

CHAPTER 4

The Vocations Director and the Discernment of Vocations: Some Considerations for Priestly Formation

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Introduction

The twenty-first century is associated with advancement in information and communication technology (ICT), like the fourteenth century which came with the Renaissance that was associated with new knowledge and the scientific method which revolutionized virtually all sectors of life including the Church and priestly vocation. The discernment of priestly vocations has become a herculean task for all those who are engaged in the discernment and formation of vocations to the Catholic Priesthood. With the challenges that are rocking the priesthood today ranging from sexual abuse, Protestantism, materialism and secularism, the question: “How Vocation Directors and Formators in the Seminaries discern genuine vocation or discover candidates with genuine vocations” has become a front-burner question. This is the aim of this essay. This paper, therefore, attempts to discuss this topic issue with theoretical and practical insights and further make some proposals, that is believed would enhance the discernment process. Without being overly presumptuous, it suffices to clarify some of the key concepts in this discourse.

The Concepts of Vocation, Vocations Director and Discernment

Denotatively, the term, “vocation is from the Latin word *vocātiō* which means a call or summons. It is an occupation to which a person is specially drawn to, or for which they are suited, trained, or qualified.”¹ In the 15th century, the term was first attributed to a spiritual calling.² It was used in reference to those in the clerical order. It was Martin Luther who arguably later broadened the understanding of the term to mean all Christian calling and every state of life. Thereafter, John Calvin gave it the notion of industry and commerce. It was the English Puritans in the seventeenth century who eventually stretched the meaning of vocation to include any job or trade.³ In ecclesiological understanding, vocation is associated with “divine call addressed directly to a man’s soul, inviting him by means of a secret divine voice, to enter the clerical state.”⁴

On the other hand, when the term Vocations Director is employed, what easily comes to mind is any priest who has been given the mandate to recruit and present candidates for priestly ordination. In reality, this is a shortfall from the true meaning and task of who a Vocations Director is. The principal task of directing vocations rests on the Bishop. He is the first representative of Christ in priestly formation.⁵ However, just as candidates are ordained to share in the priesthood of Jesus Christ, so as to assist the Bishop in his priestly functions; a priest who is chosen and assigned the responsibility of directing vocations is, in reality, assisting the Bishop. Therefore, a Vocations Director is a priest who has been assigned to recruit, direct and guide and evaluate the suitability of the candidates to the Sacred Catholic priesthood. The role of a Vocations Director is to direct and guide young boys or young men who express the desire to become priests, as well as future priests (Seminarians) so that they may discover their calling to the priesthood as well as the nature of the calling. As the name implies, the Vocations Director has the obligation of *directing*. However, his function is not only to direct but also to inspire vocations in young boys; as well as to form and lead by word of advice, encouragement, explanation and example of life, those who express the desire to serve in the clerical orders as deacons or priests; and where one is discovered not to be a suitable candidate or have the ability to serve in the clerical order, he sincerely advises the candidate to withdraw and embrace another state of life. The function of a Vocations Director and Formators is not about telling candidates what they need

to do, rather it is much more of modelling and encouraging vocations to the priesthood. To be able to function properly, it is important that they are exposed to some years of pastoral experience and formation course or seminars periodically. The Vocations' Directors and Formators should endeavour to rid themselves of personal biases, tribalism, injustice, emotions that may prevent them from truly evaluating the qualities that a candidate exhibits.

St. Francis de la Sales emphasised the need for a guide for those who would enter upon and advance in the devout life. He referred to the Spiritual guide as a heaven-sent Angel, like the Angel who guided Tobias on his journey.⁶ The role of a vocation director is not in any way short of the task of guiding and accompanying candidates to the priesthood. This kind of journey together must be characterised by genuine love, mutual trust, prayerfulness, openness and sincerity to one another, and docility to the promptings of the Holy Spirit.

Although in every Diocese or Religious Congregation, the task of directing of vocations is primarily assigned to a particular priest, nevertheless, every priest is in a certain sense, a Vocations Director. Therefore, every priest must inspire vocations to clerical life and provide exemplary leadership and influence, as well as guide and direct every candidate who aspires to the Catholic priesthood. All the priests are united with the Bishop and share his responsibility in seeking and fostering priestly vocations. Together with the Bishop, they are *agents of formation*.⁷

Be that as it may, since the earliest Christian teachings, there has been a strong nexus between the human relationship with God and his ability to truly discern reality.⁸ As far back as the earliest days of the Israelites, the notion of discernment was already invoked. The criteria for discerning a true prophet from a false prophet was already expressed, which were: leading the people to God and fulfilment of prophecy (See, Deut 13:1-5; 18:21). In the early days of the Church, St. John also warned the Christians of his community against false spirits. He admonished them to test the spirits whether they are from God (1 Jn 4:1-6). This process of testing of spirit is called discernment.

