

## You Make The Call

by Patrick Fairbanks, SJ

At the end of chapter 1 of John's Gospel, you can read about a truly amazing phenomenon related to vocations, the power of helping God call others to Jesus. In this brief passage (John 1: 35–51), we see the news about Jesus spread by word of mouth. First John the Baptist tells Andrew who then tells his brother Peter. Peter and Andrew were close to Philip who passes the news on to Nathaniel. How powerful the effect of friends and relatives to assist with God's call. Do you believe that you can also help convey the invitation to service and discipleship in the Church?

Several men in Jesuit formation can attest to the truth that a friend or relative helped to "make the call" to religious life. For instance, Matthew Spotts, nSJ, talks about the influence of his uncle upon his vocation.

At age 14, Matt was trying to decide upon a Confirmation sponsor. He thought his Uncle Steve was a natural choice. "He was approachable, deeply knowledgeable about his faith, and lived it actively and joyfully," Matt says. "Over the years as I grew, his continued interest and willingness to converse with me (sometimes for hours!) helped to nurture my faith and challenge me to grow in my understanding of God, and through that, to find my vocation." Today, Matt continues to draw inspiration from this early experience with his uncle. "The way he lives his faith as a lay evangelist and an active member of his parish continues to be an inspiration to me. I'm deeply blessed to have his continued support, whether it was his attendance at my Entrance Day into the Jesuits or meeting me for lunch in Boston after the conclusion of the Spiritual Exercises."

As these young Jesuits move ahead in formation, they recognize the value of friends and family who helped "make the call" more clear.

Many of you reading this magazine might not consider yourself such a powerful influence on the lives of young men, but don't believe it. Through your example, your prayers, and even your own words, "Have you ever considered being a Jesuit?" You have the power to assist God in calling others to religious life.

**You can make the call!** If it has never before dawned on you before to ask a young person to consider religious life—let this be your invitation to "make the call."



James R. Shea, SJ, stands with his mother and the family dog. "I think it was my mother who taught me how to pray. Without ever saying much about it, she made it clear through her example that a day should never go by without finding some time in it to pray," says Shea. "I feel sure that Mom's prayer life helped me to form my own, and made it possible for me to discover my vocation."

## Upcoming Vocations Events

### Men who are interested in a Jesuit vocation

are invited to attend upcoming events to better acquaint themselves with the Jesuit tradition.

To reserve a spot for any of these events, please contact Fr. Patrick A. Fairbanks, SJ, at [vocations@jesuits-chi.org](mailto:vocations@jesuits-chi.org) or 773-975-6363.

Matthew C. Spotts, nSJ, stands with his Uncle Steve, who helped Matthew find his vocation.

#### Jesuit Ordination Mass

Come witness the ordination to the priesthood of the Rev. Cyril W. Whitaker, SJ, and the Rev. Martin J. Schreiber, SJ. Mass and reception will be held at Church of the Gesu in University Heights, Ohio, on Saturday June 13, 2009.

#### Jesuit Final Vows Mass

Interested men are invited to join us for an afternoon celebration of the pronouncement of final vows by Fr. Timothy A. Howe, SJ, on Sunday July 5. The Vow Mass will take place at St. Procopius Church in the Pilsen area of Chicago, followed by a brief tour and an introduction to the vowed life of Jesuits.

#### Feast of St. Ignatius Loyola

In honor of the feast of St. Ignatius Loyola, candidates and interested men are invited to join us for a festive gathering on the campus of Loyola University Chicago, Friday evening July 31. The evening will include Mass, dinner, and a brief orientation to the spirituality of Ignatius Loyola for candidates.

For more information about the Jesuits, please contact



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Eric J. Sundrup, SJ, stands with grandfather Mac McHargue and Fr. John M. Ferone, SJ. "I've always been close to my grandparents and their support of my own vocation has been crucial," says Sundrup. "What really impressed me was the interest my grandfather took in the Church after my vows. He was always asking for references or books that he could read and I kept supplying him with whatever I could find." Eric's grandfather eventually grew in his faith and is pictured here at his Baptism in 2008.

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