


DISCERNING VOCATION



ACTIVITIES TO HELP ENQUIRERS
REFLECT DEEPLY ON THEIR FAITH,
VOCATION AND MINISTRY

PREPARED BY
DEPARTMENT OF ORDINANDS AND VOCATION
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Anglican
Church Southern Queensland



For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the LORD,
plans for your welfare and not for harm,
to give you a future with hope.

Jeremiah 29:11

The activities in this booklet are intended to be an aid to your prayer and reflection as you discern your God-given vocation.

Your responses are less important than the thoughts and feelings they evoke in you, which you should offer to God in contemplation, and talk through with your loved ones, spiritual companion and parish priest.

May God bless you deeply as you discern your vocation.

Sarah

*The Rev'd Canon Sarah Plowman
Diocesan Director Ordinands and Vocations*

Your Life's Ups and Downs

No one's life is straight and steady all the time. From our birth, we face challenges and triumphs, joys and sorrows. On the chart at right, map our your life according to how you perceived each period or event as positive (made you feel great) or negative (made you feel sad or lost).

Look at the highs and lows and remember each event as you track the changes. Talk to someone you trust about the feelings you recall, especially the sad ones. Do not feel sad on your own.

Use these questions as a reflection tool:

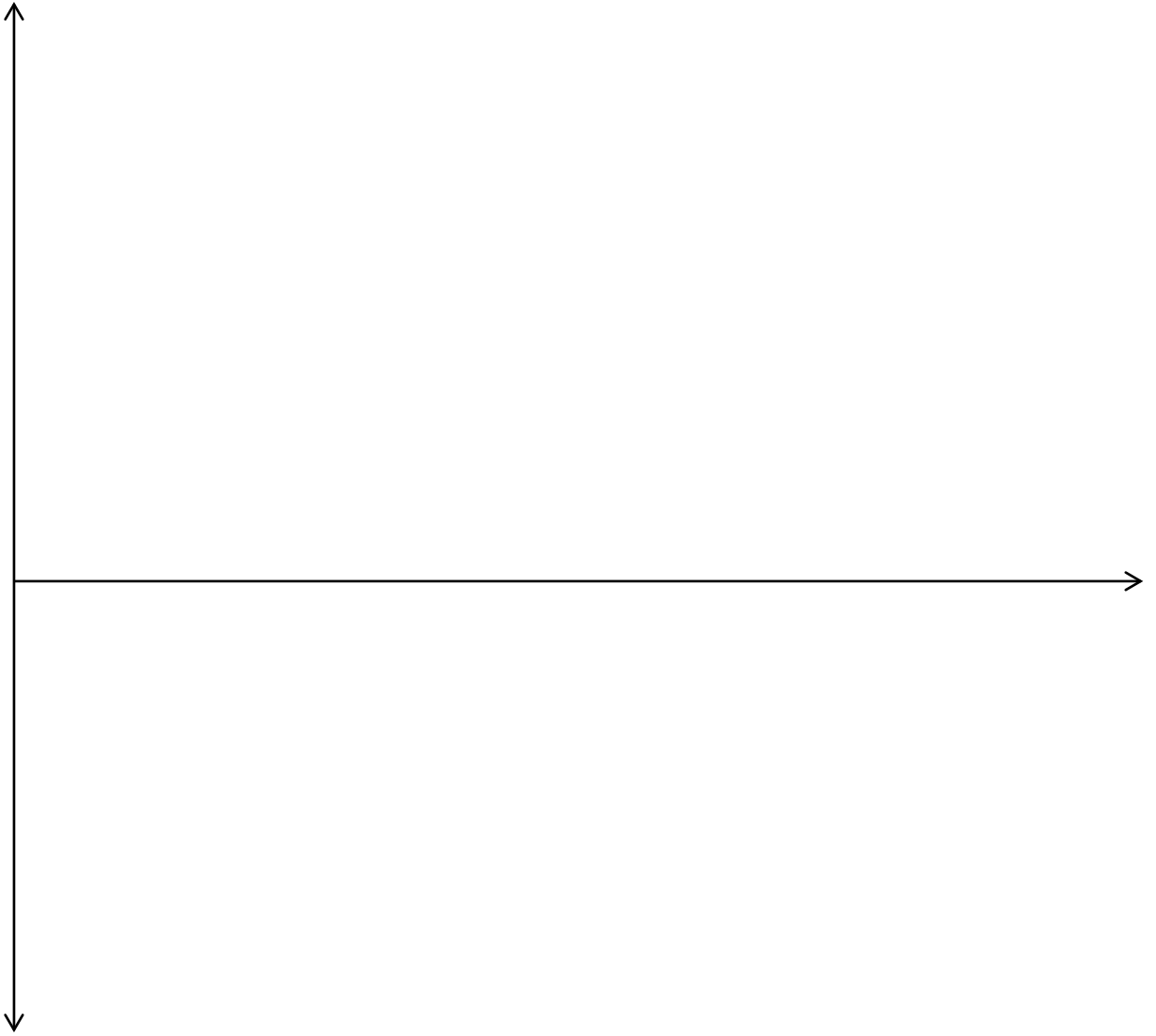
- ☞ At which times did you feel close to God?
- ☞ Were there times that God felt far from you? Or you from God?
- ☞ Who or what helped you out of the 'bad' times?
- ☞ How did you celebrate and give thanks for the good?
- ☞ Were there times you felt a 'rightness' about what you were doing?

