

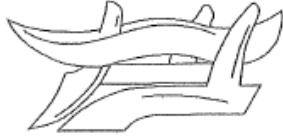


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“You are a Priest forever” Psalm 110

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November 2009



Dear Parents:

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In a recent address to the United States Serra Convention, a group that works to promote diocesan priesthood, Archbishop Timothy Dolan of New York began his remarks on promotion of priestly vocations with an emphasis on vocation to family and married life. It may seem strange to begin a pursuit of priestly and religious vocations with an emphasis on married life, but if we want good and holy men and women to be priests and religious, they must first be formed in the home of good and holy parents.

During this 'Year for Priests,' as called for by Pope Benedict XVI and during the upcoming Vocation Awareness Week, January 10-16, 2010, families in the Archdiocese of Cincinnati are invited to reflect more deeply on fostering a culture of vocations within the house, to help your children come to an understanding of the many great gifts that God has bestowed upon each one of them, and to help them become good and faithful stewards of these gifts, sharing them with the world.

In a particular way this year, we focus on the gift of the priesthood for our Church and for our families. While it is true that the priesthood does involve a life of sacrifice that can sometimes be difficult, as a priest, I have discovered that there are far more blessings that come to one who trusts in the Lord and walks in His ways. Jesus promises that those who forsake wife, husband, children, and lands for His sake and the sake of the Kingdom will be repaid many times over. I can testify that this is certainly the case.

In fact, when asked during a recent survey, nearly 90% of priests acknowledged that they feel a great joy and contentment in their life as priests. This was higher than any other career path among this survey by far. If your son comes to you expressing interest in the priesthood, if your daughter desires to give her life to Christ as a consecrated religious, those blessings are not just bestowed upon him or her, but equally with their home family, for what greater gift could a parent give back to the Lord than a child who has been called to lay down one's life for a friend?

For more information on the priesthood and religious life, see this year's Vocation Awareness Week materials at <http://cincinnati.vocations.org/vaw.shtml>

In Christ,

Fr. Kyle Schnippel
Vocation Director



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In declaring a 'Year for Priests,' our Holy Father, Pope Benedict XVI, has called for a year of study and renewal for the priesthood. Hoping that this is more than just an opportunity to 'bake an apple pie for the pastor,' his hope is that this year of study will highlight the important work and ministry that our priests perform, not only in the Church, but also in the midst of the world.

As we are now partway through this year focused on priestly life and ministry, we have focused this year's 'Vocation Awareness Week' materials precisely on this unique aspect of Catholic life. There continues to be great discussion in regards to priestly celibacy, the all male hierarchical priesthood, the need for a life-long commitment to the priesthood and to the Church. It is felt in some circles that to ease and relax these disciplines will lead to an increase in vocations to the priesthood.

In my discussions with other Vocation Directors around the country, the opposite approach is what brings an increase in priestly vocations. Instead of questioning the need for these disciplines, which ultimately leads to doubt, stressing the importance of the priest as a living icon of Christ who willingly embraces these disciplines brings forth the joy and fulfillment of priestly life; a fulfillment found not in this life, but the next.

It is our hope with this year's materials for Vocation Awareness Week, which runs from January 10-16, 2010, we highlight these nearly hidden joys found in the life of the priest, and that these hidden joys might lead our young people to consider giving their lives to Christ unreservedly as a priest and/or consecrated, as models for all Christians of embracing a life of sacrifice for the sake of the Kingdom.

These materials are not just for young men either. Young women who learn and appreciate the life of sacrifice that is in the priesthood will support their friends and brothers who might be called to the priesthood. They might then also realize a call to give their life to Christ in a particular way as a consecrated religious.

The world cries out for the transcendence. It is the life of the priest, joyfully living out his commitments before God and the world, who can call the world to this deeper awareness of life, a life centered in Christ.

In Christ,

Fr. Kyle Schnippel
Vocation Director
Archdiocese of Cincinnati



School Announcements
“You are a Priest Forever” Psalm 110

This week is *National Vocation Awareness Week* for the Catholic Church and, in following Pope Benedict XVI's declaration of the Year for Priests, we will spend this week thinking about our personal vocations as well as the importance and role of the Catholic priesthood in our world.

(Please feel free to use these announcements in any way you see fit. They may be useful as a classroom lesson or they can be shortened to fit more easily in your morning or afternoon schedules.)

Monday: What is a Vocation?

In the simplest terms, “vocation” means “a call.” So, in general terms, our vocation is what God calls us to do with our life. The catechism sums up this purpose in these simple words: “to love and serve God in this life and enjoy Him in the hereafter.” Individual vocations vary among being single, married, religious, or a priest. God gives each one of us a particular mission in life. As we grow and life progresses, that mission is revealed to us and we are invited by God to take it up and follow Him as his servants and witnesses. Discovering and ultimately following our vocation gives the greatest glory and praise to our Creator. It is what we were meant to do.

The Gospels inspire us: “Take up your cross and follow me.” (Mark 8:34) In the one life God gave you to live, you have one overriding purpose, to fulfill the will of God, because this is the key to your true destiny and eternal happiness.

Tuesday: Diocesan Priest versus Religious Life

A priest is a man who has received the Sacrament of Holy Orders, which confers on him certain powers of Christ, principally the power to consecrate bread and wine to the Body and Blood of Christ and the power to forgive sins in the Sacrament of Reconciliation. When he does these things, he acts in the Person of Christ. A diocesan priest is one who is called to serve all people in a particular diocese. The Bishop has been placed by Christ as the head of the diocese and the diocesan priests serve in obedience to, and in collaboration with him, serving mostly in parishes.

Religious men and women are consecrated to God by publicly professing vows within a religious order approved by the Church, and they live in community. Women religious are nuns or sisters and male religious can be either brothers or priests, and they are under the authority of the superiors of their order and are obedient to the local bishop. Each has its own founder and mission. Some religious priests serve in parishes, but the majority have more specialized ways to serve, such as education, medical care, serving the poor, retreats, communications or other assignments.

Wednesday: Obedience

Today we concentrate on obedience: an attitude of openness, a spirit of dependence on the Holy Spirit, and an acceptance of God's plan for our life. In the one life God gives us to live, we have one overriding purpose, to fulfill the will of God, because this is the key to our true destiny and eternal happiness. Obedience in this sense means that we do not try to force God's plan to match our own, but instead, throw aside our own egos and desires and truly live in total dependence upon God. Discovering and ultimately following our vocation – God's plan for our lives – and saying "yes" to that plan gives the greatest glory and praise to our Creator. It is what we were meant to do and being obedient to God's plan is what will make us truly happy.

Thursday: Celibacy

Priestly celibacy is a special gift of the Holy Spirit that is profoundly connected with ordination, where a man takes on the likeness of Jesus Christ. It is a choice of a greater and undivided love for Christ and His Church. The priest identifies himself with Christ and dedicates his whole life to building up the Kingdom of God. Christ must be the ideal that permeates the priest's whole being. Just as Jesus remained celibate and dedicated His life to the service of His Father and all people, a priest consecrates himself totally to serving the mission of the Lord. He sacrifices being married to a woman and having his own family, to be "wedded" instead to Christ and His Church and to serve their needs as "father." Celibacy requires the grace of God to be lived – the grace of being able to say "yes" to our Lord each day. By being connected with the person of Jesus Christ, priestly celibacy is no longer a merely negative act of self-denial; rather it is an act of self-giving to and in union with Christ.

Friday: Life's Choices

Everybody is called by God to know, love and serve him. The difference is how each one does this. God tells us an amazing thing: that even before he created us he knew us and called us. However, this does not mean that we always automatically know for sure what we are called to do in life. God reveals His will gradually; we can always make a mistake and we can even say "no" to him. Fortunately, God is always with us as long as we keep close to Him through prayer and do our best to live up to His Will in the present moment. Being obedient and saying "yes" to Him every day will bring us the greatest joy in our lives, whether we are called to be single, married, religious or a priest. What is asked of us is our willingness to cooperate with whatever it is that God asks.



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Pre-school Lesson Plan
“You are a Priest Forever” Psalm 110

Session 1

Purpose:

1. The students will demonstrate understanding of the term “vocation” or calling, particularly as it relates to the priesthood and religious life.
2. The students will demonstrate understanding of the term “Year for Priests.”

Supplies:

- Children’s Bible
- Construction paper
- Crayons/markers
- Netting (optional)
- Small pre-cut fish
- **Song Sheet**

Discussion:

1. Begin the discussion by asking the children if they know the word “vocation”; define it as a call from God. Ask about ways to listen to God.
2. Show them a children’s Bible and explain it is the Word of God. Read Matthew 4:18-22. Explain that just as Jesus called St. Peter and the apostles to follow Him, the priesthood continues to this day as a call from God. Help students understand that we all need to listen to how and where God is calling us, then we pray & respond. For some it may be the priesthood or religious life!
3. Explain the term “Year for Priests:” a year set apart to understand, honor, and appreciate what a priest is all about. Ask the students to share, in their own words, how we might celebrate the Year for Priests.

Activities:

1. Let the students play a game of Follow the Leader or Simon Says; each student gets a turn to be the leader. Stress that each child needs to listen carefully and do what the leader asks. Remind them that is how they need to listen to God and do what He asks.
2. The students may make a picture of a net with fish. Write “...they left their nets and followed Him. – Matthew 4:18-22” on the picture.
3. Teach the song **God is Calling** with actions (see below).

Conclude:

1. We all are called by God in our lives and we must listen closely and pray about what God is asking. God calls some to be priests. We do our best wherever God calls us. For the “Year for Priests,” we work to understand and appreciate our priests.
2. Sing the song **God is Calling** at the end of the day.

Session 2

Purpose:

1. The students will demonstrate understanding of the role of the priest at Mass: bringing us the Eucharist.

Supplies:

- Crayons
- **Last Supper Coloring Sheet**
- Plastic baggies
- Construction paper
- Glue sticks
- Several photos of priests during Liturgy of the Eucharist (may be found in old First Communion workbooks, etc.)
- Song Sheet

Discussion:

1. Show the students the coloring sheet of the Last Supper. Ask them if it reminds them of something they experience (Mass). Tell them the priest takes on the role of Jesus at Mass during the Consecration and speaks the words of Jesus: "Take this, all of you, and eat it: this is my body which will be given up for you." "Take this, all of you, and drink from it: this is the cup of my blood, the blood of the new and everlasting covenant." Show them pictures of the priest elevating the host and chalice.

Activities:

1. Give the students the **Last Supper Coloring Sheet** to color or paint.
2. As a follow-up activity, the coloring sheets may be cut into 5 or 6 large pieces and placed in a baggie with each child's name on it. Tell them to put the puzzle together (assist as needed). Give the students a piece of construction paper and a glue stick. Ask them to glue the puzzle pieces on the construction paper and put the "puzzle" together.
3. Teach the song **God Wants Us** with actions (see below).

Conclude:

1. The priest is like Jesus – even speaking the same words as He did at the Last Supper – during Mass at the Consecration.
2. Sing the song **God Wants Us** at the end of the day.

Session 3

Purpose:

1. The students will demonstrate understanding of their role in supporting priests.

Supplies:

- Card stock
- Ribbon
- Glue sticks
- Photos or other prints of local parish priests, Archbishop, Pope Benedict XVI
- Large tablet or white board and markers

Discussion:

1. Ask students if they think their parents pray for them. Explain that parents pray for their children and children should pray for their parents. Then ask if they think their parish priest prays for them. Explain to students that prayer is something a priest does for his parish and that the Archbishop and the Pope pray for all of us, too.
2. Ask them if they think they should pray for their priests, Archbishop, Pope. (Yes!)

Activities:

1. Ask students to help compose a prayer asking God to bless our priests and thanking God for what they do for our Church. (Do this as a class, getting input from students as they are able.) Write the prayer on a large tablet or white board. (Type the prayer and print out for use in activity #2 below.)
2. Give students photos of local parish priests, the Archbishop and the Pope. They may be pre-cut or the students may cut them out. Let students glue the photos on card stock. The class prayer may be glued on the reverse side, making a prayer card. Students may be encouraged to bring a prayer card to their parish priest as a way of thanking him for his service to the Church.
3. Add the prayer cards to a classroom prayer table and give students the opportunity to pray specifically for priests during the day.