Discernment as an English word was borrowed from an Old French word *discerner*. *Discerner* was from two Latin words "*dis*" meaning apart, and "*cernere*" meaning to separate. *Discerner* in its Old French original, meant "to separate, divide, distinguish or discern."⁹

Discernment can be employed both in the secular as well as in ecclesiological sense. In this secular sense, it refers to the act of evaluating or judging or reviewing a decision.

In an ecclesiological sense, it is the act of prayerfully evaluating or judging a decision through the guidance of the Holy Spirit. The concept when employed in vocations to the priesthood and religious life, refers, therefore, to the act of prayerfully evaluating or judging the suitability, motive, behaviours, the ability, as well as the natural and supernatural qualities of a prospective candidate to priesthood using both human reasoning and divine enlightenment. McIntosh (2004), outlined faith, impulses, discretion, divine will and illumination as the elements of discernment.¹⁰ The purpose of discernment is to know God's will. According to McIntosh (2004), "human relationship with God was distorted, and the ability of human persons to see God's ways in the world was drastically impaired-they could no longer recognise God's truth shining forth in creation because they were no longer rightly acquainted with God."¹¹

Discernment of Vocations and Evaluating the Suitability of Candidates

Priestly formation refers to the art and process of providing orientation, guidance, and training regarding priestly life to a candidate who aspires to the clerical order. Priestly formation is an essential aspect of the priestly vocation. In view of the crises rocking the Catholic priesthood and taking into consideration the challenges posed by the world of information communication and technology, it has become expedient to evolve new methods or techniques in formation. The task of formation and the selection of formators should be taken more seriously than ever before. Vocations Directors and Formators should be truly Formators and not just lecturers or chosen to fill up the gap.

Often times in the selection and formation of candidates, one is tempted to judge whether a candidate is called instead of judging the suitability of the candidate. This has often led to a serious error in the selection of candidates for the priesthood. It is a dangerous venture to create a dichotomy between discernment of call and deciding the suitability of candidates. Deciding the suitability of candidates is in itself a process of discernment. Using the words of Blowick (1932), "the true doctrine of vocation is so straightforward and so simple that the question of 'deciding a boy's vocation' is reduced to the exercise

of prudent judgement and sound common sense.”¹² It is important that vocations directors and formators in the Seminary know the nature and meaning of sacred calling in view of pastoral ministry, so as to be able to play their role well.

The selection and evaluation of a candidate for the priesthood will be more difficult for Vocations Directors and Formators if the essence of priestly ministry is not put into consideration. In evaluating the suitability of a candidate, basic virtues that candidates are expected to cultivate as well as the current challenges in priestly ministry should be brought to the fore at the point of evaluation. Right from the early centuries of the Church to the seventeenth centuries, as far as the issue of raising men to the status of pastoral leadership is concerned, the emphasis of the Church was always on the *suitability* of a candidate. This is what St Paul emphasised in his letters to Timothy and Titus regarding the choice of Overseers, Deacons and women who rendered special services in the early Church (**1 Tim 3:1-13; 5:22; Titus 1:5-10**). In recent times, the Church has also emphasised this *suitability* of candidates in her documents on the formation of future priests. However, it seems some Vocations Directors and Formators have shifted their focus from this trend of determining the suitability of a candidate to the clerical state, and have given room to bias and personal feelings. In matters of the priestly vocation, there are already basic requirements which are available in the various documents on formation to the priestly ministry. Vocations Directors and Formators should, therefore, acquaint themselves with these documents. The task of directing vocations and formation of the candidate is to determine whether given the behaviour manifested by a candidate and evaluating such in the light of the Gospel and the teachings of the Church if such an individual will be able to fulfil the priestly functions.

