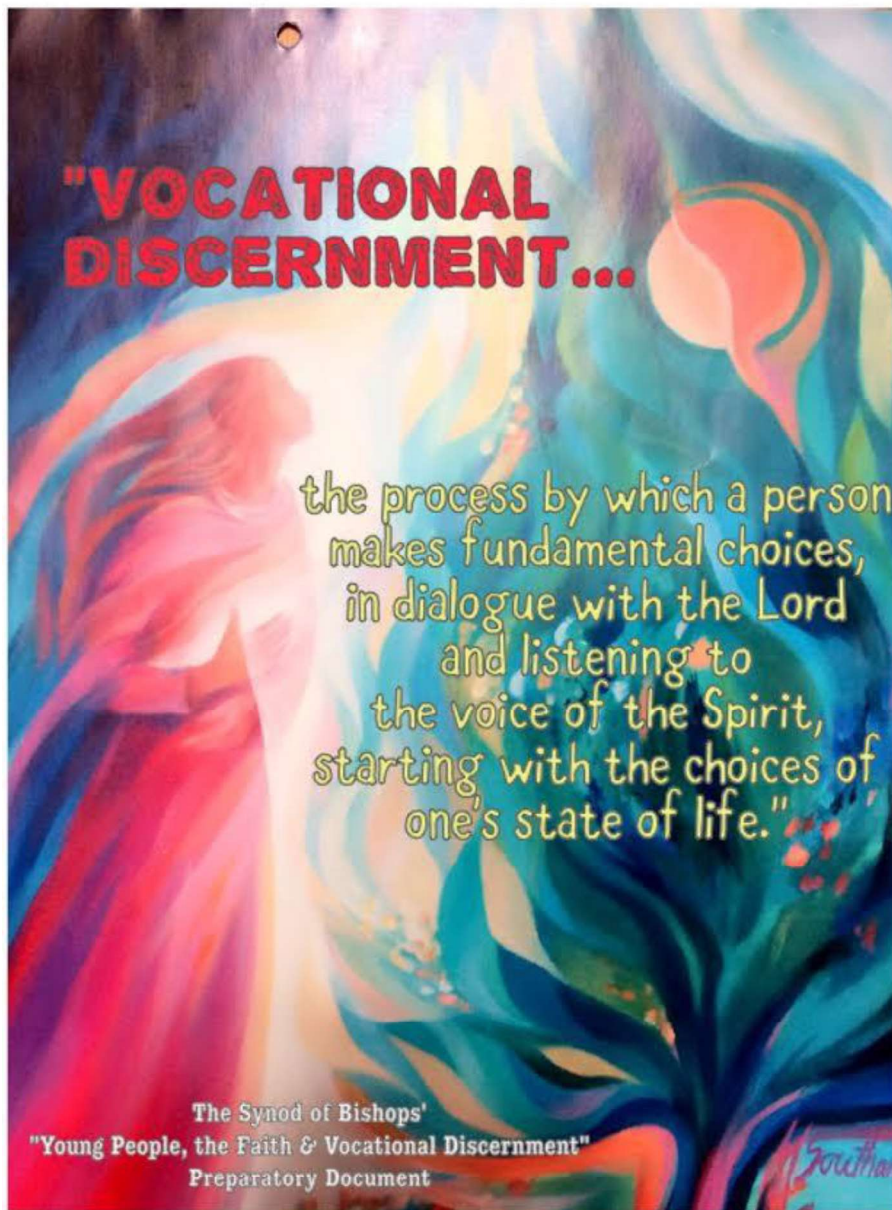


-Week 14-

*The Gift of Discernment: A Path Towards Fullness of Life*

#SERVEANDDISCERN



## -Week 14-

### *The Gift of Discernment: A Path Towards Fullness of Life*

Last week, we explored “The Gift of Faith: Seeing Things as Jesus Does,” which invited us to reflect on our experiences of knowing ourselves to be personally loved by God. We were also invited to pray with the events of Jesus’ passion and reflect on how Jesus’ choice to see his whole life through the lens of love helped Jesus fulfill his calling. Continuing into this fourteenth week of our Benedictine Volunteers 20-weeks Vocational Discernment Series inspired by the Synod of Bishops’ “Young People, the Faith and Vocational Discernment” Preparatory Document, we explore “The Gift of Discernment: A Path Towards Fullness of Life.” How does choosing love lead us onto a pathway towards fullness of life? What evidence does Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection offer us about God’s gift of new life?

The path of discernment, the *Preparatory Document* says, starts with one’s current state of life. In other words, discernment begins with where we are, right now. There is no perfect, best, or better moment to begin the journey. We begin as we are, knowing that God accepts and loves us as we are. In our current state, we may not yet know how this plan may unfold, but by choosing love like Jesus, we can trust that all will unfold into goodness, fullness, and love. Through Jesus’ resurrection, we can know God’s plan for us holds this same promise and mystery of new life. In John 20:1-31, we see Jesus offering hints and glimpses of God’s gift of fullness of life that is extended to us through Jesus’ rising. Jesus appears to Mary of Magdala, asking her to stop mourning so that she can rejoice with him in new life. Jesus appears to the disciples, showing them his hands and side and asking them not to be afraid, but to share in his peace and receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. Jesus appears to the doubtful Thomas, asking him to have faith in what cannot be seen by the eyes, but rather, experienced by the heart. Midst the disciples’ uncertainty and conflicting feelings, Jesus appears to remind them that the path of love is full of mystery, but it not something to be sad about or fearful of. Rather, the pathway of mystery is preparation for the joy of new life.

To choose love like Jesus means trusting that love leads to a new way of seeing, a new way of relating to others, and a new way of living life. Like Jesus, there may be many struggles and challenge to overcome along this path. However, like Jesus’ dying and rising, our dying to an old way of life will also lead to a rising towards a new way of life rooted in God’s love.

## *Questions for Reflection:*

- Spend some time reflecting on your life in its current state. What are the events and circumstances you are in, right now? Who and what is around you? What are your feelings towards these?
- What in your life feels to be called towards change/transformation/new life?
- Spend some time prayerfully with John 20:11-18. Image yourself as Mary of Magdala. What is Mary looking for? What does she learn? What in your own life are you looking for?