Conclude:

1. Priests pray for us and we pray for our priests. It is important to tell our priests (in our parish, school, etc) that we are thankful for them.
2. Sing **God is Calling** or **God Wants Us** at the end of the day. Send the song lyrics home encouraging them to sing and discuss them with their parents.
3. To expand on this lesson, use VAW materials from previous years at various times throughout the year.

Song Sheet

God is Calling (sung to "*Frere Jacques*")

God is calling (put one hand to side of mouth, "calling" gesture)
God is calling
Come this way! (hand wave, "come here" gesture)
Come this way!
Follow where he leads you (arms swing and step in place)
Follow where he leads you
Sing and pray (hands to sides of mouth on "sing," fold together at chest on
"pray")
Sing and pray

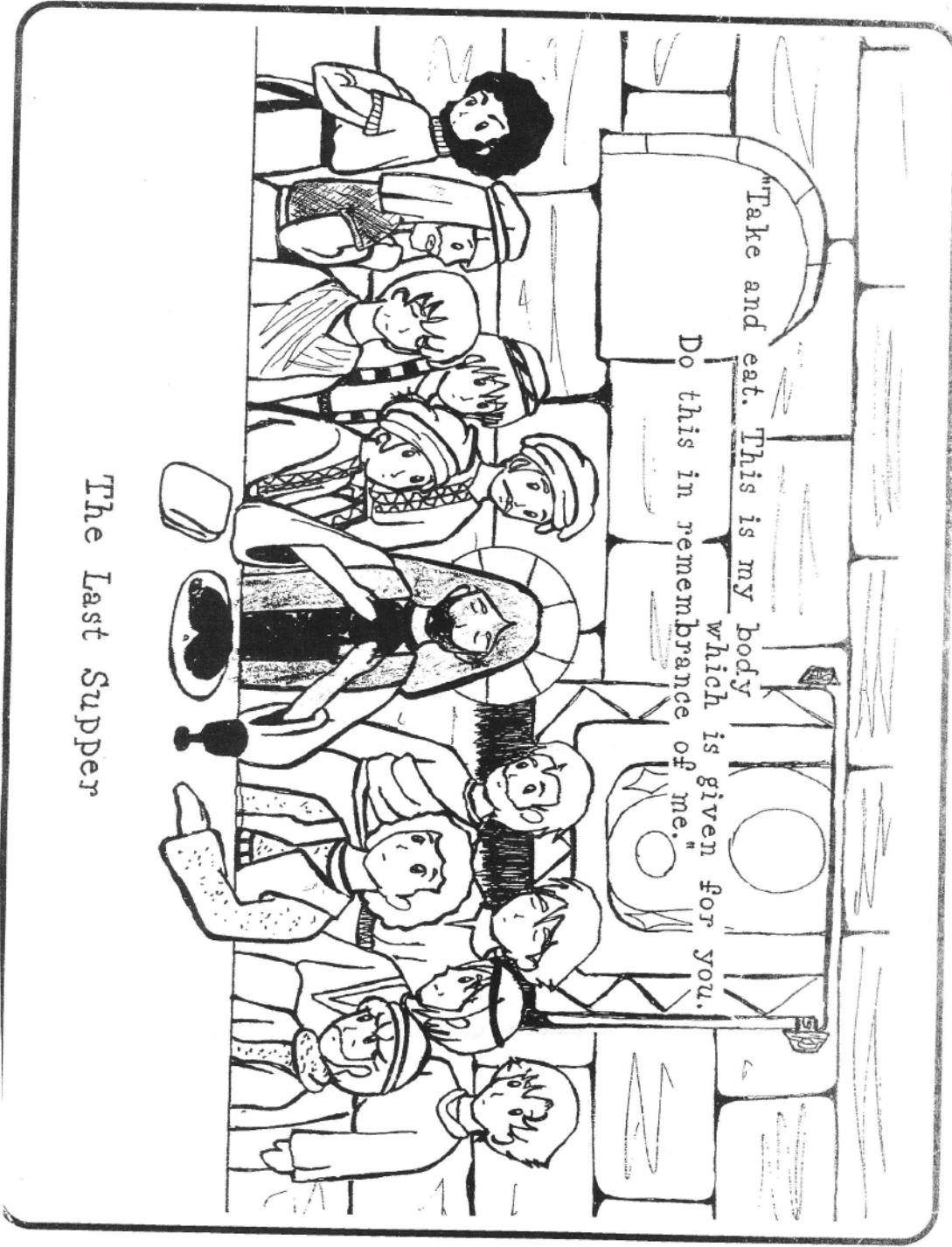
God is calling (same as above)
God is calling
Can you hear? (one hand cupped to ear)
Can you hear?
Listen for His voice now (with hand still on ear, turn head from left to right)
Listen for His voice now
He is near (at "He", hands point up to heaven, at "near," fold across chest)
He is near

God Wants Us (sung to "*Row, Row, Row Your Boat*")

God wants us in Heav'n (point to heaven with both hands above head)
For eternity (hands move down to sides, tracing out curve over head)
Help me, help me, help me. Lord (hands folded in prayer)
To find Your path for me (at "to find," one hand over eyes in
"searching" gesture and at "for me," point to self).

Last Supper Coloring Sheet

(See .pdf version for full page coloring sheet)





Primary Grades 1-3 Lesson Plan

"You are a Priest Forever" Psalm 110

Purpose:

1. Students will be able to name and define the seven sacraments of the Church.
2. Students will start to understand the purpose behind each sacrament.

Supplies:

1. Crayons and drawing paper
2. List of sacrament statements (attached or create your own)
3. Pictures or symbols representing each of the seven sacraments.

Activity #1: What is your favorite sacrament?

1. Explain to the children that sacrament means "a sign of the sacred." Ask if anyone knows what "sacred" means (holy; from God). The Catholic sacraments are very special ways that God shows His love for us. When we receive the sacraments, we receive grace, which is God's life in us. Five of the seven sacraments can be performed only by a priest.
2. Ask students to help list the seven sacraments on the board. As the students list the sacraments, show them a picture or symbol of that sacrament. Then have each student draw a picture of their favorite sacrament.
3. On the back of their paper, have them write three things that make this their favorite sacrament. (If your students are not able to write out their explanations, have them at least write the name of the sacrament on the back and think about some reasons they like it.)
4. Once the children have finished their drawings and their writing, ask them to share the name of the sacrament as well as one of the reasons they wrote down (or thought about). As they share their choices and reasons, write them on the board.
5. Discussion:
 - Highlight the definition for each sacrament chosen. Q&A
 - List any sacraments not chosen on the board and highlight their definition. Q&A

Activity #2: Sacramental "Seven Up"

1. Divide the class into two teams.
2. List the seven sacraments on the board as a helpful reminder for the students.
3. Read one of the **Sacramental "Seven Up" Statements** provided below or from a list of your own and ask one team member to identify which sacrament it defines. If they are correct, they get to stand up. If they are not correct, ask someone from the other team. The first team with seven members standing is the winner. (If your classroom has fewer than 14 children you can simply "keep score" on the board.)

Further Suggestions:

1. Hold a monthly contest that asks each student to write a story or poem about a sacrament or to draw a picture about a sacrament. The winning paper will be displayed in a prominent place in the classroom for a month.
 2. Make copies of the students' drawings and put them all together in an "Our Favorite Sacraments" book for the classroom. Send the book around to other classes if possible.
 3. Celebrate the special vocation dates (e.g., World Day for Consecrated Life - February 7th; World Day of Prayer for Vocations – April 25th) or saints feast days (e.g., Conversion of St. Paul – January 25th, Chair of St. Peter – February 22nd, St. Joseph – March 19th, St. Catherine of Siena – April 29th, St. Philip and St. James – May 3rd, etc.) by playing one of the sacrament games.
 4. Utilize previous Vocation Awareness Week lesson plans at various times throughout the year.
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Sacramental "Seven Up" Statements

Three Sacraments of Christian Initiation:

The Sacrament of Baptism

- The sacrament of new life through water and in the word.
- Through this sacrament, we are freed from original sin and become a child of God.
- The person receiving this sacrament wears a white garment, which is a sign that he or she has "put on Christ."
- This sacrament makes us members of the Body of Christ and you can only receive it once.
- This sacrament is necessary for our salvation, it is received first, and no other sacrament can be received without it.

The Sacrament of Confirmation

- This sacrament is necessary for the completion of baptismal grace.
- This sacrament signifies the Gift of the Holy Spirit by an anointing of the forehead with perfumed oil (chrism) and the laying on of hands.
- This sacrament is usually administered by the bishop.
- The person receiving this sacrament is blessed with the Holy Spirit, as were the apostles on the day of Pentecost.
- Like Baptism, this sacrament is given only once, marking Christians with the Holy Spirit so that they may be Christ's witnesses.

The Sacrament of the Eucharist

- This sacrament is the "source and summit of the Christian life."
- In this sacrament we receive Christ himself.
- By this sacrament we unite ourselves to Christ as we share in his Body and Blood.

- At the heart of this sacramental celebration are the bread and wine that, by the words of Christ in the Consecration and the power of the Holy Spirit, become Christ's Body and Blood.
- Because Christ himself is present in this sacrament of the altar, He is to be honored with the worship of adoration.

Two Sacraments of Healing:

The Sacrament of Penance or Reconciliation

- This sacrament is also called the sacrament of conversion and confession.
- In this sacrament, we receive God's forgiveness.
- Sins committed after Baptism are forgiven through this sacrament.
- This sacrament consists of being sorry for and confessing our sins, and making a sincere effort to avoid sin in the future. It requires the priest's absolution to be complete.
- An examination of conscience is needed before celebration of this sacrament.

The Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick

- We receive this sacrament when we are in danger of death because of illness or old age.
- Each time a person becomes seriously ill, he or she may receive this sacrament.
- This sacrament consists in the anointing of the forehead and hands of a sick person and prayer for special sacramental grace.
- The special grace of this sacrament is the preparation for passing over to eternal life.

Two Sacraments at the Service of Communion and the Mission of the Faithful:

The Sacrament of Holy Orders

- Through this sacrament, the mission entrusted by Christ to his apostles continues in the Church until the end of time.
- This sacrament includes three degrees: bishops, priests and deacons.
- The priest, by virtue of this sacrament, acts "in the person of Christ the Head."
- Since this sacrament is the sacrament of the apostolic ministry, it is for the bishops as the successors of the apostles to hand on the "gift of the Spirit," the "apostolic line."
- No one has a right to receive this sacrament, but he is called to it by God.
- This sacrament prepares a baptized man to serve as Christ's instrument for his Church.

The Sacrament of Matrimony

- This sacrament signifies the union of Christ and the Church.
- This sacrament gives husbands and wives the grace to love each other as Christ has loved his Church.
- The grace of this sacrament perfects the human love of spouses and sanctifies them on the way to eternal life.
- This sacrament is a public celebration of the couple's new state in life, in a Mass before the bishop, priest or deacon, the witnesses, and the assembly of the faithful.
- This sacrament is when a man and woman bind themselves for life in a lawful marriage and receive the grace to be faithful to each other until death.



Intermediate Grades (4-6) Lesson Plan

"You are a Priest Forever" Psalm 110

Purpose:

1. Students will understand the origins of the ministerial priesthood.
2. Students will show an understanding of the hierarchy of the Church through the use of role playing.
3. Students will explain their appreciation for the priesthood and its relationship to the other sacraments.

Supplies:

1. Bibles (at least two)
2. **Sacrament of Holy Orders Word Search**
3. **Sacrament of Holy Orders Crossword**
4. **Fishers of Men DVD**
5. Copies of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*
6. Catholic Dictionary or other Catholic Reference materials

Activity #1: Where did the Priesthood come from?

- Split the classroom into two teams.
- At the front of the classroom, have the following Bible references written on slips of paper in a hat, the referenced verses typed out (you can find the verses easily at www.usccb.org/nab/bible) and laid on a desk or table face up, and two Bibles (one for each team – make sure the Bibles have the same translation as the verses you type).
 - o Ephesians 1: 4-6
 - o Exodus 19: 6
 - o Exodus 32-25-29
 - o Hebrews 4: 12-16
 - o Hebrews 5: 1-10
 - o Hebrews 7: 17
 - o Hebrews 10: 10-17
 - o Isaiah 43: 20-21
 - o John 1: 35-49
 - o John 13: 1-14
 - o John 17: 17-18
 - o John 20: 21-23
 - o Luke 18: 28-30
 - o Luke 22: 25-26
 - o Luke 22: 28-30
 - o Luke 24: 44-51
 - o Mark 1: 16-20
 - o Mark 3: 13-19
 - o Mark 14: 22-24
 - o Mark 16: 20
 - o Matthew 28: 18-20
 - o 1 Peter 1: 12
 - o 1 Peter 2: 2-10
 - o Psalm 110: 4
 - o 1 Timothy 4: 14
 - o 1 Timothy 5: 22
 - o 2 Timothy 1: 6
- Once you have the game set up, explain the rules of the game:
 - o Each member of the team will go individually.
 - o Each person will come to the front and get a Bible verse from the hat.
 - o Look up the verse in the Bible and then find the corresponding words out of the ones laid on the desk.

