bread, reminding us that Christ walks beside us even when we do not recognize Him. Every vocation unfolds through daily encounters with the Lord, often hidden in ordinary life. Parents and discerners alike are invited to remain attentive to these moments of grace and guidance.

4th Sunday of Easter (Good Shepherd Sunday) – John 10:1–10

Date: April 26, 2026

Audience: Parents and Discerners

Theme: Hearing the Shepherd's Voice

Message: Jesus, the Good Shepherd, calls each of us by name and invites us to follow Him. reveals the heart of every vocation, a relationship built on listening and trust. It also reminds parents and parish communities of their responsibility to help children hear and respond to the Shepherd's voice through prayer, encouragement, and example.

Vocation Day Note: World Day of Prayer for Vocations: Encourage the parish to pray for more priests, religious sisters and brothers, and holy marriages that serve the Church faithfully.

Religious Brothers Day / Feast of St. Joseph the Worker – Matthew 13:54–58

Date: May 1, 2026

Audience: Fathers, Discerners, and Workers

Theme: Faithful Service in Hidden Ways

Message: St. Joseph's quiet faith and dedication to his work model how ordinary tasks can be transformed into acts of love and holiness. This feast celebrates the dignity of labor and the hidden, faithful witness of religious brothers and lay workers. Each vocation, when lived with humility and love, becomes an offering to God.

Vocation Day Note: Religious Brothers Day: Honor the vocation of religious brothers who serve humbly in education, healthcare, and ministry.

5th Sunday of Easter – John 14:1–12

Date: May 10, 2026

Audience: Discerners

Theme: Trusting God's Plan for Your Life

Message: Jesus tells His disciples, “Do not let your hearts be troubled.” His assurance reminds those discerning that God has prepared a place, and a purpose, for each of us. Following His call requires trust that God’s plan, even when uncertain, leads to peace and fulfillment.

Ascension of the Lord – Matthew 28:16–20

Date: May 25, 2026 (Transferred to Sunday, June 1, in some dioceses)

Audience: Discerners and Laity

Theme: Sent Forth in Mission

Message: Before ascending into heaven, Jesus commissions His disciples: “Go and make disciples of all nations.” Each vocation participates in this mission. Whether as priests, religious, or married couples, we are called to carry Christ’s message into the world with courage and faith.

Pentecost Sunday – John 20:19–23

Date: May 24, 2026

Audience: Everyone

Theme: Empowered for Mission

Message: The Holy Spirit fills the disciples with courage and sends them to proclaim the Gospel. Every vocation is sustained by this same Spirit, who equips each person for their mission. Pentecost reminds us that the Spirit continues to guide and strengthen those who answer God’s call.

Corpus Christi – John 6:51–58

Date: June 7, 2026

Audience: Everyone

Theme: The Eucharist Sustains Every Vocation

Message: Jesus, the Bread of Life, gives Himself so that His people might have life eternal. The Eucharist gives strength to all, priests, consecrated, and families, to live out their calling with joy. This feast reminds us that our communion with Christ fuels our mission in the world.

Vocation Day Note: Corpus Christi Processions and Adoration: Encourage Eucharistic devotion as a source of strength for those discerning their call.

Feast of the Sacred Heart of Jesus – Luke 15:3–7

Date: June 12, 2026

Audience: Everyone

Theme: A Heart for the Lost

Message: The Sacred Heart of Jesus reveals the depth of God’s compassion for every soul. Those called to the priesthood and consecrated life are invited to embody this selfless devotion in their service. This feast renews all believers in their commitment to love as Christ loves, generously, mercifully, and without limits.

Vocation Day Note: World Priest Day: A day dedicated to praying for priests and for their continued holiness, that they may reflect the merciful love of Christ’s Sacred Heart.

ORDINARY TIME (SUMMER–FALL)

11th Sunday in Ordinary Time (Father's Day) – Mark 4:26–34

Date: June 15, 2026

Audience: Fathers and Families

Theme: Fathers Nurturing Vocations in the Home

Message: Just as a seed grows in hidden ways, a father's influence shapes the faith and character of his family. Fathers are called to model faith, sacrifice, and perseverance in God's plan, cultivating an environment where vocations can take root.

Vocation Day Note: Father's Day: Invite prayer for all fathers, that they may guide their families in faith and encourage openness to God's call.

14th Sunday in Ordinary Time – Matthew 11:25–30

Date: July 5, 2026

Audience: Discerners

Theme: Resting in God's Will

Message: Jesus invites all who labor and are burdened to find rest in Him. This rest comes not from ease, but from trust, trust that God's plan is good and His yoke is light. Discerners are reminded that peace in a vocation comes from surrendering their own will to the loving plan of the Father.

16th Sunday in Ordinary Time – Matthew 13:24–43

Date: July 19, 2026

Audience: Discerners

Theme: Growth in God's Time

Message: The parable of the weeds and the wheat teaches patience and faith in God's timing. Vocations grow slowly, nourished through prayer and perseverance. God's call often unfolds quietly, and discerners are invited to trust that His timing and care bring forth the harvest of holiness.

