



The Nourishing Vocation Project Near and Now Courageous Conversation Guide

Vocation – Life Worthy of Replication

Warm-up Question

What does it mean to you to make more of your life?



Photo by [Thomas Kinto](#) on [Unsplash](#)

Discussion Questions

1. What do you see in this image?
2. What do you feel looking at this image?
3. What stories from your own life does this image bring to mind?
4. What stories of the world does this image bring to mind?

Reading

"It is no accident, Ma, that, the comma resembles a fetus – that curve of continuation. We were all once inside our mothers, saying, with our entire curved and silent selves, more, more, more. I want to insist that our being alive is beautiful enough to be worthy of replication. And so what? So what if all I ever made of my life was more of it?" (Vuong 139).

- What does Vuong's assertion that "being alive is beautiful enough to be worthy of replication" mean to you?

Reflection and Discussion Questions

Vocation continually lives into three fundamental questions: Who am I? What do I do? Why am I here? While each question may be existential, they are fundamentally practical. "Who am I" invites us to be curious about what kind of person we are in any given circumstance. "What do I do" invites us to be courageous in our actions for the common good. "Why am I here" invites us to be intentional about our impact on and within our communities.

- Which one of these questions is the most challenging for you?

Vocation is personal. There is not another you. Only you can live out your unique gifts and passions. Only you have lived your unique life experiences, both joyful and sorrowful, extraordinary and mundane. Only you have been shaped by the particular places that you find yourself and through the particular relationships that comprise your life story. The ways that all of this is woven together into a life of purpose for the common good can be uniquely realized by only you. This is vocation.

- What gifts, passions, life experiences, places, and relationships uniquely mark your life, making vocation personal for you?
- How are the ideas that vocation is personal and your life is worthy of replication connected?

Vocation is discerned and lived within community. None of us discerns or lives out our vocations in solitude or isolation. We need one another to accompany us on the journey, to test our own ideas and thoughts, and to help us understand things from a variety of perspectives. It is within the company of others that we both wrestle with and lean into our various vocations.

- Who are some of the people, communities, experiences, ideas, and voices that influence the ways that you discern and live out vocation?
- In what ways does community help you make more of your life?

More than a job or career, vocation is interwoven through all relationships, experiences, and dimensions of human life. Vocation is not singular: each of us has many and varied vocations, and it is through these varied vocations that we live our lives. Here are some examples of vocations: roommate, friend, student, employee, child, citizen, neighbor, partner. Sometimes our various vocations support and encourage one another. At other times, our vocations are in conflict with one another, and at still other times, our various vocations can co-exist without a lot of intersection or interaction.

- What are some of your most important vocations at this time in your life?

- How are your various vocations an expression of “making more of your life?” Do any of your vocations sometimes feel like they “make less of your life?” If so, how?

Vocation is present tense. Vocation is not some mythical thing out in the unknowable, distant future that when the stars align just right you will be able to say, “Aha! There it is! Now I have found my vocation!” Rather, vocation is a daily, present-tense, lived experience that invites us to wonder about and lean into, how we are living on purpose for the common good -- *now in this moment – today!*

- What are some practical, present-tense ways that you can “live life on purpose for the common good” as an RA?
- How do you envision that who you will be and what you will do as an RA is part of the worthy replication of you?

Activity Suggestions

Collective Activity: Choose one gift, passion, life experience, place, or relationship that uniquely marks your life and significantly influences how you see yourself as an RA. Write it on a Post-It note and bring it forward.

Personal Activity: Spend some time, now and throughout this academic year, wondering about how embracing your RA experience as an expression of vocation impacts who you are, what you do, and why you are here.

VOCARE

Invite closing thoughts about VOCARE as it relates to this topic.

What **VALUES** did this discussion highlight for you?

What are you invited to be **OPEN to** as you think about this topic?

What voices (literal or metaphorical) have **CALLED** to you through this conversation?

What has captured your **ATTENTION** during this discussion?

What **REGRETS** have come to mind for you by considering this topic?

What is one personal **EXPERIENCE** that this discussion has brought to mind for you?

What is **JUST ONE THING** that you will take away from or carry with you from this Near and Now Courageous Conversation?

Vuong, Ocean. *On Earth We're Briefly Gorgeous: A Novel*. Penguin Books, 2021.