

## **Setting up and Maintaining a “Traveling Chalice” Program for Vocations**

Please know that you are free to modify any of these steps to fit into your specific needs.

### **Step one: choosing a chalice:**

- Think about the message you want to convey here. The chalice and paten are used for consecration of the Body and Blood of Christ. Not only that, this is the symbol of the priesthood you want to imprint in the minds of all potential candidates out there, but you are also promoting the Eucharist. Choose a good but moderate chalice.
- I would suggest that you build a wooden case with a glass display front to protect the chalice while showcasing the content. (See Dodgeville’s for sample)

### **Step two: Instruction and promotion: (Takes about 6 weeks)**

- Ask the vocation office to give you some family prayer cards for vocations, brochure of the current men in the seminary (to pray for them), and some sheets of “Family Suggestions for Vocations Awareness” that you will give each family when they host the chalice. Always encourage them to keep the cards so that they can continue to pray for vocations as a family. You may wish to laminate the sheet of “Family Suggestions for Vocations Awareness”.
- Each host family is asked to say a prayer each day as a family for increased vocations and for current seminarians in the diocese, and to display the chalice in an appropriate but visible place at home.
- Included with the chalice/paten materials are some DVDs on vocations that the family can watch in their home. Please include the DVDs in the prayer materials accompanying the chalice/paten case.
- First week of promotion speak about the chalice program at all the masses. Explain to the people what it’s all about and how the process will work. Incorporate a little talk about the need for priests and how we are all working together to promote vocations.
- Second week write about the chalice in the priest’s column in your parish weekly bulletin. Again explain the rationale for what we are planning on doing and why this is an excellent way for every family to get involved. *Be sure that everyone understands that this chalice will be presented to the first person to get ordained from that parish as a gift from the entire parish.*
- Third to the fifth week put a little blob in the bulletin about the coming “attraction”. Keep it really short, but refer them to the previous bulletin for full information. It is always good that you give them the opportunity to call the parish office or the priest for more information.

- On the sixth Sunday, speak from the pulpit as you did about the program on the first week, and tell them it will be starting next weekend.

**Step Three: Kick off Weekend:**

- Have your secretary call the first family A-Z and have them commit to hosting the chalice. If they choose not to, go to the next on the list and cross off that family. They should let the priest know what mass they will be attending. Another approach is to have a sign-up weekend after each of the Masses. An announcement can be made after Communion by the pastor, and a table would be available in the narthex for households to sign up for a week of receiving and praying with the chalice. For parishes with schools, some teachers have found it worthwhile for a classroom to sign up for the chalice/paten for a week. This is an excellent idea.
- Always display the chalice in front of the altar during mass so that people will continue to associate its presence with the need to pray for vocations.
- After post communion prayer, announce the host family and have them come up to the front of the church to receive the chalice. Briefly thank them for praying for vocations and give the chalice and the prayer card.

**Step Four: When a son of the parish is ordained**

- When a man from the parish is eventually ordained, the chalice/paten case is given to him as a gift from the parish. It is recommended that the chalice/paten case be presented to him at a set of weekend Masses by the pastor with a reception afterwards (perhaps with children getting their picture taken with him). The idea is to bring closure to the program and to celebrate its success. The parish would order a new chalice/paten case and then continue the program.

**Other considerations:**

- Start alphabetically with letter “A” names, but will be switch to the “Z’s” counting up after the “C’s” to make it more exciting and then switch back again.
- The secretary should call the families on Tuesdays and have them call back by Wed to accept or to pass. That gives you Wednesday and Thursday to find another family if the first family decides not to host it.
- Remind the people to return the chalice to the office before the end of business day on Friday.
- Offer the option to give the chalice to the families either in Church before the final blessings or in the sacristy after mass.

- Always announce in the bulletin the host family. If people are home bound but really want to be part of this program, see to it that someone took the chalice to their place of residence.
- Always avoid on very busy holidays when you know that families are not likely to fulfill their pledge because of other things that are going on.
- The priest may wish to mention at the Mass every two or three weeks that people can sign-up to host the chalice for a week. Many parishes also put the same announcement in the bulletin on a periodic rotation (every two or three weeks) as well.
- Some parishes use a simple sign-up table at the rear of the Church and use a calendar and set of cards to sign up households for the Traveling Chalice Program. The card often contains the following:
  - o Name of Family: \_\_\_\_\_
  - o Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_
  - o E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_
  - o Number in Family: \_\_\_\_\_
  - o Their Prayer Week: \_\_\_\_\_
  - o Receive chalice at Mass: \_\_\_ 5:00 P.M. \_\_\_ 8:30 A.M. \_\_\_ 10:30 A.M.
- Some parishes print in the parish bulletin which household has the traveling chalice for the upcoming week. This is a way to give encouragement and recognition to families/household who host the chalice in their home. A sample inclusion in the Parish Bulletin is:

## **Traveling Chalice**

### **A Program of Awareness and Prayer for Vocations**

**This week our parish gratefully acknowledges the**

**John and Jane Doe Family**

**As they host our Traveling Chalice**

The chalice program is a tangible way of increasing the awareness of vocations to the priesthood. Images create attitudes and attitudes lead to actions. Kids will be asking questions and more people will be talking about vocations and the priesthood in particular. Since we started it the first Sunday of Advent 2005, it has received wide acceptance from the parishioners. Even some families that earlier passed on to hosting it, are now contacting us to put their name back on the list of potential hosts. Key to the success of this program is the support of the pastors and other vocations group in the parish, Serra Club, KC's etc.