

**PRAY** Jesus, you call ordinary people like Peter, Andrew, James, and John to follow you and do extraordinary things. Help us hear and respond to your call in our lives. Amen.

# SPiRIT

## MICHAEL DALY

feels his heart pulled toward service. He discerned how to live out that call during his college years at the University of Notre Dame. He knows how his desire for service began—with his parents.

Michael's dad is an orthopedic surgeon and his mom a registered nurse. When they decided to do two weeks with Orthopedists Overseas in Santa Lucia, West Indies, they took the whole family along. Michael has two older sisters and a younger brother.

"I was 11 or 12," Michael remembers. "Dad was in hospital working. We kids went to the orphanage, saw patients, and visited the schools. It was the first time I had seen the poverty in developing countries. It shook my world.

"It was nice to be with my family to experience the poverty slowly with my parents leading me and my brother and sisters around."

His mom gave Michael and the other children journals. "I found writing helped me digest what I experienced as I tried to put my feelings into words," he says. "This is what I wrote then:

*As I volunteered at the hospital, I learned a lot. It was sad because the people were in houses of cardboard boxes, barefoot, and homeless. I was scared because of the poverty of the people and the houses. I wasn't used to it. They must have at least a speck of faith in Jesus or they wouldn't survive the poverty.*

*I learned that some people, even though they are so poor, give money for charity and hospitals; they give to the people who are poor, too. They are humble and have God in them. I didn't get to touch the people's lives with God as I had assumed. I hope I can change lives from now on.*

**M**ichael developed a sense of service as he experienced his dad making house calls and spending extra time with patients at the hospital. He volunteered with his family at soup kitchens and participated in a bible study every Monday night.

For Michael the Santa Lucia trip and bible study together brought Christ's word to life. "We were in schools, the hospital, and orphanages; we didn't even go to slums. But I had never seen such poverty or kids like those in the orphanage who had nothing."



Journaling worked as a way to pray for Michael. "I wanted to express what I saw," he explains. "I like to internalize things. I'm open with my parents and seek advice and counsel from them. When I have something really burning or moving my heart, I feel that I have to bring it to prayer and to Jesus. In journaling I was writing to God."

His parents' commitment to service affected Michael in a powerful way when they welcomed an orphan named Angela into their home for a year. Angela lived in the Nuestros Pequeños Hermanos Orphanage in Honduras, where the Dalys visited each year. Angela needed a series of surgeries to straighten her legs, which were bent outward at a 70 degree angle.



## A Passion for Service

“We visited the orphanage beforehand,” explains Michael. “We became familiar with Angela’s background and family. She came into our lives as a brother or sister at the same time I was trying to find where I fit in freshman year in high school.

“I saw my mother care for Angela day in and day out through the worst times when she was in so much pain. But this difficult care didn’t consume my mom; she understood the big picture. My mom goes to daily Mass. I think that really helped her.

“The orphans have become like a family to me,” says Michael.



In high school Michael remembers wanting to live the words of St. Francis, “Preach the gospel. Use words if necessary.” He joined the volunteer club, did Meals on Wheels for Thanksgiving, and visited Caring and Sharing Hands shelter. “There are always lots of reasons not to volunteer—study, tests tomorrow. But every time I went it was so fulfilling.

“I wanted to take advantage of ways to serve,” says Michael. “I saw my dad serving as a doctor not just for money but extra hours, up late and getting up early. I saw people at dad’s office below poverty level that he saw on a volunteer basis and prisoners. Christ preaches about poor and prisoners; I saw my dad doing that in his life. I wanted to do something as great as that. I have always had a heart for the poor.”



**SPORTS** was also huge for Michael in high school, both football and hockey. Sports involves teamwork—“how to be selfless for your teammates,” says Michael, “so they can go score a goal or make a tackle. This is an important type of education.” He aimed to be well rounded in both service and sports and get friends involved in service when he could. “It’s a challenge but so much fun when you bond not just in sports but in doing something supernatural.”

In Haiti and later in Honduras Michael met Father Rick Frechette, who works with Nuestros Pequeños Hermanos. “He is a saint for sure,” says Michael, who has found a mentor in Father Rick. It is the dynamic of being a priest and doctor that interests Michael in Father Rick’s work.

