



What About Our Identity?

*God is not the property of any one group of people. God called a people to himself:
'a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation' (CCC #782)*

“Who are you?” is one of the first questions we learn to answer as a child – our first name and then our family name. As believers, “Who are you?” speaks to our Christian identity: by Baptism, a child of God, a follower of Christ, a Catholic Christian, a brother/sister of Jesus. In the Rite of Baptism, the presider prays, “God the Father anoints you with the chrism of salvation. As Christ was anointed Priest, Prophet, and King, so may you live always as a member of His body, sharing everlasting life.”

Looking at the mission of Jesus we see three ways we are called to live:

Our call as “**Priest**”

Ways the baptized share Christ’s Priestly Office:

- celebration of the Eucharist and Sacraments
- personal prayer and devotions
- all our works and loving service in
 - family life
 - marriage
 - daily work
 - relaxation, recreation and prayer
 - hardships of life patiently borne (cf. CCC #901-903)

Our call as “**Prophet**”

Ways the baptized share Christ’s Prophetic Office:

- witnessing to Christ in word and example in the ordinary situations of everyday life and work
- speaking “Gospel” words: love, peace, acceptance, forgiveness, understanding, patience, hope, comfort, justice
- teaching and sharing faith in word and deed (cf. CCC 904-907)

Our call as “**King**”

Ways the baptized share Christ’s Kingly Office:

- self-denial and holiness of life
- service to the community of the Church in:
 - Parish Pastoral Council and Parish Finance Council
 - Parish Ministries: Social Concerns/Justice, 12 Step Programs, Athletics, Hospitality, Bereavement, Visiting Sick/Homebound, Prison, Support Groups, Divorced/Separated, Youth Ministry
- sharing time, talent, & skills at home, in the neighborhood & in the world
- loving and serving others in daily family life
- at work:
 - being a good employee/employer
 - supporting and calling forth the gifts of others
 - being driven to good ethical/moral decisions
 - giving good service to customers/clients/patients
- being guided by a Christian consciousness
- civic involvement (CCC #908-913)

“Yes, I know what plans I have in mind for you, Yahweh declares, plans for peace, not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope. When you call to me and come and pray to me, I shall listen to you. When you search for me, you will find me; when you search wholeheartedly for me, I shall let you find me, Yahweh declares.”

Going Deeper:

1. Reread the words from the Rite of Baptism at the beginning of this insert. How would you describe our Baptismal call in your own words?
2. How can we inspire others in realizing their role and purpose in the Church as People of God?
3. What personal/parish gifts have I/we been given to accomplish the mission of the Church?

Next week: Number 6 in our VPL series.... “So What’s the Real Story? Facts on Numbers of Priests - - Past, Present, and Future.”