- Once you have found the correct verse, close the Bible, take that verse back with you and tag the next person on your team.
- The team with the most number of verses at the end of the game wins.
- To make the game a little more challenging, you can type up additional Bible verses so that the last person can't just pick up the verse without looking it up.
- After the game, have all the students read out loud the verse that they looked up.
- Explain the meaning of these verses and point out that the priesthood has its roots in the Bible and was prefigured already in the Old Testament. Christ instituted the Priesthood of today and it has been passed on in constant apostolic succession beginning with Peter and the rest of the apostles.

Activity #2: Holy Orders: Thinking about football?

- Hierarchy of the Church
 - Bishop – Fullness of orders – both the pope and cardinals have no more than the fullness of orders found in the office of bishop, the Pope is known also as the Bishop of Rome; the bishop has the ability to ordain and while being in charge of a local diocese, is also connected to the universal Church in so far as he now takes part in the line of apostolic succession and is responsible for the apostolic mission of the universal Church.
 - Priest – Teaches, sanctifies, and governs the laity.
 - Deacon – Acts as liaison between laity and priest – Doesn't have full authority of the ministerial priesthood but fully participates in the common priesthood while sharing the teaching aspect of the ministerial priesthood.
 - Laity – Share in the common priesthood upon their baptism into the body of Christ; they are charged with evangelization.
- Hierarchy of a football team- This is meant to be used as an example and an easy way to understand the hierarchy of orders in the Catholic Church. For a more complete analysis of these roles, please refer to CCC 1555-1571. Utilize these paragraphs to impart a deeper understanding of the following roles on your students.
 - Head Coach = Bishop – In addition to directing the entire group, he has authority over those who directly work with the individual groups; he teaches the team and directs them in the plays they should run to succeed.
 - Assistant Coach (Offensive/Defensive Coordinator, Special Teams Coach, etc.) = Priest – Works with individual groups of people (parishes), working with them and teaching them the ways in which to best execute the wishes of the coach.
 - Team captain = Deacon – Takes the knowledge and direction from his coordinators and provides an example of how to execute the work. He is part coach and part player.
 - Players = Laity – Take on the teachings, directions and examples of their coach, coordinators, and captains and put them into regular practice, forming a team; they do the work to win the game.
 - “Create your own Diocese” Game:
 - Introduce and quickly teach the word discernment as it relates to the religious life (See **Intermediate Grades Lesson Plan from Vocation Awareness Week 2008**).
 - Divide students into two groups: discerners and distracters.
 - Allow the students to come up with a name for their team.
 - The discerners will be in charge of coming up with a game plan for discerning God's will (what can we do to know and follow God's will for our lives?). The distracters will be in charge of coming up with a game plan for distracting from God's will (what things can get in the way of our discernment and of following what God wants us to do with our lives?).

- Give both groups a few minutes to think up their game plans.
 - For the discerners, here are some ideas:
 - Receive the sacraments; practice virtues; pray daily and listen for God’s guidance; hang out with people who help us to be better; give encouragement to those who practice virtue, etc.
 - For the distracters, here are some ideas:
 - Play inappropriate music and watch inappropriate movies; hang out with a crowd that influences you negatively; make fun of people who make mistakes; don’t go to Mass or confession, etc.
- Once they have come up with some ideas, have the group sit and face one another and have them go back and forth presenting their “plays” in debate format (each side gets a set amount of time to give their play) giving reasons for their “play choice.”
 - An example of how this might play out is this:
 - The discerners would choose to receive the sacraments because it is in the sacraments that we come into physical contact with Jesus.
 - The distracters would counter that by choosing not to go to Mass because “we already know that Jesus loves us and died for our sins.”
- After a few minutes, bring the entire class back together and discuss the following points:
 - Discernment is important because it leads us to the life that God wants for us.
 - Discernment is not easy and it is easy to get distracted.
 - The roles of the Church hierarchy are very important – they give us guidance and help us to know whether or not we make the right play choice.
 - It is not easy to do discernment on your own and that is why we need support from teachers, leaders and guides.

Activity #3: Holy Orders as a Sacrament

- Have the students work in pairs to find the definition of *Sacrament* (CCC 1084, 1131) and *Holy Orders* (CCC 1536). You may use the *Catechism* or other sources such as the *Compendium of the Catechism of the Catholic Church* or the *Modern Catholic Dictionary* by Fr. John Hardon, S.J.
 - Discuss these definitions and make sure that all your students have an understanding of them.
- From here, discuss the effects of all sacraments on those who receive them:
 - Baptism – mark of the adopted sons and daughters of God that wipes away the effects of original sin and enables the individual to enter into heaven. This is a permanent mark that cannot be erased (CCC 1272).
 - Confirmation – a permanent mark of the soldiers of Christ. Those who choose to be confirmed in Christ, become forever soldiers and evangelizers for Christ. This cannot be undone (CCC 1304-1305).
 - Marriage – the two shall become one; what God has joined, no man can separate – even in civil divorce, this bond is not undone. Once a valid marriage has occurred, it cannot be undone (CCC 1638-1640).
 - Reconciliation – once the priest offers the absolution of sins, they are wiped away permanently (though we may sin anew, the effects of our past sins no longer exist).

- Eucharist – once received, the Eucharist conforms us into the Body of Christ. Each time we receive the Eucharist we strengthen and renew the promises of our baptism (CCC 1391-1392).
- Anointing of the Sick – once received in a gravely ill state, the person's sins are wiped away and the person is drawn closer into the body of Christ and farther from the temptations of evil (CCC 1520-1523).
- Follow this brief discussion with a focus on the sacrament of Holy Orders:
 - Why is this considered a sacrament?
 - When a man is ordained, he is transformed into a priest forever. From that moment on, he becomes a living icon of Christ in the world with the authority to bring Christ truly present into the world in the Eucharist. He takes on the teaching and governing authority of Christ in his parish and in the world as head of the Church just as Christ is Head of His Body. (CCC 1548, 1581)
 - The priest does not become a perfect human being upon his ordination. On the contrary, Christ now works through the priest when he performs the sacraments (consecrates the Eucharist or absolves sins in Confession) despite the priest being a flawed human person. (CCC 1584)
 - The mark of the priesthood can never be taken from the priest whose life becomes a sacrifice of service to the people of God.
 - What is the outward sign of the priesthood?
 - In the sacrament of Holy Orders, the outward sign is the laying on of hands.(CCC 1538)
- Finish the lesson by handing out the **Sacrament of Holy Orders Crossword** and **Sacrament of Holy Orders Word Search**. You may want them to work in partners and look up each of the answers for the word search using the referenced paragraphs in the *Catechism*.

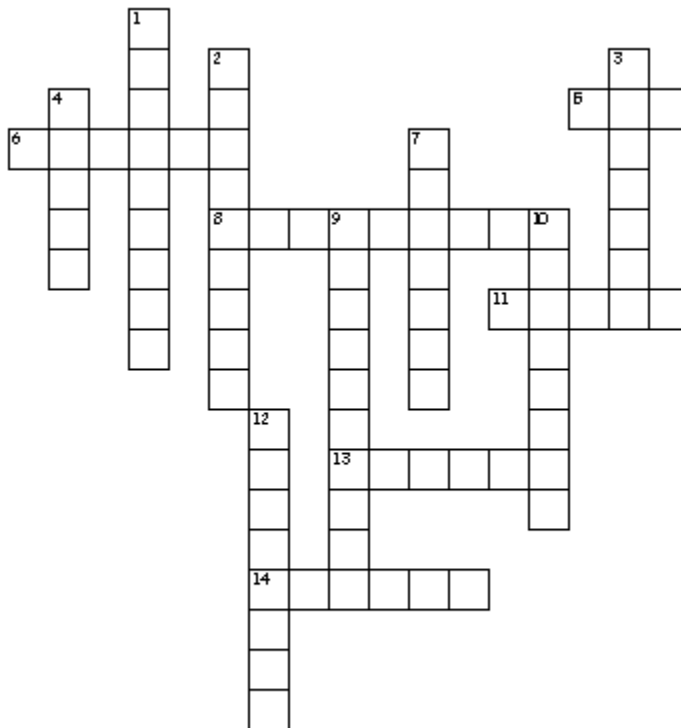
Activity #4: An appreciation for the Priesthood

- Discuss with your students the various ways in which priests help throughout the world and especially in our Archdiocese:
 - Consecrate the Eucharist (Celebrate Mass).
 - Bless Marriages.
 - Baptize people.
 - Administer Confirmation.
 - Give last rights and anointing of the sick.
 - Hear confessions and forgive sins.
 - Raise money for the poor.
 - Run homeless shelters, food pantries and soup kitchens.
 - Help immigrants find homes and file paperwork.
 - Pray for people.
 - Teach us in homilies.
 - Teach classes at high schools and colleges.
 - Counsel people who need help (married couples, pregnant women, struggling teenagers, people who have recently lost their jobs, alcoholics, drug addicts, etc.).
 - Visit the sick, etc.
- Have the students watch the **Fishers of Men** video.
- After the video have each student write a short essay describing how their lives would be different without the priesthood.

Additional ideas/Homework Assignments:

1. YouTube videos – What do they really mean?
 - a. Have students view the following YouTube™ videos at home (remind students to search for exact video title in quotes):
 - “The Christ Side of Life”
 - “Ego – Lego Parody”
 - “Catholic Fiat 500 Commercial Parody”
 - “Real Flower Power” (This video contains images of drug use)
 - “Has “Lost” gotten boring? Try Found”
 - “iConfess – Dancing priest iPod spoof”
 - “iPray + HisTunes: A Catholic iPod style ad”
 - “Holy Fellowship of the Rings”
 - “Sprite or Spirit”
 - “Thirst – Catholic Church”
 - “Matrix – Catholic”
 - “I’m Loving Her – a Catholic McDonald’s rip off”
 - “Star Wars alternative – In hoc signo vinces”
 - “The apple incident – original sin” (uses strong images including drug use, violence, and mass destruction)
 - “iLove – what really counts”
 - “Men in Black – Catholic Priests”
 - “Catholic nun commercial”
 - “Praystation – Playstation”
 - “James Bond intro – catholic priest”
 - b. Each student will then choose one of the videos to report on.
 - c. The report will include the name of the video, a brief description of what actually happens in the video and their initial reaction to the video and why they chose to report on that particular video.
 - d. Ask the students to look deeper into the topic of the video and include in their report what Catholic teaching the video is portraying and why the Church believes that teaching. The report should include references to sources such as the Bible or the Catechism.
2. The Curé of Ars: The Story of St. John Vianney, Patron of Saint of Parish Priests - <http://www.familylifecenter.net/shop/Store/Children-The-Cure-of-Ars.cfm?ID=1343#>.
 - a. At the beginning of the winter term, assign this book for your students to read. Have the students read the book and do a book report on it.
3. Together as a class, compose a prayer for priests and begin each week with that prayer along with a Hail Mary.
4. Utilize materials from 2007-2009 Vocation Awareness Weeks throughout the year.