Basically, in the discernment of vocation, the central issues are the mission of Christ and the good of the Church, faith and community building, and the salvation of souls of the Christian community. These issues revolve around pastoral leadership. The process of discernment is to determine if the candidate has the human, physical, spiritual, intellectual, emotional, psychological, moral and pastoral ability to fulfil the role of a pastoral leader and make disciples for Christ. The suitability of a candidate is evaluated and determined based on the observable human phenomenon, while the calling is the function of the

Church through an appropriate authority (the Bishop). Here, the role of the Vocations Director and the presbyterium can never be underestimated. No doubt, “the vocation to the priesthood is a divine call; it is given by God. But God has empowered certain accredited ecclesiastical officials to issue it in his name. These alone can validly administer divine vocation.”¹³

In the selection and formation of candidates for the Catholic priesthood, nothing should be overlooked. The first stage in the process of formation of candidates for the priesthood is *recruitment*. The challenge in this recruitment process is often the pressure from priests and the parents of the candidates, who may want to prevail on the Vocations Director or Formators to consider a particular candidate for admission and to continue to ensure his stay in formation, even when he is not suitable for the priesthood. Once parents, friends or relatives are the ones fronting the process of admission of a candidate or making an enquiry on behalf of a candidate into the Major Seminary, that is already in itself a red-alert that should be foreclosed. One who is 18 years old should be able to take basic steps that are necessary for the pursuit of his career or vocation. The first consideration for selection and formation of candidates for the priesthood is the *genuine intention* and *desire* to be a priest to serve the Christian Community. It should not be the intention and desire of the parents, brothers, relatives, friends, or the parish priest or a priest who is a friend to the intending candidate. It should be a personal desire to serve in the clerical state. The true test of one’s love for God is the capacity to live for God and for others. Priestly life is one of service, sacrifice and commitment. It is a call to live not for oneself but for God. As Jesus Christ gave up his life for us all, and St. Paul poured out his life as a libation for God (2 Tim 4:6), so too, those who aspire to the sacred orders should be ready to sacrifice themselves totally to God, and should be seen manifesting this life of sacrifice already. J. Blowick (1932) identified the following: a supernatural attraction for the priesthood, a strong and permanent inclination, good intention, possession of natural and supernatural gifts that will enable a man to properly discharge the sacred duties of the ministry, as signs of an authentic vocation.¹⁴ This *genuine intention* and *desire* to serve in the clerical order must be expressed throughout the period or years of formation.

The work of formators will be most difficult if candidates who already manifest unsuitable behaviour or are known to possess terrible

behaviours such as stealing, lying, deceit, homosexual tendencies, fornication, materialism, and greed, moneygrubbing, nonchalant attitude towards the Holy Mass and Church devotions, are sent to the Seminary for formation. Sometimes, it is difficult to identify such candidates once they are already in formation. And when such is discovered later in the penultimate years of formation, sentiments of sympathy begin to wade in. At this point, evaluation becomes a matter of sympathy to the individual and his family, but to the detriment of the Church and the souls of those who will be entrusted to his care. If one knows the power or influence in little things to shape or change situations, then one will know that nothing should be undermined. This is not to undermine the possibility of one with such vices to experience conversion. Experience has however revealed that candidates with these vices or dispositions can hardly be opened to the process of encountering Christ in formation and be purified in the process of formation. The human person is a mystery whose life can be influenced by any situation. There are at least four results of those who are ordained into the priesthood. First, those who from the beginning manifested good behaviour but acted badly after ordination. Secondly, there are those who manifested good behaviour as candidates and still remained good priests after ordination. Thirdly, there are those who did not manifest sufficient good behaviour but were admitted on trial but in the process of formation were transformed are good priests and fourthly, there are those who gave red-alert as candidates but were admitted with sympathy with the hope of being properly formed, but they found their way into priesthood without getting changed or converted, and their performance in the priesthood was a reflection of the red-alert they manifested.

Priestly ministry goes beyond cultic and liturgical functions. It entails the proclamation of the Gospel, the celebration of the sacraments and pastoral leadership, which is to guide the Christian community in the name and in the person of Christ.¹⁵ P. Bernier, summarizes ministry to include five basic tasks: *Building community*, *Storytelling* (Proclamation), *Prophesying*, *Nurturing*, and *Missioning*.¹⁶ Priestly ministry is a call to pastoral charity and leadership, and it is rooted in the vocation to the mission.¹⁷ Leadership according to R. L. Daft, is an influence of relationship among leaders and followers who intend real changes and outcomes that reflect their

shared purposes.¹⁸ Central to this definition is the fact that leadership is an influence relationship. The call to the priesthood apart from being a call to service is also a call to provide exemplary leadership to the faithful. Leadership is an essential aspect of the priestly vocation. A candidate to the priesthood should possess leadership qualities that will enable him to influence the faithful with the gospel message. This dimension of the priestly vocation is often not taken into consideration. It is important that prospective candidates understand the power that is inherent in the Priestly pastoral role. Leadership is a gift and a call to service, and it is an inherent part of the call to the priesthood. Not everybody possesses the gift of leadership.¹⁹