Prayer Time

Sit with the feelings this activity raised and offer them to God with no need for explanation.

Give thanks to God for all of your life and the wisdom and strength you have gained throughout it.

Your Life's Ups and Downs



The Shape of You

Every person is a mix of qualities and traits they were born with and those they gained along the way – you are a blend of nature and nurture.

What events, people and values have shaped you as you have grown up?

Think about yourself as a child, a teenager, a young adult, and as a more mature adult. The things that shaped you will change over time.

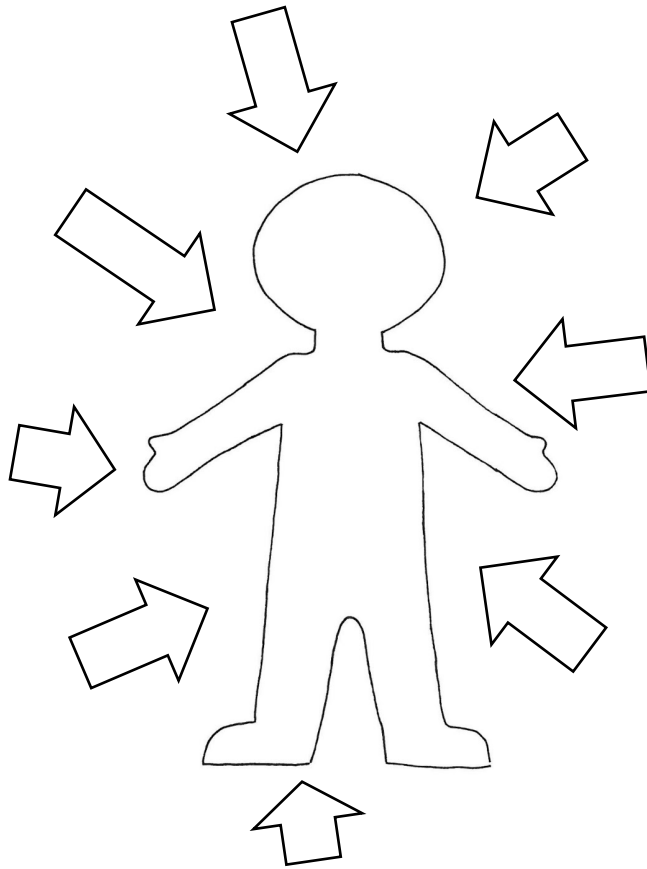
- ☞ Who were the people who influenced you?
- ☞ What values were important in your family?
- ☞ Are your values now different or similar to those? How? Why?

Prayer Time

Sit with the feelings this activity raised and offer them to God with no need for explanation.

Give thanks to God for the people who shaped your life.

The Shape of You



God Calling in Scripture

If you have been reading the Bible for a long time, you will be familiar with many stories of God calling people into service and ministry.

Think of the stories that come to mind for you.

- ☞ Adam and Eve: called to be stewards of the creation
- ☞ Abraham: called to be in special relationship with God
- ☞ Moses: called to lead the Hebrews out of Egypt
- ☞ Samuel: called as a young boy
- ☞ Deborah: called to be a Judge of Israel
- ☞ Ruth: called to be a stranger in a strange land
- ☞ Isaiah: called to remind Israel who and whose they are
- ☞ Mary: called to be mother to the Messiah
- ☞ Jesus' disciples: called to simply follow him.
- ☞ Saul/Paul: called to become what he despised and persecuted

There are many more. Write about the story you relate to most.

Prayer Time

Sit with the feelings this activity raised and offer them to God with no need for explanation.

Give thanks to God for the stories through which God speaks to you.

God Calling in Scripture

Not Quite Enough

If you are considering a vocation to ministry, you must feel that there is something missing in what you are doing right now.

