



Leader's Guide





# **Special Thanks**

The Diocese of Cleveland would like to offer special thanks to the men and women who diligently prayed through the Holy Spirit and worked to develop this inventory and its accompanying resources. Our hope is that this resource can be accessed and adapted to meet specific need in communities and help initiate and support a larger process of discernment for all missionary disciples. Specifically, we recognize the following individuals who served on the Called by the Spirit creation team:

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Without the hard work, dedication, and prayer of these individuals, this resource would not be possible. We are pleased to offer it to the Church in hopes that it will begin a discernment process which will lead to much fruit in the vineyard of the Lord.

"Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have gained access [by faith] to this grace in which we stand, and we boast in hope of the glory of God. Not only that, but we even boast of our afflictions, knowing that affliction produces endurance, and endurance, proven character, and proven character, hope, and hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out into our hearts through the holy Spirit that has been given to us." ~Romans 5:1-5





#### **Introduction**

God, by his sheer grace, draws us to himself and makes us one with him. He sends his Spirit into our hearts to make us his children, transforming us and enabling us to respond to his love by our lives. (Evangelii Gaudium, 112).

As missionary disciples, each of us is called by virtue of our baptism to respond to and cooperate with God's grace in the world. This grace is both life-giving and sustaining, fulfilling every aching heart that yearns for more. We are uniquely made in God's image and likeness to reveal in our own response to grace, the immensity of his love for us and all creation. Being made in God's creative image and likeness (Genesis 1), we seek, with wonderment and awe, the revelation of God intimately with us through the Holy Spirit. Through this life-long process of discernment, God reveals our role in his great plan and invites an active response that offers our restless hearts purpose and meaning.

#### A Life-long Process of Discernment and Discovery

The process of discernment is life-long and requires consistent engagement, prayerful focus, and nurturing spiritual mentoring. As experiences and circumstances shape the needs that exist in a community, the Holy Spirit will empower the graces needed to respond. It is the charge of the faithful to stir up those graces in their lives.

#### Furthermore, discernment:

- Leads us to freely align with God's heart and will, and collaborate with grace;
- Is a continual process of seeking, discovery, and awareness that involves intentional and focused listening with the heart;
- Places us in the disquieting presence of God and the ennobling sacredness of the other;
- Requires a confrontation with the illusions that sometimes easily possess us;
- Requires an intentional sacred silence and encounter we place ourselves in the presence of the Holy Spirit;
- Is a form of worship that must lead to action

As missionary disciples, discernment must continually be a part of our daily regimen. Let this inventory be a spring board for conversation and dialogue, prayer and meditation, and recognition of the Holy Spirit animating your life and challenging you to more deeply encounter the love of Christ within your life.

The Called by the Spirit Discernment Inventory is a tool that can be used and adapted by individuals and groups to identify the gifts with which they have been graced, so that they can begin to discern how to best use those gifts to bring about God's kingdom. It is intended to provide the foundation for enriching conversation, prayer, and spiritual direction that can yield much fruit in the Holy Spirit.

On behalf of the Catholic Diocese of Cleveland Called by the Spirit team, I hope and pray that these resources can be helpful to you in your own prayerful discernment.



As you plan to utilize the material from *Called by the Spirit*, consider what might best serve your community. Be creative in utilizing the material to kick-start a process of discernment. Whether you hope to organize a full-day retreat experience or use the material in a shorter formation meeting, planning for the experience is critical!

We recommend 2-3 months to organize a retreat day. This gives you ample time to plan and advertise the event. While we suggest the following timeline for the retreat experience, it can of course be modified to fit the operational flow of your community.

2-3 months before the event, approach the pastor as well as parish leadership and express the desire to organize an experience using the *Called by the Spirit* discernment material.

Reach out the diocesan Office of Missionary Discipleship for resources or guidance.

# Once you receive a blessing to move forward, organize a leadership team to coordinate the following:

#### <u>Marketing</u>

• Those in marketing will collaborate with the parish marketing representative to get the word out about the experience. They might utilize social media, parish bulletins, flyers, and other groups in the parish to advertise the experience.

#### Hospitality

• Those in hospitality will organize the schedule for the day, the venue, registration, volunteers, food and drink, etc.

#### **Content and Administrative Organization**

- Those in content and administrative organization will review the material and prepare the content experience for participants. This includes all the downloading and printing of the necessary materials from the Diocese of Cleveland.
- All of these materials can be placed into a folder packet for participants.
- Those arranging content can organize small groups from the list of registrants.
- These small groups will gather for table discussions during the event and journal reflection groups following the experience.

#### Follow-up

- Those in follow-up can organize resources for participants to engage the community and use their gifts to enhance and serve at the parish.
- They can maintain a connection with the participants following the experience with letters, emails, and other encouragements.

#### Prayer team

• Those in the prayer team pray for all the participants in the *Called by the Spirit* experience before, during, and after the event.