The Sacrament of Holy Orders



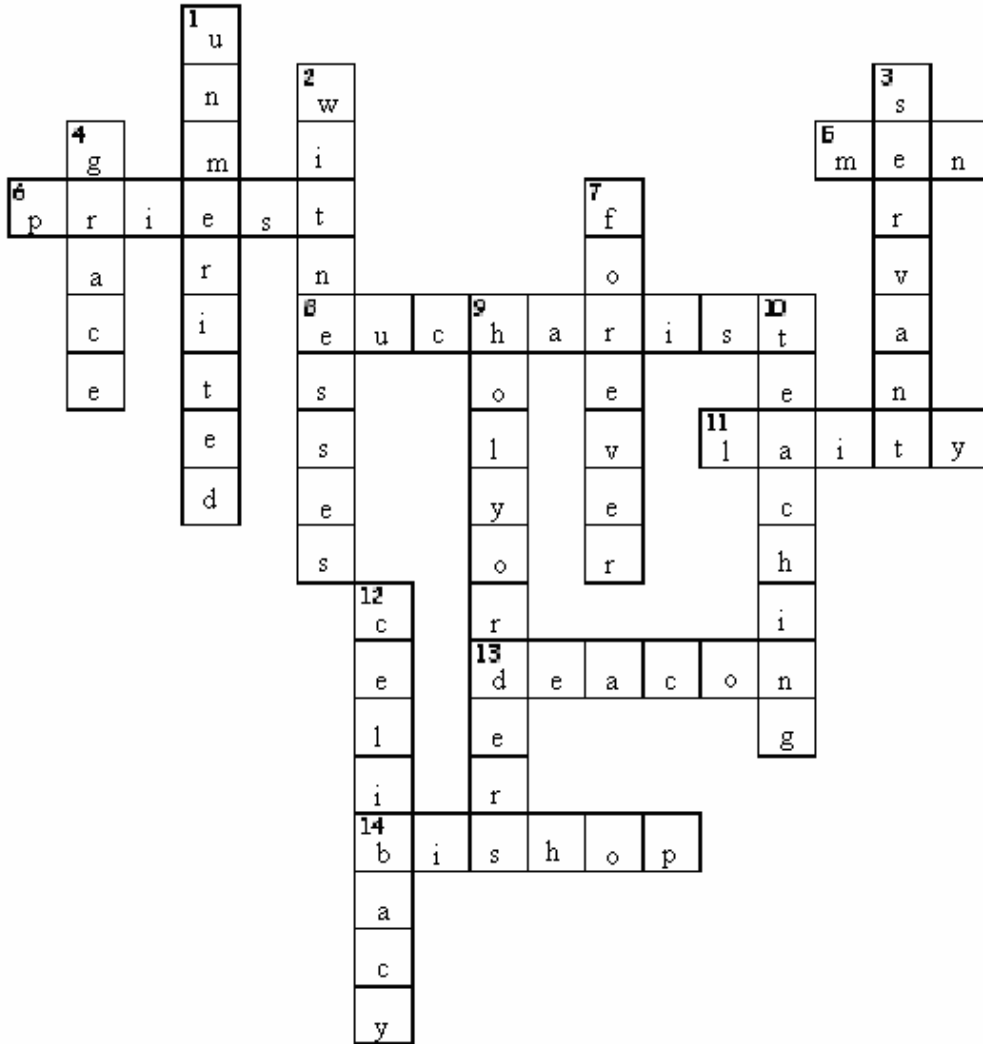
Across:

5. The only group of people who are able to validly receive ordination. (CCC 1577)
6. Acts as the Head of the Body of Christ. (CCC 1563, 1592)
8. The sacrament which was instituted on the same night as the ministerial priesthood. (CCC 1323)
11. Shares in the common priesthood by virtue of Baptism. (CCC 1547)
13. Member of the clergy that is allowed to be married prior to his ordination. (CCC 1571)
14. The head of a diocese who retains the fullness of orders. (CCC 1557, 1560)

Down:

1. The gift of holy orders is said to be *this* because no one has the right to receive it. (CCC 1578)
2. The role of the laity in the world. (CCC 2044)
3. The priest is called to be a _____ of the people of God. (CCC 1551)
4. That which comes from the Holy Spirit and enables the validity of the sacraments despite the sins of the priest. (CCC 1550)
7. "You are a priest _____ in the Order of Melchizadek." (CCC 1583)
9. The name of the sacrament through which a man becomes a priest, deacon or bishop. (CCC 1536)
10. One of three roles of the priestly office that bishops, priests and deacons exercise when preaching. (CCC 873)
12. The sign of a priest's marriage to Christ's bride, the Church and of a total gift of self to God and "the affairs of the Lord." (CCC 1579)

Solution



Across:

5. men
6. priest
8. Eucharist
11. laity
13. deacon
14. bishop

Down:

1. unmerited
2. witnesses
3. servant
4. grace
7. forever
9. Holy Orders
10. teaching
12. celibacy

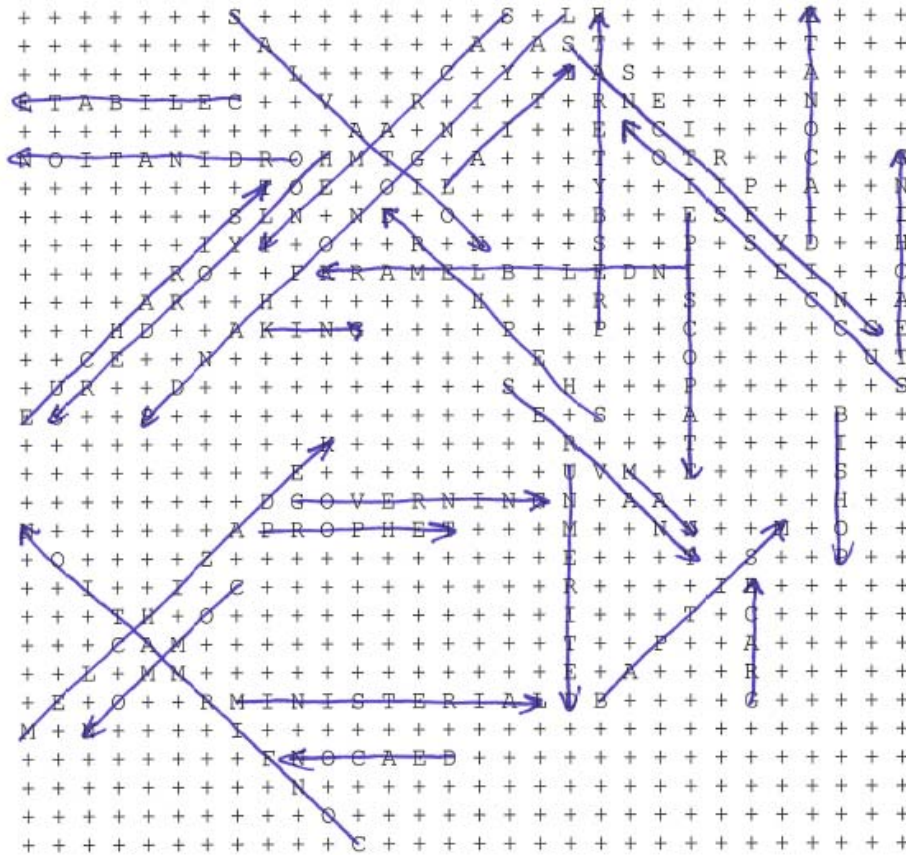
Holy Orders

T T A I W N U M P I S U Q T A J Y Z F G G G H G N O Q G L I
C S E E D P E D W V H Q P D S I J T V V N N R Z A O V N A N
I F I H L Z O J T R E R P U M S I T P A B A I J M Y N I I D
F N E R P A K F S C P I C T O P V F N U C D Y K K T G N R E
Y O D R A O Y E E Q H C H A Q P V L I E U Q B V R N H R E L
N L F O F H R I F M E F I A Z K Y V Q D O P W D I A R E T I
Y V S Z I A C P N S R C G Q E Y B L G D H J W Y U V H V S B
T S L X K O S U S G D Z B G W B I A A K V B F K D R P O I L
K R P R A V I I E D O Z A I R P I D H Z O I I K V E Y G N E
Y O P U V R O C B C E N C O A M C I Q E T R W O W S I V I M
Z Z L L F N C S E B N A O X P O V D R C K T C O M M O N M A
E T A N O C A I D O D S C F O F R U N M E R I T E D L L S R
H S S V F L E K I U U M V O H O G A A A U L T O I O Z T Y K
I B N T Y K B T E O M C D D N A S X C Y P P B R C R Z F V B
I C O V G T A W P D O G J N I H N H U R X T X D F W H J R A
J T A V R V R W T N A C L Y S Q I D Q X G Y J I E L R I C M
L L M E L Y P K F V E Z O W N N A L S H K E Z N V H C O D R
N Z E A T T X I Q Y V H I H G F I G C L V R N A N A E Z O V
G V S D W V R B X R Q H L H O N T B S A N K I T R K L G U O
Q W Q H W M B T Y Z U T X Q C L P A X G X A V I I T N E V S
K M E G A M L Z W P O Q F A Z L Y M Q F N W P O S N B Z K N
B F D T E T A R E T Y B S E R P E O G M Q G R N X R T V S Z
O C I K F C U L K Y I P N V F P Y M R S L X I I R G H Y B V
X O E I E U J G W L J U C W C Q O P Q D Y A E H Q B M R I S
N V A L O K O L O B P B T H X T P R O R E K S Q N L H P U F
O H Q C I T N Y Q O Z L L S M C J O F A K R T G B F V Z Y K
Y T I A L B W F H M L E P I S C O P A T E I S O P Y M E R K
I G T G U B A S A K M V S X O X Y X F A X L P D A V G X Z K
I L X D W M I T G J B M S Y T L D U E S A N D L Z F I G P K
A W C I E B Y Q E Q P M P G R D I E V Z Y D V L M B W M I T

BAPTISM
BISHOP
CELIBATE
COMMON
CONFIRMATION
DEACON
DIACONATE
EPISCOPATE
EUCHARIST
GOVERNING
GRACE
HOLY ORDERS
INDELIBLE MARK
KING
LAITY

LAYING ON OF HANDS
MAN
MELCHIZADEK
MINISTERIAL
ORDINATION
PRESBYTERATE
PRIEST
PROPHET
SALVATION
SANCTIFYING
SERVANT
SHEPHERD
SUCCESSION
TEACHING
UNMERITED

Solution



(Over, Down, Direction)

(Over, Down, Direction)

- BAPTISM (20, 25, NE)
- BISHOP (28, 15, S)
- CELIBATE (8, 4, W)
- COMMON (8, 21, SW)
- CONFIRMATION (12, 30, NW)
- DEACON (15, 27, W)
- DIACONATE (27, 9, N)
- EPISCOPATE (23, 8, S)
- EUCHARIST (1, 15, NE)
- GOVERNING (10, 18, E)
- GRACE (25, 25, N)
- HOLY ORDERS (11, 6, SW)
- INDELIBLE MARK (23, 10, W)
- KING (9, 12, E)
- LAITY (15, 7, NE)

- LAYING ON OF HANDS (19, 1, SW)
- MAN (21, 17, SE)
- MELCHIZADEK (1, 26, NE)
- MINISTERIAL (8, 25, E)
- ORDINATION (10, 6, W)
- PRESBYTERATE (20, 12, N)
- PRIEST (25, 7, NW)
- PROPHET (9, 19, E)
- SACRAMENT (17, 1, SW)
- SALVATION (8, 1, SE)
- SANCTIFYING (19, 2, SE)
- SERVANT (17, 14, SE)
- SHEPHERD (20, 15, NW)
- SUCCESSION (30, 14, NW)
- TEACHING (30, 13, N)
- UNMERITED (19, 17, S)



Junior High Lesson Plan

"You are a Priest Forever" Psalm 110

Purpose:

1. Introduce students to the rich theology underlying the Catholic Priesthood through saintly examples, Bible quotes, Vatican II documents, papal encyclicals and our Archdiocesan website materials.
2. To understand the role of priests as icons of Christ.
3. To illustrate the essential nature of the priesthood to the Catholic faith.
4. To acquaint the students with (a) great examples of saintly priests in history, (b) recently ordained priests and current seminarians and (c) their parish priest.

Supplies:

- **List of Web Resources**
- **Priest Saints Quiz**
- ***Catechism of the Catholic Church* Handout**
- **Bible Quotes** Handout
- ***Ordinatio Sacerdotalis* Handout**

Activity 1: Catholic Priesthood – Origin in Scripture and Icon of Christ

St. John Vianney

- Background: The "Year for Priests" was instituted by Pope Benedict XVI for June 19, 2009 to June 19, 2010 to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the death of St. John Vianney, the patron saint of priests. St. John Vianney (also known as the Cure of Ars) was a simple parish priest in France who became known across the world due to his holiness and sanctity. He understood the importance of the priesthood and was not afraid of stating it bluntly.
- To set the tone of the importance of understanding and celebrating Catholic Priesthood in this "Year for Priests" begin the class with the quote from St. John Vianney on the critical nature of the priesthood found at <http://www.fisheaters.com/holyorders2.html>. Break it up among several students who can each read a paragraph. It is a very long quote, but it powerfully states the case of the absolute necessity of the Catholic priesthood.