The focus of priestly vocation is *Mission, Service, and Leadership* (MSL). The challenges in the priestly ministry today revolve around bad leadership. That is, the faithful can no longer find exemplary leadership in some priests. St. Paul in order to emphasize the importance of leadership in the early Church, admonished Timothy thus: “Let no one reproach you on account of your youth. Be a model to believers in the way you speak and act, in your love, your faith and purity of life. Devote yourself to reading, preaching and teaching, until I come” (1 Tim 4:12-13).

Bernier holds the view that the fundamental purpose of the New Testament ministry is to preserve the self-identity of the Christian community as the community of Christ as well as to discover the gospel in the changing circumstances of life.²⁰ Those who were appointed elders in the early Church were appointed not so much so that they might celebrate the Eucharist, but that they might guide and conduct the community and proclaim the Gospel.

Right from the time of Moses down to the New Testament era when the Church was still evolving, all those who were appointed leaders were to essentially lead the people and help them to sustain their faith in God. Whoever, therefore, must be admitted to commence the journey to sacred Priesthood or promoted to the Sacred Orders should be seen to manifest authentic vocation and exhibit evidence of his ability to perform the priestly function and lead the faithful in faith. The sacrament of Holy Orders is not an individual sacrament, like Baptism, Confirmation, Holy Eucharist, Penance and Anointing of the sick, which are received for the benefit of the recipient. Like the sacrament of Matrimony, the Sacrament of Holy Orders is both *individual* and *social*, hence the need to ensure that there are no

irregularities and impediments, because the recipients will fulfil a social function, which is not primarily for the benefit of the recipient but that of the entire Christian Community. Therefore, good intention alone is not sufficient to assume the office, but certain requirements are necessary and are insisted upon by the recipient.²¹

In the early days of the Church when celibacy was not regarded as part of the life of presbyters, the consideration for choosing a presbyter basically was *the styles of life*,²² centuries later, when celibacy became mandatory for those who are admitted into the clerical order, there was a shift from the *styles of life* to the *states of life*.²³ Today, in the selection of candidate the *styles of life* and the ability to assume *the states of life* of a priest are elements to be considered in determining the suitability of a candidate. The candidate before being admitted into the Seminary, and even while in formation in the Seminary and outside of the Seminary, should manifest the evidence of his *genuine intention* and *desire* to serve in the clerical state in his *styles of life*, disposition and readiness to embrace the clerical state. Intention and desire have a correlation in one's behaviour and outlook. It is an aberration for one to desire the priesthood, yet adopt worldly mindset and style. It should not in any way be assumed that the candidate will change after ordination. The evaluation of the candidate to determine his suitability should go beyond keeping the Seminary rules. His *actions* and *inactions*, his *behaviours* and *dispositions* should be scrutinised and interpreted in the light of the Gospel, the teachings of the Church and the challenges of the church and the situation of the world today, and how his *actions* and *inactions* and behaviour reflect and promote the Gospel message or bear witness to the risen Lord.

Also to be considered is the initial conversion of the candidate as well as openness to ongoing conversion. The initial conversion is evident in the reception of the Sacraments of Initiation, and the manifestation of the *Theological Virtues of Faith, Hope and Love*. These manifest in his prayer life, Christian devotion and service in the Church, as well as his detachment from the world. It is not enough to only be baptised, one must be open to conversion. Otherwise, after ordination one may behave worse than a non-Christian and do more harm than good to the body of Christ, as Alexander the Coppersmith did to St. Paul (**2 Tim 4:14**). Initial conversion will help a candidate get rid of such vices like stealing, lying, deceit, homosexual tendencies,

fornication, materialism, and greed, moneygrubbing, nonchalant attitude towards the Holy Mass and Church devotions.

