Youth Vocational Discernment Resources

Who claims you? Who calls you? Who sends you?

Each summer at the Wartburg Youth Leadership School (WYLS), Rev. Dr. Winston D. Persaud delights in inviting youth to dig deep into life and faith. Questions abound, the Word is alive, and wonders never cease. Through the old-old stories – of Ruth, Jonah, Peter and Cornelius – they start to see their own baptismal calls in bold new colors, leading them in bold new directions. Consider inviting your youth to journey with you through these biblical wonderlands:

The Book of Ruth
In the Book of Ruth we learn that Ruth had committed herself to the Lord God, in whom Naomi and her family believed. Ruth’s commitment mean ‘giving up and leaving behind’ and ‘moving on’ to a new land, people, and life.

How does her story help you in discerning God’s call?
What would that mean to you?

The Book of Jonah
In the Book of Jonah, we eventually learn that Jonah ‘ran away’ from God’s call because Jonah knew God was gracious, compassionate, and forgiving, and Jonah did not want God to act that way toward the people of Nineveh.

What is ‘standing before you and hearing and following God’s call?’

Peter and Cornelius (Acts 10)
In the story of Cornelius and Peter in Acts 10, both Cornelius and Peter are transformed by God’s call.

In what ways does thinking about the fact that following Jesus’ call will mean ‘changing your mind’ challenge you to say, “There is no other place in which I would rather be than where Jesus changes my mind about being called by the Spirit to witness God’s love for all”?

Letter writing exercise:
As you pray and ponder God’s call to you, write a letter to yourself telling the following:

What you like about yourself as a child of God blessed with the gifts of…. (name them).
How you see yourself as a disciple of Jesus Christ? Do you see yourself as a leader for the church?
Who have you spoken to directly or indirectly about considering you baptismal call?
What help (spiritual, material, etc.) would you need as you discern your call and pursue it.
Place the letter in a sealed self-addressed envelope and give it to your Bible Study Leader who will return it to you at a later date.
Article to assist in your preparation:
The Lutheran Study Bible, “The Bible and God’s Mission”, by Rev. Winston D. Persaud, PhD, Professor of Systematic Theology at Wartburg Theological Seminary (pg. 1547-1552)

Other terrific resources to consider:


Dancing with Your Gifts: An inventory of Spiritual and Relational Gifts for Youth
- a great tool to use with youth in exploring gifts and call for today and into their vocational future. This page also has great tools for all ages of youth from elementary school to teen years.

Consider sending youth to Wartburg Youth Leadership School -
http://www.wartburgseminary.edu/template_centers.asp?id=229