

The Vocations Discernment Group in the Year of Faith.

For anyone seeking to know God's will for their life, the Word of God is one of the most important guides and inspirations for their journey of discernment. The light which the Scriptures can shine on our path is the inspiration for a series of meetings for the Vocations Discernment Group at Westminster Cathedral which will run throughout the Year of Faith.

A variety of speakers from different vocational paths will offer a series of talks focusing on figures of faith from the Bible who have inspired them personally and reflect on how we can all learn from their examples for our own journey. The speakers/Bible figures will be:

September 28th 2012: Fr John Hemer – Abraham, our Father in Faith

October 26th: Sarah de Nordwall - Sarah in the Book of Tobit

November 23rd: Andrew and Angie Bull – Mary and Joseph

January 25th 2013: Mgr Christopher Brooks – Jonah

February 22nd: Fr Matthew Blake – Elijah

March 22nd: Dr Anna Abraham – The Woman at the Well

April 26th: Deacons Anthony Curran and Oscar Ardila – St Stephen

May 24th: Sr Gabriela Gasz – Mary

June 28th: Sr Elaine Penrice – St Paul

The Vocations Discernment Group is for men and women in their 20's and 30's seeking their path in life and meets on the 4th Friday of each month, 7-9pm in the Hinsley Room, Morpeth Terrace next to Westminster Cathedral. If you are actively discerning God's calling for your life, we warmly invite you to join us for what promises to be a really inspiring and powerful journey during the Year of Faith. Let God's Word lead you to a deeper faith and discipleship of the Lord in your life.

Directions to the Hinsley Room can be found at: www.westminstercathedral.org.uk/find_us.php

Inspired by God's Word A Personal Reflection by Fr Richard Nesbitt

It was not until I was in my mid-20's that I began to have a real, living relationship with God. This change in my life took place in the 1990's when I went out to a city called Wroclaw in Poland to teach English in that decade of monumental change in Eastern Europe after the fall of the Iron Curtain. This was my first contact with the Catholic Church and God led me into the friendship and support of an amazing priest and his parishioners. They recognised both my spiritual emptiness and hunger and patiently, step by step shared their faith and love of God with me, bringing me into relationship with the One who had created me.

One of the greatest gifts of this wonderful parish was the gift to me of a Bible in English – the first I had ever owned. And they not only gave it to me but also showed me how to enter into its great

treasures. For example, I used to meet up with the parish priest every week and we would talk through the Sunday Gospel, which helped me to understand that the questions and struggles of the original disciples were echoed in my own journey. I identified with Peter's impetuosity, with Matthew's radical conversion, and with Thomas's swings from doubt to deep faith.

With time a new voice began to echo in my heart – a persistent sense that God was calling me to the priesthood. It seemed an incredible idea – me a priest? It was the gift of the Scriptures which once again helped me to come to a deeper trust in God in the face of this possible calling. I remember that a huge obstacle for me in responding to this voice was the sense of my own deep unworthiness, especially following the waywardness of my earlier life, and also a real anxiety that I did not have the gifts needed to become a priest. In particular I was troubled by the stammer which I had had since my early childhood – how could I stand in front of great crowds and speak with eloquence?

My moment of liberation from these fears came when I was reading the story of Moses. In just a few paragraphs the writer of Exodus sketches a vivid portrait of a man living far from his roots, racked by guilt for the sins of his past who one day is granted a mystical, life-changing encounter with the living God. Moses' response is one of incredulity, both at his own unworthiness for the mission entrusted to him and real fear that his speech defect will render him a useless instrument of the Lord. In my Bible, the translation given was "I stutter and am clumsy in speech" Wow – it was like hearing my very own words of protest being spoken by Moses. And then this reply from God: "Who gave you a mouth? Is it not I? Now go, and I shall help you to speak and instruct you what to say." (Ex. 4: 12).

I can still remember reading those words and being overcome by the most almighty relief, peace and joy. I knew that those words were being spoken to me as well and that I was simply to trust and, like Moses, give myself whole-heartedly to whatever mission God had for me, knowing that in Him nothing is impossible.