



Come & See

Program Guide

"Come & See" can help to follow up on your vocation efforts by offering those interested a chance to visit with the Brothers. "Come & See" gives step-by-step plans of what to do to have students and other interested individuals visit with the Brothers for an evening.

For schools/ministry sites with no Brothers present, contact the Province Vocation Promoter to arrange to have a Brother or Brothers attend your "Come & See" event.

Province Vocation Promoter
Brother James McDonald, C.F.C.
Call or text: 815.272.7742
bromaccfc@yahoo.com



“Come & See” Program

An Overview

Somewhere among us are young men who may be waiting to be asked -- asked to consider a vocation to the Christian Brothers. With this conviction, you are invited to host a modified version of the vocation program, “Called By Name”. The program challenges local communities and co-workers, in the spirit of the early Church, to identify and invite potential candidates to explore a vocation to the Christian Brothers.

The original “Called By Name” is a vocation program designed for inviting women and men to consider priesthood and religious life. It has been authorized and published by the Bishops’ Committee on Vocations. That program is rooted in the belief that all of us share a common call through baptism and that we respond to that call in a variety of ways: marriage, single life, religious life and priesthood. It contains the key element in the vocation ministry of extending the invitation to particular individuals rather than doing a “shotgun” approach of extending the invitation to a whole group of people with the result that no one really hears the invitation that has been extended to him/her.





Program Strengths

- It is scripturally rooted. (The Acts of the Apostles shows the apostolic Church choosing its leaders from within its community.)
- It animates the prayers and attention of the entire mission community on behalf of Church vocations.
- It results in a direct (but not pressured) call to prospective candidates for ministry.

Our “Come & See” evening enables those who respond to learn more about the vocation of a Christian Brother, and, if they wish, to continue to explore this vocation with the local community or the vocation promoter.

The program involves a few basic elements, the first of which is collecting data concerning the qualities of potential candidates. As the Brothers and lay people are engaged in various activities to identify such qualities, a representative sample of desired qualities is developed. These qualities will be shared with co-workers in an appropriate forum.

After considering the desired qualities, a list of persons to be invited to the “Come & See” evening is generated.

A date is set for the event. The event is planned by you and your colleagues who are energized by the vocation ministry.

Details such as sending the invitations, RSVP dates, follow-up phone calls, program description and format are finalized. After hosting the “Come & See” evening, you will determine how best to follow-up with those who attend the gathering to determine their interest in learning more about the life and work of a Christian Brother.

One of the main obstacles in most religious communities is the hesitation of Brothers and others to extend the direct invitation to men who have the qualities to live the Brothers’ way of life. This program uses the written invitation as an alternative since it does not require anyone to make the invitation in person if he or she is not comfortable doing so. With this program it is hoped that more of us will come to realize that extending the invitation is not such an overwhelming thing to do.

A simple, sincere comment should not be underestimated.

***I see in you the qualities that would make a good Brother,
and I want to encourage you to pray about it.***



The process for setting up a “Come & See” evening

(For locations without a Brothers' community, please make appropriate adaptations)

I. Hold a Community/Ministry Site Meeting (Involve lay people from your ministry site)

- Reflect on qualities of potential candidates.
- Create a list of persons to be invited to the information gathering. As a way to include the lay faculty and as an alternative to a meeting, the Brothers may want to put out a flyer to all or selected members of the faculty to elicit the names of individuals and ask them to include why they think that these individuals would be good candidates for religious life.
- Once the community has the "list" then they could continue planning.
- Set date for the event.

II. Local Leader, Contact Person, or Vocation Animator (or other community member(s), or lay people)

- Choose a community member or lay person to write/sign the invitation letter.
- Set date for invitation letters to be sent.
- Set deadline for follow-up phone calls.
- Send written invitation letters to people on the list.
- Make the follow-up phone calls.

THE CALLS SHOULD INCLUDE:

- An introduction of the person calling and a reminder that this concerns the invitation he received. Again state that he has been named as someone who possesses the qualities needed for our way of life and ministry.
- Ask him if he is interested in learning more about our way of the life and ministry. Assure him that he is not being asked to commit himself to anything at this point.
- Remind him of the evening to be held at the local community and ask him if he would like to attend.
- If he would like to attend, give a brief summary of the evening and any other information the person may request.

III. “Come & See” evening is hosted by the local community or ministry site.

A sample outline shows how this gathering might be structured.

