



Wisdom for Nurturing Vocation

1. When someone steps forward to say, "I am sensing a call in my life," a congregation's work and responsibility has only just begun. That person needs the congregation's ongoing support, presence and involvement to understand and enact that call.
2. It is often the case that a person discovers a call only after circumstances have drawn her into that life and work. That is, a sense of call arrives after the work and ministry is already underway.
3. A sense of call is occasionally hereditary – a person is raised into life and work in the church. And like developing from an adolescent into an adult, this kind of nurture requires and enables him to be a novice at first.
4. The local congregation is one of the few cultural institutions where the arts are practiced and presented primarily by amateurs. Music, visual art, drama, poetry, prose, scholarship – done simply for the joy and power they provide – are a weekly part of life in a congregation. And these things can be powerful conduits for vocation.
5. The sights, sounds, textures, tastes and smells of church are powerful magnets for the soul.
6. An experience of call can be intensely personal and mystical but this experience must move into interpersonal and concrete expressions to be made whole.
7. Answering one's call is risky, uncertain, frightening and absolutely life-changing.
8. Understanding and enacting one's call is not a one-time experience. It is a lifelong conversation with one's self, one's community of faith, and one's God.

*Drawn from an exercise in personal storytelling at a leadership retreat with
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