Dinner/Meal with the Pastor

Personal connection with one’s priest is invaluable in the promotion of a vocation to the Priesthood. Consistently, young men who enter the seminary and Priesthood point to the example and invitation of their parish priests as the contributing factor to their consideration of the call to Holy Orders. While the Vocations Office offers many opportunities to explore a vocation, it is vital that there be a familiar and local voice of encouragement for a young man to follow Christ’s call.

A helpful way to encourage men, as well as to raise awareness, is to share some time informally with them. Inviting potential candidates to dinner (or lunch or breakfast after a Mass) offers a friendly environment where men can talk with their pastor, get to know him, and become comfortable discussing the Priesthood. This is also a good way to follow up a man’s participation in a diocesan-sponsored awareness event, such as the “Highways and Byways” dinners. Follow-up is a large part of the encouragement, and pastors and parish priests are in the best position to accomplish this task.

It is also helpful to invite the pastor or a parish priest to a youth ministry event in the parish. This allows the young people to encounter their pastor and hear his story – seeing him as a regular guy whom they can approach.