“I’m discerning to be a priest,” says Michael. “My mom planted the idea in the back of my mind. I never really thought about it until I started to think about college. I got involved in spirituality at Notre Dame, which makes Mass and adoration very available.

“Discerning the Christian lifestyle that I am called to live involves struggle. I seek to find my own lifestyle. I take to

heart the Church and let Christ be my example.

“Father Rick was a priest first, but when he realized how much the poor needed medicine, he went back to school. I followed him in his rounds, in the mobile clinic, in his public health work, the food and water distribution. I understand that people need healthier lifestyles such as adequate food if medicine is going to work.”

Michael appreciates how Father Rick integrates his prayer and work. “In his work with poverty Father Rick is so close to God that everything he does consciously or subconsciously is for and with God; Christ is working through him. I see in him how far a person can go with one’s relationship with God. Christ is here and everywhere in other people.”

Michael recognizes he is very passionate about what he does. “When I have something I want to do, I give 100% and push myself. I saw that in my sports mentality and also in serving.

**I DON’T** want to do things half heartedly. I want to be fully present to what I am doing.”

After freshman year in college Michael went to Calcutta, India, all summer. “I had the burning desire to serve. I wanted to do something when my parents weren’t holding my hand. I wanted to trust in God and leave it to God. Calcutta was a life-changing experience, working at a home for the dying, experiencing a different culture, and not understanding the language.”



As he worked at the home for the dying, Michael encountered Hindus, Muslims, and Sikhs. “They challenged me to see the fullness of God’s reign,” says Michael. “We believe in



# SUNDAY GOSPEL

3rd Sunday in Ordinary Time

## Jesus is light to people in darkness.

**NARRATOR 1:** When Jesus heard that John the Baptist had been arrested, he withdrew to Galilee. He left Nazareth and went to live in Capernaum by the sea near the territory of Zebulun and Naphtali, to fulfill what had been said through Isaiah the prophet:

**ISAIAH:** Land of Zebulun, land of Naphtali along the sea beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the nations. A people living in darkness has seen a great light. On those who live in a land overshadowed by death, light has arisen.

**NARRATOR 2:** From that time on Jesus began to proclaim this theme:

**JESUS:** Reform your lives! The kingdom of heaven is at hand.

**NARRATOR 1:** As Jesus walked along the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon known as Peter, and his brother, Andrew, who were casting a net into the sea. They fished for a living.

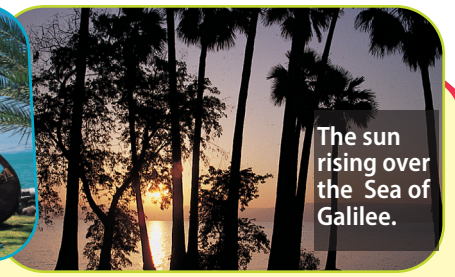
**JESUS:** Come, follow me. I want you to fish for people.

**NARRATOR 2:** Peter and Andrew immediately abandoned their nets and

became his followers. Jesus walked along farther and saw James and John, Zebedee's sons. They were in their boat, getting their nets in order with their father. Jesus called to them, and immediately they left their boat and their father to follow him.

**NARRATOR 1:** Jesus traveled all of Galilee. He taught in synagogues, proclaimed the good news of the kingdom, and cured people of every disease and illness.

Matthew 4.12-23



Catholic faith that our religion is the fullest truth and that all other religions have truths, but not the fullest. The sisters helped me to look for the similarities, not put up boundaries.

"When I went to a leper colony, I found myself feeling distance from them and thinking, what if I get this awful disease? To dispel that mentality, I shook the hands of the lepers. I didn't, like St. Francis, kiss the cheek of the leper. I wasn't able to do that."

In India Michael also felt displaced. He made the Stations of the Cross and found himself identifying with the 10th station when Christ is stripped of his garments.

"I meditated on that station. In India I didn't know anybody. I couldn't email or call parents. I had to make friends with other volunteers, but they didn't know who I truly was. Where did I find comfort? In Mass and adoration, which was familiar.

One day I served Mass four times and loved it. That is where I received my strength. I found I couldn't turn to things of this world; I needed to turn



to the supernatural to sustain me.

"Now I'm not afraid of going anywhere or doing anything as long as there is Eucharist. I know everything is going to be fine. My heart is full at Mass or in front of the tabernacle."