A. Roots of the Catholic Priesthood: To properly understand the importance of the Priest to the Catholic Church, we must begin with the role the Jewish priest played for the chosen people. This will show how the Catholic priesthood is prefigured in the Jewish priesthood.

1. Pass out the ***Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC)*** and **Bible Quotes** handouts.
 - a. Have students read aloud the CCC paragraphs 1539 to 1542 regarding Jewish priesthood.
 - b. Read CCC 1544 which talks about connections of the ancient priesthood to Christ. It uses the term "prefigures." Begin this exercise with an explanation of "prefiguring."
 - 1) In his first letter, Peter identifies Noah in the Ark as a "prefiguring" for the sacrament of Baptism (read 1 Peter 3:18-22 aloud). Noah's Ark in the Old Testament *relates to* Baptism in the New Testament.

- 2) What we learn from Christ and the Apostles in the New Testament is frequently "prefigured" in the Old: the meaning of what is contained in the Old, is unveiled in the New.
- 3) Prefiguring is easily seen with the Sacrament of Holy Eucharist (Manna from heaven prefigures Christ's Body in the Holy Eucharist, the true bread from heaven as said in John 6:48-58).
- c. From the CCC paragraphs, ask the class to identify/list the elements of ancient Jewish Priesthood that relate to the Catholic Priesthood:
 - 1) Israel is a kingdom of priests (see Exodus 19:6) and we all partake in the common priesthood as Catholics (read CCC 1546).
 - 2) Within this kingdom, some are set aside for special priesthood (Num 1:48-53 - only the Levites perform the duties of the tabernacle). Only men ordained by the Catholic Church as priests can perform all 7 Sacraments (read CCC 1547).
 - 3) The priest offers gifts and sacrifices for sins (Hebrews 5:1, Leviticus 5:1, 5-6). Today, a Catholic priest offers the Holy Eucharist during the sacrifice of the Mass.
 - 4) People go to the priest with their offering, and the priest offers it to God (Leviticus 5:1, 5-6). We go to the priest today for Confession.
- d. Conclusion: Wrap exercise for students by again noting that many of the features of the Catholic priesthood are contained in the earlier Jewish priesthood. Similar, but not identical. The Catholic priesthood fulfills the Jewish priesthood.

B. Christ as High Priest: Christ comes as Son of God, Messiah, Prophet, King and also Priest. At the last supper, He acts as High Priest and, instead of an imperfect animal, He offers up His own sacred body and precious blood as the perfect sacrifice for sins, once and for all (1 Peter 3: 18-22).

1. Melchizedek:

- a. Read aloud CCC 1544-1545 (recalling idea of "prefiguring").
- b. Read aloud the biblical citations to Melchizedek, who was King and Priest and who offered bread and wine (introduced in Genesis 14:18-20, written by Moses, praised in Psalm 110 by David, invoked by Paul in Hebrews 6:17 - 7:22).
 - 1) It is not a Levitical heritage that makes Christ a high priest (he's from the Royal lineage of Judah-David, but He's a priest just as Melchizedek, the King of Salem, was a priest. The place called "Salem" will later be the city of Jerusalem).
 - 2) Hebrews author identifies that the imperfect nature of earlier priests before Christ rendered their sacrifices ineffective.

C. Priest acts "in persona Christi" (Latin for "in the person of Christ")

1. Read aloud CCC 1548-1549.
2. Priest acts "in the person of Christ."
 - a. Christ forgives sins (Mark 2:5-7) and gives priests power to forgive sins (John 20:21-23).
 - b. Christ heals the sick (throughout the Gospels) and He sends the Apostles out to do the same (Mark 6: 7, 12-13).
 - c. Christ offers himself at the Last Supper and tells His first priests to do this in memory of Him (Luke 22:8-20 and 1 Corinthians 1: 23-29).
3. Must see this special state in its balance. Have CCC 1550-1551 read aloud. Each priest is still an imperfect sinful human, but when Christ acts through him during Sacraments, the actions are perfect. The priest is a servant, wholly dependent upon Christ. But, from the sacrament of Holy Orders, the priest receives a "sacred power" that comes from Christ Himself.

D. Priest represents Christ AND represents the Church.

1. Read aloud CCC 1552-1553.
 - a. Priest represents Christ to his Church, AND Priest represents the whole Church to God when offering Holy Eucharist.

E. Other important sections on priesthood:

1. Holy Eucharist importance - Read CCC 1566.
 - a. The Priest makes “present again” the unique sacrifice of Christ on Calvary. He is NOT “re-sacrificing” but making present again the exact same sacrifice. The bread and wine become LITERALLY the same body and blood of Christ that hung on the cross nearly 2000 years ago.
 - 1) Emphasize the power of the last sentence: “From this unique sacrifice their whole priestly ministry draws its strength.”
 - b. Have 1 Corinthians 11:23-29 read aloud now (see Bible Quotes section). Note the following:
 - 1) By the sacrifice of the Mass, we proclaim Christ’s death until He comes (present again).
 - 2) Receiving Holy Communion when guilty of un-confessed mortal sin is profaning the body and blood of the Lord God. This is why many Bishops now refuse to give the Holy Eucharist to elected Catholic politicians who support the grave moral sin of abortion. By their public support of the sin of the taking of the life of an innocent human being, these Catholic politicians are deemed by many of their Bishops as being unworthy to receive the Holy Eucharist.
 - 3) To eat and drink the Holy Eucharist and Precious Blood without discerning that it is Christ’s body and blood is to eat and drink judgment upon oneself.
 - 4) These are the reasons why, when we have committed a mortal sin, we must go to the Sacrament of Reconciliation (Confession) before receiving the Holy Eucharist from the priest.
2. Role of Bishop in ordination:
 - a. Read CCC 1572- 1573 which explains that it is the imposition of hands by a Bishop that confers priesthood.
 - 1) Have someone read 2 Timothy 1: 5-14 in which St. Paul talks with Timothy, whom Paul had ordained to the priesthood.
 - b. Each Bishop is an ordained priest, so if we had complete records, we could trace every priest’s ordination link back to one of the 12 Apostles.
 - c. Have 1576 of CCC read aloud – Only a bishop can ordain priests.
 - d. Have 1587 of CCC read aloud – Prayer of consecration for the priest given.
3. Celibacy:
 - a. Read CCC 1579. Only celibate men are normally ordained to priesthood in the Latin Rite of the Roman Catholic Church (the Rite to which we belong).
 - b. Read the scripture passages in the Bible quotes section on celibacy (Matthew 19:11-12, 1 Corinthians 7:32-35, Revelation 14:1-5).
 - c. For more on the topic of Celibacy, see **Activity 5: Website Activities** (below)
4. Indelible character
 - a. Read aloud 1581 of CCC. The priest acts as a representative of Christ in his offices of priest, prophet and king.
 - b. Read CCC 1582-1583. Like baptism, once ordained a priest, one receives an indelible character to their spirit that can never be removed.
 - c. Read aloud for the students CCC 1589. The quotes from St. Gregory of Nanzianus and St. John Vianney are very powerful.

5. Have someone read 1591-1592 of CCC and reflect on the difference between the common and ministerial priesthoods.

F. Special in-depth project - section 1577, only men can be ordained priests...why?

1. The controversial nature of "only men can be priests" should not be shied away from, but rather approached directly, with the Church's teachings on the topic being presented. To begin, the first paragraph of section 25 from the Vatican II document *Lumen Gentium* should be read aloud. Focus especially on this section:
 - a. "...In matters of faith and morals, the bishops speak in the name of Christ and the faithful are to accept their teaching and adhere to it with a religious assent. This religious submission of mind and will must be shown in a special way to the authentic magisterium of the Roman Pontiff, even when he is not speaking ex cathedra; that is, it must be shown in such a way that his supreme magisterium is acknowledged with reverence, the judgments made by him are sincerely adhered to, according to his manifest mind and will. His mind and will in the matter may be known either from the character of the documents, from his frequent repetition of the same doctrine, or from his manner of speaking."
2. The teachings:
 - a. Read aloud CCC 1577. This may be the most concise explanation of the Church's position. Christ chose only men for priesthood, as did the Apostles. The Church is bound by this choice made by the Lord himself. The ordination of women is not possible.
 - b. Many felt this teaching was changeable, a matter of discipline, like all priests being celibate. So, in 1976 Pope Paul VI issued the document *Inter Insigniores* to clarify that the all male hierarchical priesthood is straight from the will of Christ and a matter of doctrine, and therefore is not changeable.
 - c. Controversy continued so, Pope John Paul II, in 1994, issued a brief but absolutely final statement on the subject, called ***Ordinatio Sacerdotalis***, in which he concluded with:
 - 1) "Although the teaching that priestly ordination is to be reserved to men alone has been preserved by the constant and universal Tradition of the Church and firmly taught by the Magisterium in its more recent documents, at the present time in some places it is nonetheless considered still open to debate, or the Church's judgment that women are not to be admitted to ordination is considered to have a merely disciplinary force." (OS, 4)
 - 2) "Wherefore, in order that all doubt may be removed regarding a matter of great importance, **a matter which pertains to the Church's divine constitution itself, in virtue of my ministry of confirming the brethren (cf. Lk 22:32) I declare that the Church has no authority whatsoever to confer priestly ordination on women and that this judgment is to be definitively held by all the Church's faithful.**" (OS, 4)

Activity 2: Priest Saints Quiz

Activity 3: Q and A on Priesthood with the Pastor

1. Prior to the Q and A session:
 - Invite the parish pastor to come to the school for an hour to do a Q and A session with the students in grades 6-8. **NOTE: Priests are exceptionally busy people...contact them to get on their schedule as soon as possible. Stress that this is a Vocation Week activity in celebration of the "Year for Priests."** Also, call to remind the priest the

day before. Consider having the students present something to the pastor at the end of the session to show their gratitude for all the pastor does for them.

- Show students the video "Fishers of Men." Copies were sent to all schools 3 years ago. If a copy is needed, contact the Vocation Office at (513) 421-3131 to get an additional copy sent as soon as possible. It is also on YouTube™ at:
 - Part 1: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qqtOvt7d490>
 - Part 2: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SnwodBiLq1g&feature=related>
 - Next, if you wish, have classes write some questions for the priest and submit them to you before the session. Get together with the other 6th to 8th grade teachers and select a good subset. You could also just have the students bring their questions to the session.
2. The day of the Q and A:
- Join the 6th, 7th and 8th grades together with Father and go through some of the written questions. Though questions were produced beforehand, try to keep it informal. If no one else asks, get Father to talk about his hobbies, interests, talents, favorite foods, sports teams – all those things that are just regular normal activities and feelings. He's a normal man with an extraordinary vocation, and that's what the students need to see.

Activity 4: Modern Hero Saints: *In persona Christi*

- Have students choose one of these saints and write a biography of how their lives were a reflection of Christ's life:
 - St. Pio of Pietrelcina (a.k.a. Padre Pio)
 - St. Maximilian Kolbe
 - St. John Vianney

Activity 5: Website Activities

1. Web Homework Assignment - Celibacy:
 - Have students choose 3 resources from the web on Celibacy and choose what they consider the two strongest arguments they found for keeping the discipline (require they read the Archbishop's article and pick 2 of the other three).
 - Archbishop Pilarczyk's article on Celibacy on the Archdiocesan website (http://www.cincinnati vocations.org/women_celibacy.shtml)
 - <http://www.cuf.org/FileDownloads/godsgiftcelibacy.pdf>
 - http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/paul_vi/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-vi_enc_24061967_sacerdotalis_en.html
 - <http://www.catholic.com/thisrock/2001/0102fea5.asp>
2. Pope John Paul II's Holy Thursday Letters:
 - At www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/letters/documents/hf_jp-ii_let_index-letter-to-priests_en.html you will find a listing of each letter the Holy Father wrote to his priests on Holy Thursday during his 26 year pontificate. Have students choose a letter and write a report on what was the focus of the letter. What was the Pope encouraging them to think about or do and why? What Bible passages and/or documents did he quote? Etc.
3. www.CincinnatiVocations.org Website activities
 - Read biographies and Q & A's of 4 of our recent priests and seminarians:
 - Questions:
 - What differences did they have when realizing God was calling them to be a priest?
 - How did their backgrounds differ?
 - What is your favorite interesting fact about one of them?



