

## **Four Steps to Hearing Your Call**

By Sr. Anita Louise Lowe, O.S.B.

(<https://vocationnetwork.org/en/articles/show/5-four-steps-to-hearing-your-call>) Full Article

While discernment has many parts, Sr. Anita suggests four basic steps in any time of discovering one's vocation. The first is a call to become aware. You are called to listen to God, to yourselves, and to those around you. The second step in discovering your vocation is to gather information and investigate the many options in front of you. Discernment calls for patience on all our parts. There is usually not a quick answer to the various questions posed. You need to take time to pay attention to the Spirit's movements within you. Eventually though, you do need to choose—to make a decision. This is the third step of discernment. The fourth step of discernment follows this time of making a choice, and it is a critical step in the process. You look for confirmation of your choice. While prayer needs to be an element throughout the process, it is vital during this time. You have made a decision.

### **Follow the Four-Step Process**

***TAKE THESE STEPS as you go through the process of discernment:***

#### **1. BECOME AWARE**

Questions to ask yourself: Has anyone ever suggested that I might want to consider being a brother, a sister, or a priest? Has someone invited me to be active in ministry? Has anyone recognized gifts and talents in me and called them forth? Do I acknowledge that these voices could be the voice of God leading me toward my vocation in life? How do I sift through all of it? How do I discern God's voice in the midst of the cacophony around me? What do I hear? To whom am I listening? How much time do I spend in prayer? Have I asked God for assistance as I strive to listen for my vocation in life? What do others have to say to me, about me?

#### **2. GATHER INFORMATION AND INVESTIGATE THE MANY AVAILABLE OPTIONS**

Questions to ask yourself: What are my gifts? Where am I best suited to serve? What motives are driving me in my choices? Where am I resisting God's invitation?

#### **3. CHOOSE WHAT YOU UNDERSTAND TO BE GOD'S WILL**

Questions to ask yourself: What is the most loving choice I can make? What is the choice that will help me be most fully myself?

#### **4. LOOK FOR CONFIRMATION OF YOUR CHOICE**

Questions to ask yourself: What happens within me? Is there peace, even in the midst of some doubts? What happens when I share my choice with other people? Do others say, "Oh, I can see you as . . ."? How do I understand negative responses that occur within me? How do I interpret negative responses that I receive from family members or from friends? How do I listen to these guides? Do I seek to find God's voice in the voices of those who know me and who love me? Do I take any criticism or concern as an opportunity to examine my motivations and find myself strengthened rather than weakened in my resolve?