# Proposed timeline of Action Items:

#### 2-3 months out

- Approach the pastor and pastoral leadership
- Secure the date of the event and the venue space
- Assemble a leadership team to begin practical work on the event
  - Each subgroup on the leadership team will organize an appropriate timeline to complete respective tasks
- If needed, contact the Diocese of Cleveland for support
- Send initial marketing to the community about the program include a short blurb on the
- program, date, time, and registration information
- Pray for those who will participate in and facilitate the experience

#### 1 ½ - 2 months out

- Continue to roll out marketing on different platforms and encourage parish groups to spread the word about the event
- Pray for those who will participate in and facilitate the experience

#### 1 month out

- Continue to market the event
- Start to print and assemble participant packets
- Confirm venue, technology availability, and hospitality plans
- Organize follow-up plan and extend invitation to group representatives to engage with participants at the end of the experience
- Pray for those who will participate in and facilitate the experience

#### 2 weeks out

- Continue to market the event
- Finish any other content preparations for the event
- Organize food and drink for the day
- Complete volunteer list (registration table, food prep, greeters, etc.)
- Send a welcome message to those who have registered, sharing excitement for the event
- Pray for those who will participate in and facilitate the experience



# Proposed timeline of Action Items:

## 1 week out

- Strong marketing push towards the end (encourage participation by the pastor)
- Tie up loose ends
- Pray for those who will participate in and facilitate the experience

# **Day of event**

- Offer prayers for all those involved
- Continue to tie up loose ends
- Enjoy the day!

# 2-3 days following the event

- Follow-up with every participant and encourage small group journal discussions
- Work with parish leadership to connect with each participant to continue the discernment process
- Review evaluations and determine any changes that can be made for future implementation of Called by the Spirit



# Called By the Spirit Retreat Sample Schedule

8:30 – 9 AM	Registration, Welcome, Hospitality
9 – 9:15 AM	Opening Comments & Prayer to the Holy Spirit
9:15 - 10:15 AM	Joyful Missionary Disciples
10:15 – 10:30 AM	BREAK
10:30 - 11:15 AM	A Discernment Process and Cycle
11:30 AM – 1 PM	Mass & Lunch
1 – 1:45 PM	Called by the Spirit Gifts Inventory Process
1:45 – 2:45 PM	Storytelling: Sharing and Affirming
2:45 PM	Closing Prayer

# Please Note:

- This is a sample schedule and can be adjusted to fit the time constraints of the parish.
- Time for prayer for the participants must be included.
- Mass or adoration is encouraged as a beneficial part of the spiritual experience.



## As you prepare to Get Started

As Christians, we are a people animated by the Holy Spirit to be on the move, sharing in word and deed, the transformative love of Christ. Each of us has a unique role in the Church. Speaking to this, the Catechism of the Catholic Church says, "So that she can fulfill her mission, the Holy Spirit 'bestows upon the Church varied hierarchic and charismatic gifts, and in this way directs her.' 'Henceforward the Church, endowed with the gifts of her founder and faithfully observing his precepts of charity, humility and self-denial, receives the mission of proclaiming and establishing among all peoples the Kingdom of Christ and of God" (Catechism of the Catholic Church, par. 768).

All the baptized have been given a role in this mission. With Christ as the Head of the Mystical Body, and the Holy Spirit to guide us and provide the necessary gifts, each of us are active participants in the Church. The laity, together with the clergy, are called to address the real needs of our time.

By identifying our charisms, the plan and intention of God will be revealed. Then we can collaborate with each other as members of a body, working in unison toward a common goal. Shedding any desire to be independent, our weakness becomes our strength. We become beautifully reliant on God and on each other. What a vision God has given us! What an honor is ours to be called into this One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church.

#### The Value of the Assessment to the Participant

- To grow in awareness of your own gifts.
- To become more aware of the variety of ministries, activities, and gifts that are present in the Church.
- To grow in appreciation of the gifts of others.
- To have a sense of the unity of the members of the Church with their variety of gifts as members of the Mystical Body of Christ.
- To name and understand at which stage of the Journey of Faith you are currently and identify the next small step in your development toward becoming a fully engaged Missionary Disciple.
- To consider offering your gifts to a ministry in the parish based on your maturing in faith or the realization of your own gifts.

#### The Possible Uses of the Results of the Assessment

- To invite participants to explore areas of ministry for which they have no experience with the purpose of becoming aware of hidden talents and surprising spiritual gifts and interests.
- To use the information for spiritual direction and mentoring for the purpose of learning how to recognize and respond to the promptings of the Holy Spirit.
- To help a participant in the discernment process for seeing how to get involved in the parish ministries based on the stages of the Journey of Faith and the needs for specific gifts.
- To look at the overall results of a parish group to identify future needs of the parish in regards to parish ministries and where the Holy Spirit seems to be leading the pastoral plan of the parish.
- For those having difficulty knowing where to get involved, have them meet with the Pastor and let them pray together.

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