Natural and supernatural endowments of the candidates while in formation should be evaluated. The priesthood is a call to pastoral leadership. Whoever must assume this status must be seen to possess some leadership qualities and must be free from canonical impediments and irregularities, which include: amentia, psychic illness, apostasy, heresy, schism, attempted marriage, voluntary homicide, procured abortion or cooperated in abortion, self mutilation or mutilated another, attempted suicide, or has performed an act reserved for those in the sacred orders.²⁴ Those who practice homosexuality or have deep-seated homosexual tendencies or support “gay-culture,” are not to be admitted into the Seminary.²⁵

The Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation “*Pastores Dabo Vobis*” enumerates four dimensions of priestly formation: human, spiritual, intellectual and pastoral formation.²⁶ These four aspects are so important that neglecting or undermining any of these dimensions is to do great harm to the entire work of formation and the Church at large. The crisis in the priestly ministry today can be linked to an improper formation in these four areas. Therefore, only those candidates whose human, moral, spiritual and intellectual gifts, as well as physical and psychological health and right intention, show that they are capable of dedicating themselves permanently to sacred ministries are to be admitted to the seminary.²⁷

The tendency to sometimes downplay the intellectual capacity and formation of the candidate often arises. References are often made to St. John Mary Vianney, the *Cure of Ars*, who was regarded not to be intellectually bright, yet, was a model of holiness and pastoral life. The world we must know is constantly evolving, and the Church expresses herself in every age in order to adequately meet the pastoral needs of the world. In the age of the Martyrs, Martyrdom was seen as a means of proving one’s holiness. After the age of Martyrs, monastic life and celibate living became the ultimate way of attaining holiness. We are no longer in the era of John Mary Vianney when the priestly function was basically the celebration of the sacraments and proclamation of the Gospel within the liturgical assembly. With the age of Information Communication and Technology, the world where the Church and clerics minister has become more sophisticated. It is no longer enough to celebrate the Sacrament and proclaim the gospel within the liturgical

assembly. The Church must move away from the liturgical assembly into the world. The Church needs to understand and interpret the mandate of Jesus Christ in light of the present-day world. "Go into the world and preach the Gospel" (**Mk 16:15**) must be understood as *a call for the Church to diversify her apostolate in the world* in order to effectively fulfil her mission of bringing Christ into the world. To this end, a myopic view of the world and reality will be dangerous to the Gospel message. Besides, it is only a person with a sound mind and intellect, who is constantly open to learning that can sufficiently present the Church's teaching to answer the questions of the modern-day human being. Experience has shown that one with low intelligence suffers low self-esteem and myopic in world view. Such a person finds it difficult to forgive and is more tribalistic, and so he excludes those who are not from his tribe or race from benefiting from his goodwill.

Since the candidate for the priesthood is trained to be a leader, whose life can influence the followers, it is important that the candidate is prudent in his actions. A candidate who is not prudent will be a bad leader and a negative influence. According to Thomas Reese (Jesuit priest), "Nothing chases a person out of the Catholic Church and away from Christ faster than a bad priest. The priest does not have to be a child molester. He may simply be arrogant, patriarchal, insensitive or just stupid. More people leave the Catholic Church because of bad priests than because of disagreement over dogma."²⁸ "A good priest can spend years building a parish community, inspiring active participation in the liturgy, recruiting volunteers for the parish ministries and to help neighbourhood poor. A new pastor can destroy all that works in a few weeks."²⁹

It is not sufficient for a candidate to be spiritual. He must be devout. Sometimes the spiritual life of a candidate is mistaken as a sign of suitability, to the detriment of other requirements. Yet, such a candidate is unforgiving, malicious, and does not see the need to tame his emotions. One who has not been able to tame his emotions, no doubt, will be a scandal both in his words and in his attitudes.

The task of directing vocation and forming candidates for the priesthood is an onerous one. And those who are appointed to carry out this task should be carefully selected. They should be people with mature minds and sincere in their approach to issues and evaluation of any candidate. These qualities do not necessarily come with years in

the priesthood or biological age. It is much more a personal disposition informed by one's background or situations in life.

Priestly vocation apart from being a gift to the recipient, it is also a gift to the Church as a whole for the benefit of her mission. The Faithful are also agents of the priestly vocation.³⁰ So, in every diocese, there should be a vocation team comprising of Priests and Lay faithful who carry out the recruitment and evaluation of Seminarians.

Concluding Remarks

The formation of Seminarians today has become much more difficult than ever before. Similarly, the role of the Vocations Director has equally doubled. The Vocations Director acts as a sentry for the Church within his Diocese, Religious Congregation, or society of apostolic life for which he is appointed, and as a guide for the candidate to the priesthood.