19th Sunday in Ordinary Time – Matthew 14:22–33

Date: August 9, 2026

Audience: Discerners

Theme: Trusting the Call Beyond Fear

Message: When Peter steps out of the boat, he demonstrates courage to follow Christ into the unknown. His faith falters only when fear takes hold. This Gospel challenges those discerning to step forward in faith and keep their eyes upon Christ, trusting that His hand will sustain them even through uncertainty.

22nd Sunday in Ordinary Time – Matthew 16:21–27

Date: August 30, 2026

Audience: Discerners

Theme: Taking Up the Cross of Vocation

Message: Jesus calls His followers to deny themselves, take up their cross, and follow Him.

Every vocation involves surrender, reminding discerners that carrying their cross leads to transformation and joy.

24th Sunday in Ordinary Time – Romans 12:4–8

Date: September 13, 2026

Audience: Everyone

Theme: One Body, Many Parts

Message: St. Paul's teaching on the Body of Christ reveals that each vocation, priesthood, consecrated life, or holy matrimony, has a vital purpose within the Church. No vocation exists in of itself; all work together to glorify God and serve His people. This Sunday invite the faithful to value and support every vocation as part of God's divine plan.

26th Sunday in Ordinary Time (Priesthood Sunday) – Matthew 21:28–32

Date: September 27, 2026

Audience: Laity and Families

Theme: Grateful for Shepherds Among Us

Message: The parable of the two sons highlights the importance of faithful obedience to God's will. Priests embody this obedience daily as they say "yes" to their sacred calling. Share some of your vocational discernment in this homily.

Vocation Day Note: Priesthood Sunday: A day to celebrate, affirm, and support priests in their vocation and ministry.

28th Sunday in Ordinary Time (Deacon Sunday) – Matthew 22:1–14

Date: October 11, 2026

Audience: Everyone

Theme: Called to Serve

Message: Jesus' parable of the wedding feast reminds us that God's invitation to serve is open to all. Deacons embody this service in their ministry of charity, word, and liturgy. Their example encourages the faithful to respond generously to their own call to holiness and service.

Vocation Day Note: Deacon Sunday: Recognize the vital role of permanent deacons and their families in the life of the Church.

29th Sunday in Ordinary Time – Matthew 22:15–21

Date: October 18, 2026

Audience: Parents and Discerners

Theme: Giving to God What Is God's

Message: Jesus' words, "Render to God what is God's," invite a reflection on how we offer our lives in return for all we have received. Each vocation is a response of gratitude and stewardship.

Parents are reminded that their children belong first to God and are entrusted to them to nurture faith and discernment.

31st Sunday in Ordinary Time – Matthew 23:1–12

Date: November 2, 2026

Audience: Everyone

Theme: The Humble Path of Vocation

Message: Jesus reminds us that true greatness is found in humility and service, not in titles or recognition. Each person is called to live their vocation with a spirit of generosity, putting others first. As we begin National Vocation Awareness Week, let us pray that more men and women will have the courage to answer God's call — and that we, as a parish, will encourage them through our words, prayers, and example.

Vocation Day Note: National Vocation Awareness Week: Encourage prayer, education, and parish efforts to support and inspire vocations.

33rd Sunday in Ordinary Time – Matthew 25:14–30 (Parable of the Talents)

Date: November 15, 2026

Audience: Everyone

Theme: Using Our Gifts for God's Kingdom

Message: Jesus calls each of us to use the gifts entrusted to us for the glory of God. Every vocation is a unique gift meant to bear fruit in the world. This reading encourages all to discern how they can invest their talents in service to God's Kingdom through their chosen vocation.

Optional Memorial – Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary – Luke 1:46–55 (Magnificat)

Date: November 21, 2026

Audience: Everyone

Theme: Hidden but Powerful Witness

Message: Mary's hidden life of prayer and her quiet "yes" reveal the beauty of total surrender to God's will. Like Mary, those in cloistered and contemplative life sustain the Church through their prayer and sacrifice, often unseen yet deeply fruitful. Today we give thanks for their faithful witness and pray that we, too, may live our daily vocations with the same humility and devotion.

Vocation Day Note: World Day of Cloistered Life: Pray for those in contemplative communities who dedicate their lives to interceding for the Church.

Solemnity of Christ the King – Matthew 25:31–46

Date: November 22, 2026

Audience: Everyone

Theme: Serving Christ the King

Message: Jesus identifies Himself with the least among us, teaching that to serve others is to serve Him. Every vocation, whether the priesthood, consecrated life, or sacramental marriage, is a way to share in Christ's reign through love, mercy, and service. This solemnity crowns the liturgical year, calling all to renew their commitment to Christ's mission and to build up His Kingdom through their vocation.