What Michael really wants to be is more than a doctor, lawyer, priest, teacher. "What I really want to be is be a saint, be in union with God, a saint for Christ," he says. "That journey is daunting because we have to go through the cross in order to gain that union with Christ, with God."

**ABROAD** Michael has experienced how joy in serving can go hand in hand with compassion for people's suffering.

Through service the gospel comes to life for Michael. "Service is so tangible and in sync with Christ's apostolate," he says. "All of us are called to serve in some way. My heart has been in serving the poor."

Today Father Michael Daly is a parish priest serving the people of St. Helena Parish in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

To learn more about *Nuestros Pequeños Hermanos*, visit [NPH.org](http://NPH.org) online and discover the many areas in which the organization works.

## QUESTIONS

**1** How do Michael's experiences with service change him? **2** Other than service, what does Michael do to nourish his faith? **3** Who has influenced Michael? **4** To what does Jesus call Peter, Andrew, James, and John? **5** What does following Jesus mean for us today? **6** How is Michael Daly a follower of Jesus?

# How does God call us?

**W**hen Jesus begins his ministry in Galilee, he immediately calls others to walk with him, join his work, and live his message.

“Come, follow me,” Jesus says to Peter, Andrew, James, and John when he sees them working on their fishing nets along the shore of the Sea of Galilee. Jesus invites these four to use their gifts in a new way. He wants them to give up the work of gathering fish in their nets and start gathering people together. Jesus wants them to fish for people.

Jesus still walks into people’s lives and says, “Come, follow me,” just as he did into the lives of the four fishermen. How does a call today take place?



**All the faithful of Christ are called to the fullness of the Christian life and to the perfection of charity.**

*Catechism of the Catholic Church #2013; also, 2028, 2930*

Actually we hear many calls each day. The phone rings. A friend says, “Come help us out tonight at the soup kitchen.” You go where you’d never go alone and make a commitment to go again.

A parent strongly suggests you accompany the family on a visit to Grandma this weekend. “She really wants to see you.” This is a call to keep up and deepen a special relationship.

A coach compliments you for playing a heads-up game and suggests regular weight training. “I think you can make varsity.” This is a call to develop strength and agility.

A friend wants to talk and confides that his or her father is seriously ill. Such confidence is a call to attentive listening and support.

Many people in our lives ask us to do things, to keep up friendships, to recognize and use our talents. These are calls.

Michael Daly has experienced calls to service in his parents’ examples and in Father Rick’s work as priest and doctor. Their examples brought Jesus’ ministry, which the family studied on Monday nights, to life. His mother’s gift of a journal called Michael to reflect in a way that fit his need to internalize and proved prayerful for him. In playing football and hockey, Michael experienced calls to the selfless action that makes teams work together.

With the Missionaries of Charity in Calcutta Michael experienced a love of eucharist and adoration and at the same time a call to openness to other cultures and religions. In all these experiences he has discovered in himself a passion for the poor as he discerns his future. Michael was ordained a priest on May 28, 2016.

**A** call can happen during religion class. A scripture verse in a faith-sharing circle can leap off the page of the bible into our lives. It can open to us who we are and who God calls us to be. For example, we hear the first line of Psalm 84, “How lovely is your dwelling place, O Lord of hosts,” and suddenly we realize this line describes not only the ancient temple building but me. God dwells in each of us.

Each of us has special experiences that call us. Perhaps the awesome view from Pike’s Peak makes us aware of God’s vastness. A brush with death leaves a person thanking God for being alive. The birth of a baby

## CHARITY

You can support Friends of the Orphans at [NPH.org](http://NPH.org). View “2012 Opus Prize Winner,” Father Rick Frechette’s St. Luke Foundation on YouTube.

makes parents and siblings feel in touch with God’s creative spirit. Getting involved with a youth group can move a person from silent shyness to leadership—a new direction.

**O**ur baptisms bless us with divine love and call us to bless others.

Every Eucharist nourishes us to live as Jesus lived—pouring out his life in love for us. Our baptisms not only make us members of Jesus’ church but call us to use our gifts in ministry among all whom God considers kin—that’s everybody, the cosmos and its creatures.



## FAITH in ACTION

- 1 What calls to use your gifts in ministry do you hear?
- 2 What gifts do you contribute to your parish community?
- 3 What calls do you hear as a class or youth group? In what service projects in your parish or neighborhood can you or your group take part?
- 4 What service are you proud of doing?