The Vocations Director acting as a sentry on behalf of the Church ensures that bad elements do not creep into the Priesthood. This role has become so important as the devil masquerades to be an angel of light (**2 Cor 11:14-15**). No doubt, he inspires his messengers as candidates to the priesthood, to be his ministers in order to carry out his mission of stealing, killing and destroying the Priesthood and the souls of Christians who believe in Jesus Christ (**John 10:10**). Wherever the children of light are gathered, the devil too sends his angels there (**Job 1:6**). Clear evidence of inordinate missions abound in the priesthood today, with some young men trying to become priests at all costs. At any level of formation, after careful observance, where a candidate is found to be unsuitable for the clerical orders, he should in love and for the good of the Church be advised to withdraw. It does not matter how many years he has spent in formation. He should not be promoted in sympathy. To deny one ordination is neither a denial of life or heaven. However, it is important that Vocations Directors and Formator cultivate the virtue of patience in the formation of candidates. With the challenges facing family life, the task of formation will require greater patience than ever before.

The key players in the process of formation are the Vocations' Director, the Formators in the Seminary and the Presbyters of the Diocese or Congregation the Seminarian belongs. This is why it is expedient that the Vocations' Director knows personally the individual candidate as well as the family background of those being admitted.

This can be achieved if there is a synergy between the Vocations Director and the other priests in the diocese. Also, a candidate should be well known in his parish. So no candidate should be recruited who is not well known in his parish. In the early Church, elders were chosen from their community and appointed for service in their community.

Conclusively, the vocation to the priesthood is both divine and human. It is the prerogative of the Bishop to ordain young men who have been adequately prepared for the priesthood. In reality, the Bishop may not really know, at a direct level the level of suitability of those he ordains. He acts on the reports that are presented to him. The Vocations Director and the entire presbyterium should work together to ensure that reliable candidates are admitted for formation.

Endnotes

¹ Cf. "Vocation" in <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vocation>, accessed September 12, 2019

² Online Etymology Dictionary

³ Hahnenberg, E.P, *Awakening Vocation: A Theology of Christian Call*, Minnesota: Liturgical Press, 2010, 3.

⁴ Blowick, J, *Priestly Vocation*, Dublin: M. H Gill and Sons Ltd, 1932, 1.

⁵ *Pastores Dabo Vobis*, n. 65.

⁶ [https://Introduction to Devout Life](https://Introduction%20to%20Devout%20Life) in Catholicity.com, retrieved 19/9/2019.

⁷ *Pastores Dabo Vobis*, n. 41.

⁸ McIntosh, M. A, *Discernment and Truth*, Newyork:The CrossRoad Publishing Company, 2004, 4.

⁹ See, "Discernment" in Wiktionary, <https://en.m.wiktionary.org>

¹⁰ McIntosh, M. A, *Discernment and Truth*, 5.

¹¹ McIntosh, M. A, *Discernment and Truth*, 4.

¹² Blowick, J, *Priestly Vocation*, vii.

¹³ Blowick, J, *Priestly Vocation*, 238.

¹⁴ Blowick, J, *Priestly Vocation*, 2

¹⁵ *Pastores Dabo Vobis*, n. 43.

¹⁶ Bernier, P, *Ministry in the Church*, (2nd ed), New York: Orbis Book, 2015, xii-xiii.

¹⁷ Bernier, P, *Ministry in the Church*, *Ibid*, xii

¹⁸ Daft, R. L. , *The Leadership Experience*, MA: Cengage Learning, 2018, 5

¹⁹ Bernier, P, *Ministry in the Church*, xii.

²⁰ Bernier, P, *Ministry in the Church*, 38.

²¹ Blowick, J, *Priestly Vocation*, 315.

²² Bernier, P, *Ministry in the Church*, 92.

²³ Bernier, P, *Ministry in the Church*, 93

²⁴ *Code of Canon Law*, Canon 1041.

²⁵ Congregation for Catholic Education, *Instruction Concerning the Discernment of Vocations with regard to Persons with Homosexual Tendencies in view of their Admission into the Seminary and to the Holy Orders*.

²⁶ *Pastores Dabo Vobis*, nn 43-57.

²⁷ *Code of Canon Law*, Canon 241.

²⁸ Thomas Reese, “Bad Priests, of all kinds, chase people away from Christ and the Church” in *National Catholic Reporter*, <https://www.ncronline.org/news/opinion/signs-times/bad-priests-all-kinds-chase-people-away-christ-and-church>. Retrieved 22/019/2019.

²⁹ Thomas Reese, *ibid*.

³⁰ *Pastores Dabo Vobis*, n. 41.