

## Pastoral letter from our bishop on Vocation Month



Dear brothers and sisters in the Lord

The Universal Church has designated the Fourth Sunday of Easter every year as Vocation Sunday. The purpose is to encourage everyone to promote vocations and to pray for more of them.

Our Holy Father, Pope Francis, has issued a special letter for this May 11, Vocation Sunday. The letter opens with a quote from Jesus to his apostles, “The harvest is great, but the labourers are few. So pray to the Lord of the harvest to send workers into his harvest” (Matthew 9:38).

Our Holy Father continues by pointing out that we are God’s field (1 Corinthians 3:9). Thus, at the end of the letter, he exhorts us not to be tied to material desires, but to free our hearts and have more love for God and for people.

The fruit of vocations will emerge especially if we diligently listen to the word of God, accept it and live it out.

Looking back, the Diocese has used various methods to further vocations, yet obvious results are still lacking. The Council of Priests recently discussed topics related to vocations again.

As a long-term plan, its members suggested that the Diocese work towards building a Culture of Vocation, to deepen the knowledge of vocation among people at every level of the Church, to recognise the important value of vocations and to plant the seeds of vocation more effectively. I fully agree with this suggestion.

To advance a Culture of Vocation and in alignment with the universal Church’s observance of Vocation Sunday on the Fourth Sunday of Easter, I now announce that

from May 1 to May 31 of this year, the Diocese will conduct a Vocation Month.

During this Vocation Month, we will pray especially for vocations. We will also entrust the Diocese to the care of Holy Mother Mary, asking her to intercede with God to help us and bring about an abundant harvest of vocations to the religious life—especially to the priesthood.

This is in line with the hope expressed in the documents of the Diocesan Synod of 2000-2001 regarding Vocation and the Continuing Formation of the Diocesan Priests.

The diocesan clergy shoulder an important role in shepherding the people of God and in evangelising those outside the Church.

For detailed material and arrangements for Vocation Month, please see the web pages of the Sunday Examiner <http://sundayex.catholic.org.hk> and the Diocesan Vocations Commission [dvc.catholic.org.hk](http://dvc.catholic.org.hk)

Brothers and sisters, the promotion of vocations is the work of all the people of God. If we can all be united in heart and mind to pray and to exert ourselves to promote vocations, then we will certainly obtain assistance from God and from Our Blessed Mother.

This will not only bring an increase of new Catholics to the Diocese of Hong Kong, but also an increase in clergy. May God bless you!

+ John Cardinal TONG

Bishop of Hong Kong

Holy Thursday, April 17, 2014