IV. Local leader, other community member(s), or local vocation animator checks back with those who came to the evening event to ascertain their interest in learning about the Brothers.

V. Names of those interested in learning more about the Brothers are allocated to individual community members, the local vocation animator, or other lay person for continued contact or are submitted to the Province Vocation Promoter.



Qualities of Potential Candidates

Who are we looking for? What qualities, gifts, and talents should we look for in those we invite to consider our way of life?

Physical Health

- Is he in generally good health?
- Is he attentive to maintaining good physical condition?

Intellectual Development

- Does he have an adequate intellectual ability?
- Does he demonstrate an active mind; a willingness to learn and seek for truth?

Personal and Social Development

- Does he exhibit a positive life direction which has a sense of purpose?
- Does he consider close personal friendship as important?
- Does he have normal, healthy relationships with peers and others?
- Does he have a sense of perspective and humor?
- Is he able to make a positive choice for celibacy?

Spiritual Development

- Is he an active member of the Roman Catholic Church, with an appreciation for the past and a sense of hope for the future while being engaged in the Church as it is here and now?
- Is he a person of faith and integrity?
- Does he have a relationship with God which is alive and life-giving?

Ministerial Development

- Is he responsive to the needs of others?
- Does he demonstrate the desire and ability to serve generously in a variety of settings?
- Does he have leadership ability: can he invite and enable others to use their gifts; can he collaborate with women, men, all ages, ethnic backgrounds, etc?

Each Brother is an open letter from Christ-- a message written not with ink but in the Spirit of the living God, with a faithful human heart to carry it.

Blessed Edmund Rice



“Come & See” Sample Format

1. The evening begins with everyone gathered in the Chapel (or other appropriate location) for an abbreviated form of evening prayer which could include a welcoming prayer for all those gathered which invokes the Holy Spirit's movement within the group.
2. Next, those assembled “break bread” by sharing a meal.
3. After the meal, everyone gathers in the community room or a location other than the dining room.
4. A couple of community members share their vocation stories.
It is recommended that persons of different age groups tell their stories.
5. A couple of other community members address the question, “What does it mean to me to be a Christian Brother?”
6. One member of the community talks about what life in this community is like.
What is the schedule of the day? How does the community spend time together?
7. Participants are invited to ask any questions that may have surfaced for them.
8. The evening gathering is drawn to a close with a very simple concluding prayer.

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Additional Materials

The pages which follow may be of assistance to you with your “Come & See” event.

- Sample Invitation Letter from a Brother
- Sample Invitation Letter from a Non-Brother
- Prayer for Vocations to Religious Life
- Frequently Asked Questions (You may wish to copy this and distribute it to the attendees to help generate discussion.)

Thank you for your willingness to answer God’s call through your participation in the ministry of seeking vocations to the Christian Brothers.

Please contact me if I can be of any assistance in your vocation efforts.

Yours in Christ and Edmund,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "James McDonald".

Brother James McDonald, C.F.C.
Vocation Promoter
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Sample Invitation Letter From a Brother

USE YOUR LETTERHEAD

Date

Dear **Name**:

Your name has been suggested as an individual who seems to possess qualifications for a vocation to the religious life. During a recent meeting of the Christian Brothers of the **XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX** Community, at least one Brother identified you by name. This is quite a compliment. You have obviously made an extremely good impression on one of us.

Has the thought ever crossed your mind that you might have a calling to serve in the ministry of Christ? Are you in the process of evaluating your choices for your life's work? Do you have any questions regarding the life of a Brother? If the answer is "yes" to any one of the above questions, then here is an opportunity for you.

You are cordially invited along with others from the area, to attend a "Come & See" evening, the purpose of which is to familiarize interested persons with the call, life, and ministry of the Brothers and to help surface their questions and provide some answers.

Obviously, there is no commitment on your part, other than an expression of interest to participate.

This "Come & See" evening is to be held on **DATE** at the Brothers' residence, at **ADDRESS**, beginning with a gathering prayer at **TIME**.

You are earnestly requested to give serious thought to this invitation and are encouraged to ask the Holy Spirit for guidance in making your decision. Whatever choice you make, please email me at **E-MAIL ADDRESS** or call me at **TELEPHONE NUMBER**.

If you have any questions regarding the "Come & See" evening, please do not hesitate in contacting me for I will be happy to help you.

