

CALLED AND GIFTED

We are told from a young age that every person has unique gifts and special talents. These talents are often attributed to visible actions such as singing, playing an instrument or being an athlete. I am blessed to have three athletic children who each have their own focus. My youngest son is talented at football and lacrosse. My middle child, his sport is soccer. My oldest is a talented dancer. Her high school Poms team is currently preparing for their next Poms competition, Nationals in Florida. Each time I'm in the stands I hear things like, "Wow, did you see all those turns?" or "Man, he is fast!" or "What an awesome shot!".

As a mother, I do love hearing these compliments, but I also want to share what isn't seen on that stage or on the field. These athletes are also amazing people on the inside! Each and every one of them out there are unique and special.

It wasn't until I started working at the diocese that I had heard of the Called & Gifted program. The Office of Catechesis, Evangelization, and Youth Ministry works in collaboration with the Catherine of Siena Institute to help Christians discern the presence of charisms in their lives.

Now, if you are like me, when I first heard this, I thought, "What is a charism?" In the simplest terms it means "spiritual gifts", so I of course began thinking of priests, deacons, and everyone in the religious life. What caught me off guard is that each of us has charisms. They are given to us by the Holy Spirit, and it is really up to us on how we use them. How it was explained to me is that we are given the ability to "represent Christ and to be a channel of God's goodness for people."

The goal of the program is to lead more people into a personal relationship with Christ and become His disciples. I share a lot with you about the Diocesan Ministry Appeal and Bishop Golka's message for us to KNOW, LOVE AND SERVE GOD and the Called & Gifted program does just that. Thank you to those who support the appeal because your gift directly supports this office and beautiful program. You are truly nurturing the relationships people are seeking to have with Christ and in turn share their spiritual gifts with each of us.

I know I cannot explain the Called & Gifted program well enough, so I invite you to learn more about the program and their upcoming workshops happening March 4th and 11th by visiting <https://www.diocs.org/Pastoral-Services/Catechesis-Evangelization-and-Youth-Ministry/Called-Gifted>.

Thank you for sharing your gifts and talents with the people of our diocese.

God Bless,

Jamie Crane

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