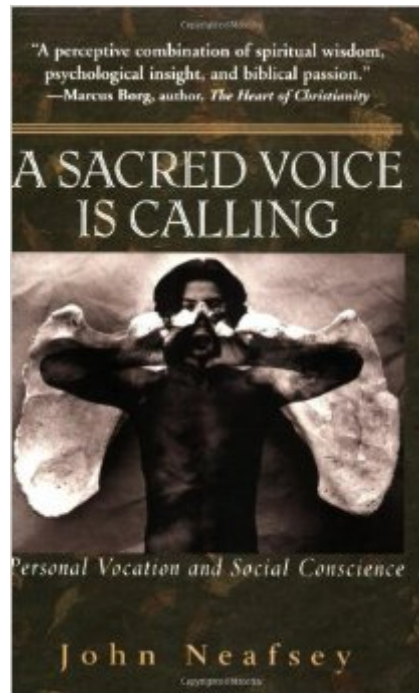


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# A Sacred Voice Is Calling: Personal Vocation And Social Conscience



## Synopsis

What does it mean to find and follow our personal calling? How do we distinguish between the "still, small voice" of our authentic vocation and all of the other competing counterfeit voices in ourselves and in our culture? Specifically, how do we balance the inward listening to our hearts and the need to listen with our hearts to the realities and needs of our world? Drawing widely on the wisdom of saints, sages, and the traditions of spiritual direction, Neafsey describes a path to living in the place, as Frederick Buechner has put it, "where our deep gladness and the world's deep hunger meet."

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

There have been times when I have done something, something new and maybe a bit risky, and it just felt right. And I wish I had more moments like that. Yet, how often have we found ourselves in careers, educational programs, relationships and it has not felt right at all. So how do we really know what is really right for our lives and what is not? John Neafsey's book is an inspiring journey towards achieving our true vocation in life. In its pages, he recounts wisdom from many traditions including Native American and Christian about how better we can listen to that voice, that sacred voice, that calls us to action, especially action that not only benefits us but also benefits our fellow human beings. As I read the book I made a vow to spend more time with my God to realize my true vocation. An easy and inspirational read and a book I feel very blessed to have read.

For the last ten years or so, the Lilly Foundation has spent millions of dollars in grants to

universities and individuals to promote research and activity to determine how religious oriented youth, who in years past responded in relatively large numbers to the call of a vocation to the priesthood and religious life, are now responding to a personal vocation in both secular and church spheres of life. Lilly is interested in knowing what is replacing the so-called religious vocation of the past. Author John Neafsey, a clinical psychologist at Loyola University of Chicago, was supported by Lilly in writing *A Sacred Voice is Calling*, in which he explores what it means to find and follow a personal calling. The subtitle, *Personal Vocation and Social Conscience*, reveals the uniqueness of Neafsey's approach. He discusses calling in the context of forming a personal conscience with reference to social issues rather than in the context of a particular institution or life style. Issues such as 9/11, the war on terror and the Iraq war are used as examples of situations one could use to sharpen one's conscience and provide opportunities to hear a call. The book should be suggested reading for any person struggling to find meaning in life. Neafsey has done a marvelous job of bring together examples of persons from Native American Black Elk to Mother Teresa and Thoreau, persons who have heard and followed a special calling and has used numerous quotes which will inspire those who are in a process of discernment. Being a psychologist, Neafsey makes good use of psychological theory related to the underpinnings of the notion of the true self as a foundation for developing a meaningful and dedicated life. Developing a strong social conscience is a key element, in the author's presentation, to hearing the cry of the poor and sites contemporary reconciliation attempts in South Africa and Guatemala, and martyrdom in Latin America as situations which can help to develop a critical conscience. The author is very successful in his attempt to take a broad, interdisciplinary and ecumenical approach to the notion of sacred calling and demonstrates that "vocation" is a "universal or archetypal phenomenon."

Looking for God Young adults who are on a God quest, can use this book to help them not only find God but to realize that our call is to serve others. It is about joy in finding fulfillment and in service to others. They will then find God without a doubt. I have given this book to many of my nieces and nephews, and young adults, who ask for mentoring about their future lives and decisions they need to make. This should be required reading in all our Catholic High Schools and even in higher education.

Neafsey explores personal vocation through the frameworks of spirituality and psychology. His discussion is as thorough as anything I've read elsewhere. Powerful quotes from Black Elk to Zen Buddhism abound, bolstering his viewpoints and helping maintain reader interest. The extensive

notes section in the back is helpful for further exploration. Neafsey wisely contends that personal vocation should be studied with service in mind. If we approach vocation without a social conscience, a tragic form of narcissism is likely to result. I'm sure I'll read parts of this book again. Nothing between its covers is obtuse; rather, its richness encourages reflection.--Jack H. Bender, author of *Disregarded: Transforming the School and Workplace through Deep Respect and Courage*

I read this book for a class and while it was required, it was a great read that called for some reflection. I felt the last chapters summed up what is needed of us. I really liked how it spoke about how for some myself included we are living in a world that is about possessions, what we have and that by looking further we can assist and follow our dreams so that at the end we won't wonder if we did do enough. Really enjoyed and would recommend.

An exceptional treatise on the foundational value of vocation seen as a cohesive amalgam of both internal and social integrity.

Would like to order two more copies.

I rated this book high because it helps you recognized the real source of ones calling. I would recommend this book.

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