Sincerely,

YOUR NAME



Sample Invitation Letter From a Non-Brother

USE YOUR LETTERHEAD

Date

Dear **Name**:

Your name has been suggested as an individual who seems to possess qualifications for a vocation to the religious life. During a recent discussion at our school [or other ministry site], at least one person identified you by name. This is quite a compliment. You have obviously made an extremely good impression.

Has the thought ever crossed your mind that you might have a calling to serve in the ministry of Christ? Are you in the process of evaluating your choices for your life's work? Do you have any questions regarding the life of a Brother? If the answer is "yes" to any one of the above questions, then here is an opportunity for you.

You are cordially invited along with others from the area, to attend a "Come & See" evening, the purpose of which is to familiarize interested persons with the call, life, and ministry of the Brothers and to help surface their questions and provide some answers.

Obviously, there is no commitment on your part, other than an expression of interest to participate.

This "Come & See" evening is to be held on **DATE** at **LOCATION NAME AND ADDRESS**, beginning with a gathering prayer at **TIME**.

You are earnestly requested to give serious thought to this invitation and are encouraged to ask the Holy Spirit for guidance in making your decision. Whatever choice you make, please email me at **E-MAIL ADDRESS** or call me at **TELEPHONE NUMBER**.

If you have any questions regarding the "Come & See" evening, please do not hesitate in contacting me for I will be happy to help you.

Sincerely,

YOUR NAME



Prayer for Vocations to Religious Life

Creator God, life is your gift to me.

Through Baptism, you invite me to share the gift of my life in service to others.

Be with me as I choose each day to show your presence in our world.

Give me the courage and generosity to respond to your love, to your call.

I pray especially for those who serve you as priests, brothers,
sisters, deacons and lay ministers.

Keep them close to you.

Open the minds and hearts of many other men and women
that they might accept your challenge to build the kingdom.

Amen.





Frequently Asked Questions

**ARE ANY OF THESE YOUR QUESTIONS?
HERE IS YOUR OPPORTUNITY TO ASK THEM!**

General Questions

1. What are the good and bad sides of being a religious?
2. What are the differences between a priest and a Brother?
3. Do all religious get to meet the Pope or go to the Vatican?
4. What were religious like when they were in high school?
5. Why do all the Brothers seem old?
6. Why are there fewer priests, brothers and nuns?
7. What's the difference between Christian Brothers and other brothers?
8. What would the Brothers do if they weren't Brothers?
9. Why can't priests/religious marry?
10. What are your feelings about the molestation charges against some priests and religious?

Becoming a Religious

11. What are the vows?
12. What influences someone to become a religious?
13. What events in your life made you realize you were called to be a religious?
14. Why does someone choose a religious lifestyle?
15. What are the requirements for becoming a religious?
16. How long does it take to become a religious?
17. Would you be allowed to be a religious if you had been in a sexual relationship?
18. Does being a religious mean it is a lifetime commitment?
19. How old are most people when they first think about being a religious?
20. How do family and friends react to the decision to be a religious?

Life as a Religious

21. What sort of house do religious live in?
22. Who does the cooking and looks after the house?
23. What are living conditions like?
24. Why do many religious wear such plain clothes?
25. What rules or guidelines does a religious life have that are different from our lives?
26. Do religious get paid?
27. Can religious spend money they get on something for themselves?
28. Do people act differently when they know you are a religious?
29. Can religious be fired from their jobs?
30. How often do religious pray?

(continued)



Faith, Prayer and the Vows

31. Do religious find a sense of spiritual freedom in their prayers?
32. How do religious pray or bring themselves closer to God?
33. Do religious ever question whether God really exists?
34. What do religious do if they ever feel like they are struggling in following God?
35. Do religious ever get lonely?
36. What happens if religious fall in love?
37. Why the vow of chastity?
38. Can religious go out on a date?
39. How do religious deal with sexual desires?
40. What is it like for religious knowing that they will never marry?

Other Issues

41. Is it enjoyable being a religious? Why?
42. What do religious do in their free time?
43. Do religious ever get a day off?
44. Does the life of a religious ever get boring?
45. Do religious get to choose where they get to live?
46. What's the hardest thing about being a religious?
47. Do religious ever fight with other religious?
48. What obstacles in life do religious face?
49. Did a religious ever wish to change his/her decision about becoming a religious?
50. How does one leave religious life?