Take some time to think about how you are serving God right now, in what you do for paid work, or volunteering at church, in leading worship or a church group.

- ☞ Which parts of your life fulfil the 'itch' to do ministry?
- ☞ Where do your gifts and talents find their use or expression?
- ☞ Where do you feel a sense of 'rightness' about what you are doing?

Think for a few minutes about what little changes could be done in your life right now to fulfil the need to serve God and/or God's Church.

Would this be enough? (What does 'enough' even look like?)

Prayer Time

Sit with the feelings this activity raised and offer them to God with no need for explanation.

Give thanks to God for the ways in which you are already living out a vocation.

Not Quite Enough

Leave Something Behind

As we move through life, we sometimes carry burdens with us. Some we have picked up. Some have been given to us. Our burdens can weary us.

Read Max Lucado's story "Your Sack of Stones" as a reflection some time. It's easy to find on the internet with a quick search.

Lucado concludes the story with

“*Jesus says he is the solution for weariness of soul. Go to him. Be honest with him. Admit you have soul secrets you've never dealt with. He already knows what they are. He's just waiting for you to ask him to help. He's just waiting for you to give him your sack. Go ahead. You'll be glad you did.*

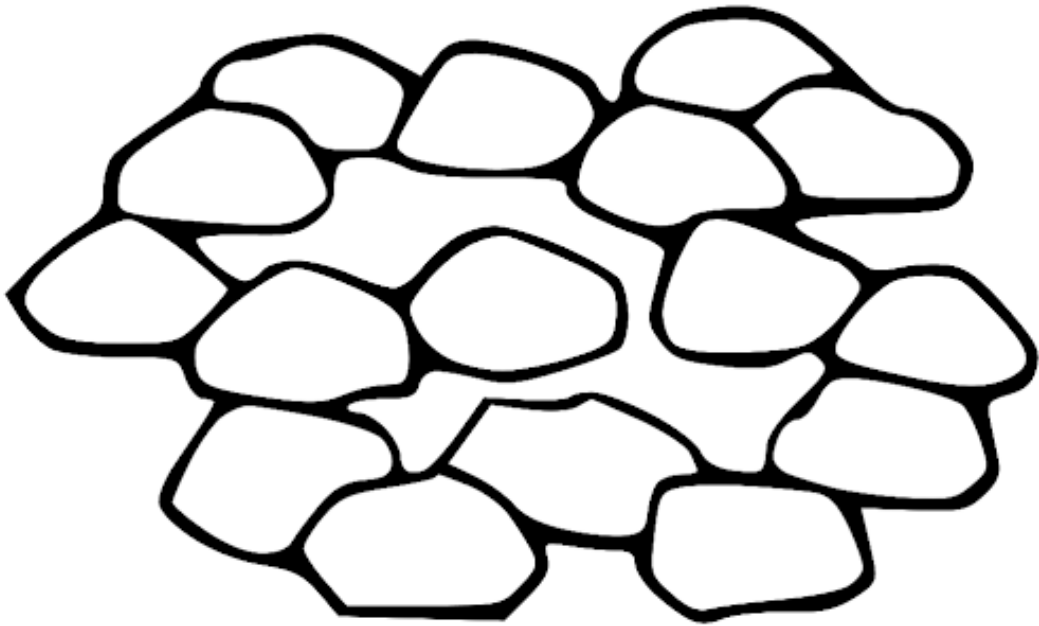
- ☞ What stones do you carry? Use the graphic at right to name them.
- ☞ Are there some you pretend are not there? What are they?
- ☞ Take each stone – small or large - and be honest with God about them.

Prayer Time

Sit with the feelings this activity raised and offer them to God with no need for explanation.

Give thanks to God for the courage you have to name the burdens you bear, and the grace God has to relieve you of them.

Leave Something Behind



Imagine a Future You

Imagine for a moment that God calls you to be a priest in a suburban church, where you are responsible for running the worship and pastoral life of the faith community. In this imaginary world, you have done your theological training and the necessary years of formation.

- ☞ What excites you about that idea?
- ☞ What terrifies you?
- ☞ Which parts of the job would you find easy? Or hard?
- ☞ What don't you know about now? What questions do you need to ask?

Record your responses on the page opposite. Go through it with your parish priest and see if he or she can answer the "I don't know" questions for you.

Make another list of things you are curious about and ask those too.

Prayer Time

Sit with the feelings this activity raised and offer them to God with no need for explanation.

Give thanks to God for the Church and the community of faith in your local area. Pray for the leaders of your church as they lead the faithful.

Imagine a Future You