Catechism of the Catholic Church: On Priesthood

Prefiguring of Catholic Priesthood in Jewish Priesthood of Old Covenant.

1539 The chosen people were constituted by God as "a kingdom of priests and a holy nation." But within the people of Israel, God chose one of the twelve tribes, that of Levi, and set it apart for liturgical service; God himself is its inheritance. A special rite consecrated the beginnings of the priesthood of the Old Covenant. The priests are "appointed to act on behalf of men in relation to God, to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins."

1540 Instituted to proclaim the Word of God and to restore communion with God by sacrifices and prayer, this priesthood nevertheless remains powerless to bring about salvation, needing to repeat its sacrifices ceaselessly and being unable to achieve a definitive sanctification, which only the sacrifice of Christ would accomplish.

1541 The liturgy of the Church, however, sees in the priesthood of Aaron and the service of the Levites, as in the institution of the seventy elders, a prefiguring of the ordained ministry of the New Covenant.

1542 At the ordination of priests, the Church prays:

Lord, holy Father, ...when you had appointed high priests to rule your people, you chose other men next to them in rank and dignity to be with them and to help them in their task. ...

You extended the spirit of Moses to seventy wise men. ...

You shared among the sons of Aaron the fullness of their father's power.

The one priesthood of Christ

1544 Everything that the priesthood of the Old Covenant prefigured finds its fulfillment in Christ Jesus, the "one mediator between God and men." The Christian tradition considers Melchizedek, "priest of God Most High," as a prefiguration of the priesthood of Christ, the unique "high priest after the order of Melchizedek"; "holy, blameless, unstained," "by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are sanctified," that is, by the unique sacrifice of the cross.

1545 The redemptive sacrifice of Christ is unique, accomplished once for all; yet it is made present in the Eucharistic sacrifice of the Church. The same is true of the one priesthood of Christ; it is made present through the ministerial priesthood without diminishing the uniqueness of Christ's priesthood: "Only Christ is the true priest, the others being only his ministers."

Two participations in the one priesthood of Christ

1546 Christ, high priest and unique mediator, has made of the Church "a kingdom, priests for his God and Father." The whole community of believers is, as such, priestly. The faithful exercise their baptismal priesthood through their participation, each according to his own vocation, in Christ's mission as priest, prophet, and king. Through the sacraments of Baptism and Confirmation the faithful are "consecrated to be . . . a holy priesthood."

1547 The ministerial or hierarchical priesthood of bishops and priests, and the common priesthood of all the faithful participate, "each in its own proper way, in the one priesthood of Christ." While being "ordered one to another," they differ essentially. In what sense? While the common priesthood of the faithful is exercised by the unfolding of baptismal grace—a life of faith, hope, and charity, a life according to the Spirit—the ministerial priesthood is at the service of the common priesthood. It is directed at the unfolding of the baptismal grace of all Christians. The ministerial priesthood is a *means* by which Christ unceasingly builds up and leads his Church. For this reason it is transmitted by its own sacrament, the sacrament of Holy Orders.

In the person of Christ the Head . . .

1548 In the ecclesial service of the ordained minister, it is Christ himself who is present to his Church as Head of his Body, Shepherd of his flock, high priest of the redemptive sacrifice, Teacher of Truth. This is what the Church means by saying that the priest, by virtue of the sacrament of Holy Orders, acts *in persona Christi Capitis*:

It is the same priest, Christ Jesus, whose sacred person his minister truly represents. Now the minister, by reason of the sacerdotal consecration which he has received, is truly made like to the high priest and possesses the authority to act in the power and place of the person of Christ himself (*virtute ac persona ipsius Christi*).

Christ is the source of all priesthood: the priest of the old law was a figure of Christ, and the priest of the new law acts in the person of Christ.

1549 Through the ordained ministry, especially that of bishops and priests, the presence of Christ as head of the Church is made visible in the midst of the community of believers. In the beautiful expression of St. Ignatius of Antioch, the bishop is *typos tou Patros*: he is like the living image of God the Father.

1550 This presence of Christ in the minister is not to be understood as if the latter were preserved from all human weaknesses, the spirit of domination, error, even sin. The power of the Holy Spirit does not guarantee all acts of ministers in the same way. While this guarantee extends to the sacraments, so that even the minister's sin cannot impede the fruit of grace, in many other acts the minister leaves human traces that are not always signs of fidelity to the Gospel and consequently can harm the apostolic fruitfulness of the Church.

1551 This priesthood is ministerial. "That office . . . which the Lord committed to the pastors of his people, is in the strict sense of the term a *service*." It is entirely related to Christ and to men. It depends entirely on Christ and on his unique priesthood; it has been instituted for the good of men and the communion of the Church. The sacrament of Holy Orders communicates a "sacred power" which is none other than that of Christ. The exercise of this authority must therefore be measured against the model of Christ, who by love made himself the least and the servant of all. "The Lord said clearly that concern for his flock was proof of love for him."

"in the name of the whole Church"

1552 The ministerial priesthood has the task not only of representing Christ—Head of the Church—before the assembly of the faithful, but also of acting in the name of the whole Church when presenting to God the prayer of the Church, and above all when offering the Eucharistic sacrifice.

1553 "In the name of the *whole* Church" does not mean that priests are the delegates of the community. The prayer and offering of the Church are inseparable from the prayer and offering of Christ, her head; it is always the case that Christ worships in and through his Church. The whole Church, the Body of Christ, prays and offers herself "through him, with him, in him," in the unity of the Holy Spirit, to God the Father. The whole Body, *caput et membra*, prays and offers itself, and therefore those who in the Body are especially his ministers are called ministers not only of Christ, but also of the Church. It is because the ministerial priesthood represents Christ that it can represent the Church.

The ordination of priests

1566 "It is in the Eucharistic cult or in the *Eucharistic assembly* of the faithful (*synaxis*) that they exercise in a supreme degree their sacred office; there, acting in the person of Christ and proclaiming his mystery, they unite the votive offerings of the faithful to the sacrifice of Christ their head, and in the sacrifice of the Mass they make present again and apply, until the coming of the Lord, the unique sacrifice of the New Testament, that namely of Christ offering himself once for all a spotless victim to the Father." From this unique sacrifice their whole priestly ministry draws its strength.

1572 Given the importance that the ordination of a bishop, a priest, or a deacon has for the life of the particular Church, its celebration calls for as many of the faithful as possible to take part. It should take place preferably on Sunday, in the cathedral, with solemnity appropriate to the occasion. All three ordinations, of the bishop, of the priest, and of the deacon, follow the same movement. Their proper place is within the Eucharistic liturgy.

1573 The *essential rite* of the sacrament of Holy Orders for all three degrees consists in the bishop's imposition of hands on the head of the ordinand and in the bishop's specific consecratory prayer asking God for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit and his gifts proper to the ministry to which the candidate is being ordained.

1576 Since the sacrament of Holy Orders is the sacrament of the apostolic ministry, it is for the bishops as the successors of the apostles to hand on the "gift of the Spirit," the "apostolic line." Validly ordained bishops, i.e., those who are in the line of apostolic succession, validly confer the three degrees of the sacrament of Holy Orders.

Who Can Receive This Sacrament?

1577 "Only a baptized man (*vir*) validly receives sacred ordination." The Lord Jesus chose men (*ver*) to form the college of the twelve apostles, and the apostles did the same when they chose collaborators to succeed them in their ministry. The college of bishops, with whom the priests are united in the priesthood, makes the college of the twelve an ever-present and ever-active reality until Christ's return. The Church recognizes herself to be bound by this choice made by the Lord himself. For this reason the ordination of women is not possible.

1578 No one has a *right* to receive the sacrament of Holy Orders. Indeed no one claims this office for himself; he is called to it by God. Anyone who thinks he recognizes the signs of God's call to the ordained ministry must humbly submit his desire to the authority of the Church, who has the responsibility and right to call someone to receive orders. Like every grace this sacrament can be *received* only as an unmerited gift.

1579 All the ordained ministers of the Latin Church, with the exception of permanent deacons, are normally chosen from among men of faith who live a celibate life and who intend to remain *celibate* "for the sake of the kingdom of heaven." Called to consecrate themselves with undivided heart to the Lord and to "the affairs of the Lord," they give themselves entirely to God and to men. Celibacy is a sign of this new life to the service of which the Church's minister is consecrated; accepted with a joyous heart celibacy radiantly proclaims the Reign of God.

The indelible character of the ministerial Priesthood

1581 This sacrament configures the recipient to Christ by a special grace of the Holy Spirit, so that he may serve as Christ's instrument for his Church. By ordination one is enabled to act as a representative of Christ, Head of the Church, in his triple office of priest, prophet, and king.

1582 As in the case of Baptism and Confirmation this share in Christ's office is granted once for all. The sacrament of Holy Orders, like the other two, confers an *indelible spiritual character* and cannot be repeated or conferred temporarily.

1583 It is true that someone validly ordained can, for grave reasons, be discharged from the obligations and functions linked to ordination, or can be forbidden to exercise them; but he cannot become a layman again in the strict sense, because the character imprinted by ordination is for ever. The vocation and mission received on the day of his ordination mark him permanently.

1587 The spiritual gift conferred by presbyteral ordination is expressed by this prayer of the Byzantine Rite. The bishop, while laying on his hand, says among other things:

Lord, fill with the gift of the Holy Spirit him whom you have deigned to raise to the rank of the priesthood, that he may be worthy to stand without reproach before your altar, to proclaim the Gospel of your kingdom, to fulfill the ministry of your word of truth, to offer you spiritual gifts and sacrifices, to renew your people by the bath of rebirth; so that he may go out to meet our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, your only Son, on the day of his second coming, and may receive from your vast goodness the recompense for a faithful administration of his order.

1589 Before the grandeur of the priestly grace and office, the holy doctors felt an urgent call to conversion in order to conform their whole lives to him whose sacrament had made them ministers. Thus St. Gregory of Nazianzus, as a very young priest, exclaimed:

"We must begin by purifying ourselves before purifying others; we must be instructed to be able to instruct, become light to illuminate, draw close to God to bring him close to others, be sanctified to sanctify, lead by the hand and counsel prudently. I know whose ministers we are, where we find ourselves and to where we strive. I know God's greatness and man's weakness, but also his potential. [Who then is the priest? He is] the defender of truth, who stands with angels, gives glory with archangels, causes sacrifices to rise to the altar on high, shares Christ's priesthood, refashions creation, restores it in God's image, recreates it for the world on high and, even greater, is divinized and divinizes."

And the holy Curé of Ars: "The priest continues the work of redemption on earth. . . . If we really understood the priest on earth, we would die not of fright but of love. . . . The Priesthood is the love of the heart of Jesus."

1591 The whole Church is a priestly people. Through Baptism all the faithful share in the priesthood of Christ. This participation is called the "common priesthood of the faithful." Based on this common priesthood and ordered to its service, there exists another participation in the mission of Christ: the ministry conferred by the sacrament of Holy Orders, where the task is to serve in the name and in the person of Christ the Head in the midst of the community.

1592 The ministerial priesthood differs in essence from the common priesthood of the faithful because it confers a sacred power for the service of the faithful. The ordained ministers exercise their service for the People of God by teaching (*munus docendi*), divine worship (*munus liturgicum*) and pastoral governance (*munus regendi*).



Bible Quotes Related to the Priesthood

Exodus 19:6

"but you shall be for me a priestly kingdom and a holy nation. These are the words that you shall speak to the Israelites."

Numbers 1:48-53

"The Lord had said to Moses: 'Only the tribe of Levi you shall not enroll, and you shall not take a census of them with the other Israelites. Rather you shall appoint the Levites over the tabernacle of the covenant, and over all its equipment, and over all that belongs to it; they are to carry the tabernacle and all its equipment, and they shall tend it, and shall camp around the tabernacle. When the tabernacle is to set out, the Levites shall take it down; and when the tabernacle is to be pitched, the Levites shall set it up. And any outsider who comes near shall be put to death. The other Israelites shall camp in their respective regimental camps, by companies; but the Levites shall camp around the tabernacle of the covenant,* so that there may be no wrath on the congregation of the Israelites; and the Levites shall perform the guard duty of the tabernacle of the covenant."

