UNDECIDED IS NOT A VOCATION

Nobody is called to do nothing with his life! God calls everyone to a specific vocation. And while discerning your vocation takes time, and can often be difficult, rest assured that God is not calling anyone to perpetual indecision.

It might be easy to confuse the single vocation with indecision, but they are very different things! Every person is called to be single for some period of time (the most obvious being when we are young and have not determined our life vocation.)

There is some debate on whether the single life can be considered a “vocation” if it does not involve a permanent commitment - for example, consecrated virginity. (See Chapter 3 of *To Save a Thousand Souls* for a balanced discussion on the matter.) However, the Church recognizes that some people are called to life-long holiness as single men and women: “Some live their situation in the spirit of the Beatitudes, serving God and neighbor in exemplary fashion.” *(CCC #1658)*

It is clear that single people are often more free to give themselves wholeheartedly to God’s work, and many offer very valuable service to the Church. But the generous single life is far different from a noncommittal “discernment limbo.” You may have heard of the (unofficial) society to which many people in the Church belong called the "Order of Perpetual Discernment." This, obviously, is meant to be a funny way of saying "I just can't seem to make up my mind and pursue a particular vocation." However, even though the

OPD is meant to make light of the situation, this perpetual indecision can be a real problem for people who want to do with their lives what God has planned.

Among the various possible reasons for lack of vocational motivation are:

- Fear of commitment
- Fear of failure
- Self-doubt

You'll notice that each of these reasons is based on fear or doubt. Neither fear nor doubt is a good impetus for deciding (or, in this case, NOT deciding) on a vocational path.

If God is calling someone to be single (either perpetually as a consecrated single person or for a short time), this will be determined in the same ways that any vocation is determined: through common sense, reflection on one's life and healthy inclinations, good spiritual direction, and above all through prayer. In the end, one who is called to the generous single life will have a real and profound peace about it.

If you think God is calling you to live a selfless single life, and have discerned this with the help of a spiritual director, great! Live it with all of your heart!

If you are not certain of your vocation, then continue to pray and discern. God will tell you with no uncertainty what he wants for your life if you are generous and open to His invitation!

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