



Diocese of Northampton

YEAR of PRAYER
and VOCATION
2017/2018



Prayer for October: Pope Francis' Prayer

Lord Jesus, your Church turns her attention to all young people of the world. We pray that they may boldly take charge of their lives, aim for the most beautiful and profound things of life and always keep their hearts unencumbered.

Accompanied by wise and generous guides, help them to respond to the call you make to each of them, to realise a proper plan of life and achieve happiness.

Keep their hearts open to dreaming great dreams and make them concerned for the good of others.

Like the beloved disciple, may they stand at the foot of the Cross to receive your mother as a gift from you.

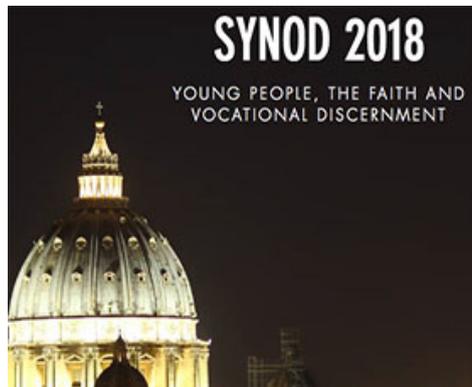
May they be witnesses to your Resurrection and be aware that you are at their side as they joyously proclaim you as Lord. Amen.

“ Show me your ways,
Lord,
teach me your paths.
Guide me in your truth and
teach me,
for you are God my Saviour,
and my hope is in you all day
long. *Psalm 25:4-5*

For 300 years, from the 1530s onwards, religious laws in England worked against those who did not belong to the Church of England. Roman Catholics, among others, suffered fines and sometimes worse for practising their religion. They were barred from the universities and from many higher professions. Eventually laws changed to make things better for Roman Catholics. In 1850, Pope Pius IX restored the Catholic hierarchy in England and Wales. Catholic dioceses could be established once more in the land.

With new Catholic dioceses came new Catholic bishops. Starting afresh, these new bishops often decided to prioritise the building of Catholic schools before churches to ensure a Catholic education for the children of a largely poor Catholic population. These early schools often served as Catholic chapels whilst churches were being built. Our Catholic schools today

are keepers of the flame that fired our Catholic forebears. In Britain today, over 850000 pupils and students attend Catholic places of education. Each of these will not only study subjects but also be helped to become a person fully formed in the human, spiritual, moral and religious dimensions.



It is the vocation of every person to be one with God in eternity. Catholic education helps young people to know themselves, love themselves and give themselves. It requires prayer and discernment to discover that 'definite service' to which each young person is uniquely called. To help in this,

Pope Francis has called for a synod (meeting of bishops) to discuss these matters. In this Month of Prayer for Our Schools and Young People and their Vocation within the Church, we join with the Pope in his call for young people to "not be afraid to listen to the Spirit" and to go on "a journey of discernment to discover God's plan" for their lives.

School Feast Days

Please pray for St Teresa's, Princes Risborough, Our Lady of Peace, Burnham, Cardinal Newman, Luton and St Edward's, Kettering.

A Practical Suggestion

Drawn from Blessed John Henry Newman's writings is a meditation 'Some Definite Service'. As a group, pray this together and think about the words.