Hebrews 5: 1-4

"Every high priest chosen from among mortals is put in charge of things pertaining to God on their behalf, to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins. He is able to deal gently with the ignorant and wayward, since he himself is subject to weakness; and because of this he must offer sacrifice for his own sins as well as for those of the people. And one does not presume to take this honour, but takes it only when called by God, just as Aaron was."

Leviticus 5:1, 5-6

"When any of you sin in that you have heard a public adjuration to testify and—though able to testify as one who has seen or learned of the matter—do not speak up, you are subject to punishment. ... When you realize your guilt in any of these, you shall confess the sin that you have committed. And you shall bring to the LORD, as your penalty for the sin that you have committed, a female from the flock, a sheep or a goat, as a sin-offering; and the priest shall make atonement on your behalf for your sin."

1 Peter 3: 18-22

"For Christ also suffered for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, in order to bring you to God. He was put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit, in which also he went and made a proclamation to the spirits in prison, who in former times did not obey, when God waited patiently in the days of Noah, during the building of the ark, in which a few, that is, eight people, were saved through water. And baptism, which this prefigured, now saves you—not as a removal of dirt from the body, but as an appeal to God for a good conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers made subject to him.

John 6: 48-58

"I am the bread of life. Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died. This is the bread which comes down from heaven, that a man may eat of it and not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven; if any one eats of this bread, he will live for ever; and the bread which I shall give for the life of the world is my flesh.' The Jews then disputed among themselves, saying, 'How can this man give us his flesh to eat?' So Jesus said to them, 'Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink his blood, you have no life in you; he who eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is food indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He who eats my flesh and drinks my blood abides in me, and I in him. As the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so he who eats me will live because of me. This is the bread which came down from heaven, not such as the fathers ate and died; he who eats this bread will live for ever.'"

Genesis 14:18-20

And King Melchizedek of Salem brought out bread and wine; he was priest of God Most High. 19He blessed him and said, 'Blessed be Abram by God Most High, maker of heaven and earth; and blessed be God Most High, who has delivered your enemies into your hand!' And Abram gave him one-tenth of everything.

Psalms 110

The Lord says to my lord, 'Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies your footstool.'
The Lord sends out from Zion your mighty sceptre. Rule in the midst of your foes.
Your people will offer themselves willingly on the day you lead your forces on the holy mountains.
From the womb of the morning, like dew, your youth will come to you.
The Lord has sworn and will not change his mind, 'You are a priest for ever according to the order of Melchizedek.*'
The Lord is at your right hand; he will shatter kings on the day of his wrath.
He will execute judgement among the nations, filling them with corpses; he will shatter heads over the wide earth.
He will drink from the stream by the path; therefore he will lift up his head.

Hebrews 6:17 - 7:22 (long quote on legitimacy of Christ as High Priest citing Melchizedek):

"...when God desired to show even more clearly to the heirs of the promise the unchangeable character of his purpose, he guaranteed it by an oath, so that through two unchangeable things, in which it is impossible that God would prove false, we who have taken refuge might be strongly encouraged to seize the hope set before us. We have this hope, a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul, a hope that enters the inner shrine behind the curtain, where Jesus, a forerunner on our behalf, has entered, having become a high priest for ever according to the order of Melchizedek.

This 'King Melchizedek of Salem, priest of the Most High God, met Abraham as he was returning from defeating the kings and blessed him'; and to him Abraham apportioned 'one-tenth of everything'. His name, in the first place, means 'king of righteousness'; next he is also king of Salem, that is, 'king of peace'. Without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but resembling the Son of God, he remains a priest for ever.

See how great he is! Even Abraham the patriarch gave him a tenth of the spoils. And those descendants of Levi who receive the priestly office have a commandment in the law to collect tithes* from the people, that is, from their kindred, though these also are descended from Abraham. But this man, who does not belong to their ancestry, collected tithes from Abraham and blessed him who had received the promises. It is beyond dispute that the inferior is blessed by the superior. In the one case, tithes are received by those who are mortal; in the other, by one of whom it is

testified that he lives. One might even say that Levi himself, who receives tithes, paid tithes through Abraham, for he was still in the loins of his ancestor when Melchizedek met him.

Another Priest, Like Melchizedek. Now if perfection had been attainable through the levitical priesthood—for the people received the law under this priesthood—what further need would there have been to speak of another priest arising according to the order of Melchizedek, rather than one according to the order of Aaron? For when there is a change in the priesthood, there is necessarily a change in the law as well. Now the one of whom these things are spoken belonged to another tribe, from which no one has ever served at the altar. For it is evident that our Lord was descended from Judah, and in connection with that tribe Moses said nothing about priests.

It is even more obvious when another priest arises, resembling Melchizedek, one who has become a priest, not through a legal requirement concerning physical descent, but through the power of an indestructible life. For it is attested of him,

'You are a priest for ever, according to the order of Melchizedek.'

There is, on the one hand, the abrogation of an earlier commandment because it was weak and ineffectual (for the law made nothing perfect); there is, on the other hand, the introduction of a better hope, through which we approach God.

This was confirmed with an oath; for others who became priests took their office without an oath, but this one became a priest with an oath, because of the one who said to him,

'The Lord has sworn and will not change his mind, "You are a priest for ever" '— accordingly Jesus has also become the guarantee of a better covenant.

Mark 2: 5-7

"And when Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, 'My Son, your sins are forgiven.' Now some of the scribes were sitting there, questioning in their hearts 'why does this man speak thus? It is blasphemy! Who can forgive sins but God alone?'"

John 20:21-23

"Jesus said to them again, 'Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I send you.' And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and said to them, 'Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained.'"

Mark 6: 7, 12-13

And Christ called to him the twelve, and began to send them out two by two, and gave them authority over unclean spirits... So they went out and preached that men should repent. And they cast out many demons, and anointed with oil many that were sick and healed them.

Luke 22: 8-20

"So Jesus sent Peter and John, saying, 'Go and prepare the passover for us, that we may eat it.' They said to him, 'Where will you have us prepare it?' He said to them, 'Behold, when you have entered the city, a man carrying a jar of water will meet you; follow him into the house which he enters, and tell the householder, 'The Teacher says to you, Where is the guest room, where I am to eat the passover with my disciples?' And he will show you a large upper room furnished; there make ready.' And they went, and found it as he had told them; and they prepared the passover. And when the hour came, he sat at table, and the apostles with him. And he said to them, 'I have earnestly desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer; for I tell you I shall not eat it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God.' And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he said, 'Take this, and divide it among yourselves; for I tell you that from now on I shall not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes.' And he took bread, and when he had given thanks he broke it and gave it to them, saying, 'This is my body which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.' And likewise the cup after supper, saying, 'This cup which is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood.'"

1 Corinthians 11:23-29

"I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, "This is my body which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me." In the same way also the cup, after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me." For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes. Whoever, therefore, eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of profaning the body and blood of the Lord. Let a man examine himself, and so eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For any one who eats and drinks without discerning the body eats and drinks judgment upon himself."

2 Timothy 1: 5-14

"I am reminded of your sincere faith, a faith that dwelt first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice and now, I am sure, dwells in you. Hence I remind you to rekindle the gift of God that is within you through the laying on of my hands; for God did not give us a spirit of timidity but a spirit of power and love and self-control. Do not be ashamed then of testifying to our Lord, nor of me his prisoner, but share in suffering for the gospel in the power of God, who saved us and called us with a holy calling, not in virtue of our works but in virtue of his own purpose and the grace which he gave us in Christ Jesus ages ago, and now has manifested through the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. For this gospel I was appointed a preacher and apostle and teacher, and therefore I suffer as I do. But I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed, and I am sure that he is able to guard until that Day what has been entrusted to me. Follow the pattern of the sound words which you have heard from me, in the faith and love which are in Christ Jesus; guard the truth that has been entrusted to you by the Holy Spirit who dwells within us. "

Matthew 19: 11-12

"Jesus said to them, 'Not all men can receive this saying, but only those to whom it is given. For there are eunuchs who have been so from birth, and there are eunuchs who have been made eunuchs by men, and there are eunuchs who have made themselves eunuchs for the sake of the kingdom of heaven. He who is able to receive this, let him receive it.'"

1 Corinthians 7:32-35

"I want you to be free from anxieties. The unmarried man is anxious about the affairs of the Lord, how to please the Lord; but the married man is anxious about worldly affairs, how to please his wife, and his interests are divided. And the unmarried woman or girl is anxious about the affairs of the Lord, how to be holy in body and spirit; but the married woman is anxious about worldly affairs, how to please her husband. I say this for your own benefit, not to lay any restraint upon you, but to promote good order and to secure your undivided devotion to the Lord."

Revelation 14:1-5

"Then I looked, and lo, on Mount Zion stood the Lamb, and with him a hundred and forty-four thousand who had his name and his Father's name written on their foreheads. And I heard a voice from heaven like the sound of many waters and like the sound of loud thunder; the voice I heard was like the sound of harpers playing on their harps, and they sing a new song before the throne and before the four living creatures and before the elders. No one could learn that song except the hundred and forty-four thousand who had never redeemed from the earth. It is these who have not defiled themselves with women for they are chaste; it is these who follow the Lamb wherever he goes; these have been redeemed from mankind as first fruits for God and the Lamb, and in their mouth no lie was found, for they are spotless."



VOCA TIONS
ARCHDIOCESE OF CINCINNATI
ORDINATIO SACERDOTALIS

JOHN PAUL II TO THE BISHOPS OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH
ON RESERVING PRIESTLY ORDINATION TO MEN ALONE

Venerable Brothers in the Episcopate,

1. Priestly ordination, which hands on the office entrusted by Christ to his Apostles of teaching, sanctifying and governing the faithful, has in the Catholic Church from the beginning always been reserved to men alone. This tradition has also been faithfully maintained by the Oriental Churches.

When the question of the ordination of women arose in the Anglican Communion, Pope Paul VI, out of fidelity to his office of safeguarding the Apostolic Tradition, and also with a view to removing a new obstacle placed in the way of Christian unity, reminded Anglicans of the position of the Catholic Church: "She holds that it is not admissible to ordain women to the priesthood, for very fundamental reasons. These reasons include: the example recorded in the Sacred Scriptures of Christ choosing his Apostles only from among men; the constant practice of the Church, which has imitated Christ in choosing only men; and her living teaching authority which has consistently held that the exclusion of women from the priesthood is in accordance with God's plan for his Church."(1)

But since the question had also become the subject of debate among theologians and in certain Catholic circles, Paul VI directed the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith to set forth and expound the teaching of the Church on this matter. This was done through the Declaration *Inter Insigniores*, which the Supreme Pontiff approved and ordered to be published.(2)

2. The Declaration recalls and explains the fundamental reasons for this teaching, reasons expounded by Paul VI, and concludes that the Church "does not consider herself authorized to admit women to priestly ordination."(3) To these fundamental reasons the document adds other theological reasons which illustrate the appropriateness of the divine provision, and it also shows clearly that Christ's way of acting did not proceed from sociological or cultural motives peculiar to his time. As Paul VI later explained: "The real reason is that, in giving the Church her fundamental constitution, her theological anthropology-thereafter always followed by the Church's Tradition- Christ established things in this way."(4)

In the Apostolic Letter *Mulieris Dignitatem*, I myself wrote in this regard: "In calling only men as his Apostles, Christ acted in a completely free and sovereign manner. In doing so, he exercised the same freedom with which, in all his behavior, he emphasized the dignity and the vocation of women, without conforming to the prevailing customs and to the traditions sanctioned by the legislation of the time."(5)

In fact the Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles attest that this call was made in accordance with God's eternal plan; Christ chose those whom he willed (cf. Mk 3:13-14; Jn 6:70), and he did so in union with the Father, "through the Holy Spirit" (Acts 1:2), after having spent the night in prayer (cf. Lk 6:12). Therefore, in granting admission to the ministerial priesthood,(6) the Church has always acknowledged as a perennial norm her Lord's way of acting in choosing the twelve men whom he made the foundation of his Church (cf. Rv 21:14). These men did not in fact receive only a function which could thereafter be exercised by any member of the Church; rather they were specifically and intimately associated in the mission of the Incarnate Word himself (cf. Mt 10:1, 7-8; 28:16-20; Mk 3:13-16; 16:14-15). The Apostles did the same when they chose fellow workers(7) who would succeed them in their ministry.(8) Also included in this choice were those who, throughout the time of the Church, would carry on the Apostles' mission of representing Christ the Lord and Redeemer.(9)

3. Furthermore, the fact that the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God and Mother of the Church, received neither the mission proper to the Apostles nor the ministerial priesthood clearly shows that the non-admission of women to priestly ordination cannot mean that women are of lesser dignity, nor can it be construed as discrimination against them. Rather, it is to be seen as the faithful observance of a plan to be ascribed to the wisdom of the Lord of the universe.

