

## **CAREERS AND VOCATIONS**

**Thoughts for**      **Principals**  
                         **Careers advisers**  
                         **Those responsible for career education**  
                         **DRSs**  
                         **Chaplains**

### **IN CATHOLIC PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS**

- 1.0      Careers advisers and those responsible for career education may not always consider the concept of vocation as one that comes within career education. However, it is appropriate in a Catholic school that it should do so. It is valuable that our students develop an awareness of the vocational element in any life choice and career choice.
- 2.0      A vocation is a calling. The call to be fully human applies to all Christians, with Jesus as the example of the fully human person. How we live out our particular call is our specific vocation, including both our career choice and how we lead our daily life. Students' idealism and desire to contribute to the world need to be fostered in career education, no matter what career they are considering.
- 3.0      The word vocation has three related meanings: one's choice of career; a way of being that describes who we are with and how; a summons or strong inclination to a particular state or course of action, especially a divine call to the religious life or entry into the priesthood.
- 4.0      The specific consideration of the religious life (priest, brother, sister) can be seen as both a particular vocation and a particular career choice. While religious orders and the seminaries do not normally accept students until some years after they have left school, it is really important to have this option placed in front of students considering their careers.
- 5.0      Careers advisers could work with DRSs, so that students have an approach to career choice that includes this option. Students could also be provided with a sense of the pathways that can lead to a commitment of one's life to specific Church work, which may include being a lay volunteer, working in youth ministry, justice and aid or advocacy roles, teaching in Catholic schools, joining a community of young people who are engaging in life choice discernment while they study or work, etc. A discussion between those responsible for careers advice and education, and those responsible for religious education, Catholic character and chaplaincy could result in some fruitful ideas and programmes.
- 6.0      In the Year 12 religious education programme students study commitment and ministry, and this could be a particularly good time for career advisers to work with religious education teachers. In 2008, the National Vocations Week occurs on 3-10 August. This also would be a good time for a focus in schools.
- 7.0      Diocesan vocations advisers and religious education staff will have useful information and suggestions. Vocations advisers are listed in the New

Zealand Catholic Directory, and DRSs will be aware of these contacts. Members of religious orders may be available to come to careers events to talk about religious life, and the vocations advisers will be able to suggest for this task people who may have a particular rapport with young people. Such advisers, chaplains and DRSs will be able to talk with students more specifically about spiritual aspects which can be seen as central to a vocation to religious life such as a radical dependence on God, including a deep desire for oneness with God and others.

- 8.0 Some resources to start discussion in the school are attached:
- Article from Catholic Australia: this provides a succinct summary of the call to holiness, and the relationship between this, ministry and vocation.
  - Article by Kathy Calcaterra Chateau: this has a primary school focus, but it is also of relevance for secondary schools.
  - Two articles from NZ Catholic.
- 9.0 As part of career education and advice or as part of religious education classes it might be worthwhile to encourage students to visit some of the following websites:
- [www.catholicovocations.org.au](http://www.catholicovocations.org.au) is well worth a visit, for both staff and students. It includes married life and the single life as vocational decisions.
  - [www.calledtoday.com](http://www.calledtoday.com) is the UK vocations website. It is particularly effective for the way in which it presents the exploration of the various types of religious life. This site would be appealing to students in senior primary school and all levels of secondary school.
  - [www.seminary.org.nz](http://www.seminary.org.nz) is the website of Holy Cross, the national seminary for priests, located in Auckland. It includes contacts for diocesan vocations advisers.
  - [www.maristseminary.org.nz](http://www.maristseminary.org.nz) is the website of the Marist seminary in Auckland.
  - [www.catholic.org.nz](http://www.catholic.org.nz) lists specific religious orders in NZ (and their websites)
  - [www.catholicsoncall.org](http://www.catholicsoncall.org) is a site run from the Catholic Theological Union, Chicago. It has information about gatherings (in the US) for adults considering religious life but it also has a range of articles and online forums that may be of interest to more academic senior students or to staff (the material is probably aimed at 18-35 year olds).