The presence and the role of women in the life and mission of the Church, although not linked to the ministerial priesthood, remain absolutely necessary and irreplaceable. As the Declaration Inter Insigniores points out, "the Church desires that Christian women should become fully aware of the greatness of their mission: today their role is of capital importance both for the renewal and humanization of society and for the rediscovery by believers of the true face of the Church."(10)

The New Testament and the whole history of the Church give ample evidence of the presence in the Church of women, true disciples, witnesses to Christ in the family and in society, as well as in total consecration to the service of God and of the Gospel. "By defending the dignity of women and their vocation, the Church has shown honor and gratitude for those women who-faithful to the Gospel-have shared in every age in the apostolic mission of the whole People of God. They are the holy martyrs, virgins and mothers of families, who bravely bore witness to their faith and passed on the Church's faith and tradition by bringing up their children in the spirit of the Gospel."(11)

Moreover, it is to the holiness of the faithful that the hierarchical structure of the Church is totally ordered. For this reason, the Declaration Inter Insigniores recalls: "the only better gift, which can and must be desired, is love (cf. 1 Cor 12 and 13). The greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven are not the ministers but the saints."(12)

4. Although the teaching that priestly ordination is to be reserved to men alone has been preserved by the constant and universal Tradition of the Church and firmly taught by the Magisterium in its more recent documents, at the present time in some places it is nonetheless considered still open to debate, or the Church's judgment that women are not to be admitted to ordination is considered to have a merely disciplinary force.

Wherefore, in order that all doubt may be removed regarding a matter of great importance, a matter which pertains to the Church's divine constitution itself, in virtue of my ministry of confirming the brethren (cf. Lk 22:32) I declare that the Church has no authority whatsoever to confer priestly ordination on women and that this judgment is to be definitively held by all the Church's faithful.

Invoking an abundance of divine assistance upon you, venerable brothers, and upon all the faithful, I impart my apostolic blessing.

From the Vatican, on May 22, the Solemnity of Pentecost, in the year 1994, the sixteenth of my Pontificate.

NOTES

1. Paul VI, Response to the Letter of His Grace the Most Reverend Dr. F.D. Coggan, Archbishop of Canterbury, concerning the Ordination of Women to the Priesthood (November 30, 1975); AAS 68 (1976), 599.
2. Cf. Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, Declaration Inter Insigniores on the question of the Admission of Women to the Ministerial Priesthood (October 15, 1976): AAS 69 (1977), 98-116.
3. Ibid., 100.
4. Paul VI, Address on the Role of Women in the Plan of Salvation (January 30, 1977): Insegnamenti, XV (1977), 111. Cf. Also John Paul II Apostolic Exhortation Christifideles laici (December 30, 1988), n. 51: AAS 81 (1989), 393-521; Catechism of the Catholic Church, n. 1577.
5. Apostolic Letter Mulieris Dignitatem (August 15, 1988), n. 26: AAS 80 (1988), 1715.
6. Cf. Dogmatic Constitution Lumen Gentium, n. 28 Decree Presbyterorum Ordinis, n. 2b.
7. Cf. 1 Tm 3:1-13; 2 Tm 1:6; Ti 1:5-9.
8. Cf. Catechism of the Catholic Church, n. 1577.
9. Cf. Dogmatic Constitution on the Church Lumen Gentium, nn. 20,21.
10. Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, Declaration Inter Insigniores, n. 6: AAS 69 (1977), 115-116.
11. Apostolic Letter Mulieris Dignitatem, n. 27: AAS 80 (1988), 1719.
12. Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, Declaration Inter Insigniores n. 6: AAS 69 (1977), 115.



Know Your Saints and Blessed Quiz

In honor of Pope Benedict's "Year for Priests," this year's Saints Quiz has 30 saints and blessed who were priests. They came from many different backgrounds, with diverse talents and temperaments, but they were all men who dared to offer their lives in loving service to Christ and His Church as ordained priests. There are Popes, Bishops, Missionaries, Monks, Martyrs and Parish Priests. Each served as a living icon of Christ, performing the sacraments of the Church and being a Spiritual Father to those around him.

- ___ 1. Born to a noble Spanish family, this Saint founded the Mercedarian Order, a military order of monks who carried swords and sought to ransom slaves.
- ___ 2. This Italian priest was imprisoned for refusing to swear an oath of allegiance to Napoleon Bonaparte, bravely choosing to remain loyal to the Pope. He founded the Confraternity of the Precious Blood and his mission sermons to convert Freemasons were so successful, he was nicknamed the "Hammer of the Sectarrians".
- ___ 3. Born into wealth and privilege, this native of France left leisure behind and became a priest. This saint founded the Order of the Most Holy Trinity to secure the release of Christian slaves held by the Muslims.
- ___ 4. The son of a nobleman, this blessed was ordained a Benedictine priest before becoming a professor at the University of Montpellier. After being appointed the abbot of a monastery, he regularly assisted the Pope on diplomatic journeys. Though neither an Italian, nor a Cardinal, he was surprisingly elected Pope.
- ___ 5. In his early days, this saint was such a skilled metalworker that King Clotaire II hired him to build the "Chair of State." He was later made a bishop. Deeply loved for his charity, honesty and holiness, he continued to do metalworking in his spare time.
- ___ 6. Receiving no education in his childhood in Germany, this shepherd's son started working 12 hours a day in a shoe factory at the age of 18, but began studying at night. He graduated high school at the age of 24 and was ordained a priest at 32. He became the leader of a society of Catholic young men that later was named for him. In contrast to his contemporary Karl Marx, this blessed stressed the dignity of man and of work.
- ___ 7. Born into an Italian naval family, this brilliant saint began as an attorney before becoming frustrated with court battles. He was ordained a priest, wrote prolifically, battled the heresy of Jansenism and lived to the age of ninety.
- ___ 8. This Dominican Priest was one of the greatest artists of the early Renaissance. His paintings of Christ in the small cells where his brother monks lived and prayed in Florence, Italy are still visited by thousands of art fans today.
- ___ 9. This accomplished British poet and Jesuit Priest was tortured during the reign of Queen Elizabeth I. Convicted of "being a Catholic Priest," he was hung, drawn and quartered for remaining true to the Church and his Priestly vocation.
- ___ 10. As a young man, he was taught the Catholic faith by the last living Apostle, St. John. Decades later, as an elderly bishop, he was martyred by the local pagan authorities who first tried to burn him alive, but when the flames did not touch him, slit his throat. The written account of his fearlessness during martyrdom inspired thousands of the early Christians to faithfully endure persecution.
- ___ 11. As a military chaplain, this French Priest spent 52 straight months at the front during World War I without ever being wounded. He attributed his remarkable survival to his devotion to St. Therese of Lisieux. After the war, he spent his life helping abandoned and orphaned children.
- ___ 12. Born and ordained in France, this martyr was a missionary in Vietnam where he was beheaded for refusing to trample on a crucifix. His life inspired Therese of Lisieux, who clung to a relic of his as her final illness progressed.
- ___ 13. This Bishop and martyr is well known for curing a boy who was choking on a fishbone.
- ___ 14. He was an eloquent preacher who was forced, along with several fellow Catholics, to walk 600 miles across Japan to the place of his execution. During his slow execution, he preached to the people about the truth of the Catholic Faith and forgave his executors.
- ___ 15. As a boy, the Virgin Mary appeared to this saint and asked if he wanted to "persevere in purity" or "become a martyr" and he replied he wanted "both." Ordained a priest with the Franciscans, he founded the Militia Immaculata and was executed by an injection of carbolic acid in Auschwitz Concentration Camp during WWII.
- ___ 16. This saint lived a deeply sinful life during his young adulthood, despite the pleadings of his mother, who is also a saint. Possessing one of the greatest minds in history, he eventually became a devout Catholic like his mother. He became the Bishop of Hippo and is one of the most influential theologians ever.
- ___ 17. Profoundly physically deformed, this blessed was recognized for his brilliant mind and holiness. He wrote the song "Salve Regina" (Hail Holy Queen) which to this day is still chanted in monasteries around the world and said at the end of the rosary.

- ___ 18. Endowed with charm, athletic skill and intelligence, this Saint was very popular during his college years in Paris. A friend of his began the Society of Jesus and he joined, becoming ordained a priest. He became the greatest missionary since St. Paul, preaching and converting thousands in India, Indonesia and Japan. Like many other Catholic saints, his dead body has miraculously remained incorrupt (i.e. has not decayed).
- ___ 19. In his youth, this athletic Italian was a daredevil, juggler, magician and acrobat. As a priest, he opened a school to teach and care for poor children suffering from the Industrial Revolution. Eventually he would found an order called the Salesians who carried on his work worldwide.
- ___ 20. This priest and missionary helped those suffering from the debilitating and horribly disfiguring disease of leprosy, eventually dying as a leper himself. He is known as the "Apostle to the Lepers."
- ___ 21. This capuchin priest and Doctor of the Church was educated in philosophy and theology, and was said to be able to recall the entire text of the Bible. At the siege of Albe-Royal, he roused the 18,000 Catholic soldiers with a stirring sermon and then mounted a horse, held up his crucifix and charged toward 80,000 Muslim Turks. The Catholic soldiers followed fast behind him and miraculously won the battle, saving Europe again from Islamic invasion. The victorious general gave the credit for the victory to this brave saint.
- ___ 22. This busy saint founded a missionary order, was the Archbishop of a Caribbean Island and was a Queen's confessor. His zeal for the Catholic faith led to 15 attempts on his life by those who hated the Church, with one would-be assassin cutting him deeply across the face. This courageous priest spent his final years helping the poor and teaching.
- ___ 23. This cheerful Saint wasn't above behaving like a silly clown to make children he met on the street laugh. He said "A joyful heart is more easily made perfect than a downcast one." For all his work with the common people of Rome, he is sometimes called the "Apostle of Rome."
- ___ 24. Born in France, this Jesuit Priest was a missionary to the Native Americans. The Mohawks captured, enslaved and tortured him beyond the power of natural endurance, yet he continued to teach the Faith to anyone who would listen. He eventually escaped and returned briefly to Europe before going back to America. Though originally well received upon his return, he willingly entered hostile territory where he was beheaded in part of what is today New York State.
- ___ 25. Prior to his birth, the mother of this Spanish saint had a vision of a dog holding a burning torch that "seemed to set the world on fire." He traveled, preached and encouraged people to say the Rosary. The religious order that is named after him battled the Albigensian heresy and is also known as the Order of Preachers.
- ___ 26. This Dominican Priest was elected pope, but retained his white Dominican habit. Since then all future Popes have worn white. As the Muslim naval fleet threatened to invade Europe, this Pope asked all Catholics to pray the Rosary. The heavily outnumbered Catholic fleet miraculously won the battle of Lepanto on October 7th, prompting the Pope to make it a feast day for Mary called "Our Lady of Victory."
- ___ 27. This saint ministered to the African slaves who'd been brought to America to be sold, becoming the "slave to the slaves." As soon as a slave ship would arrive in Cartagena, Colombia, he would board it and begin to give food, medicine and help to the slaves inside. He battled constantly for the ending of slavery, but died before that was achieved. He is known as the "Patron Saint of Slaves."
- ___ 28. One of the most intelligent persons to ever live, this Dominican priest successfully synthesized Catholic theology with Aristotle's philosophy. When asked by the Pope to write songs for the new feast of Corpus Christi, he reluctantly agreed, producing some of the greatest poems ever written in Latin (including Tantum Ergo Sacramentum, Pange Linqua and O Salutaris Hostia).
- ___ 29. During the brutal repression of the Catholic Church in England during the reign of Queen Elizabeth I, this courageous Jesuit saint met clandestinely with devout Catholics, holding Mass in secret, so they would not be imprisoned. He was captured and later tortured by being stretched on the rack. When he refused the Queen's request that he reject his Catholic faith, he was hung, drawn and quartered.
- ___ 30. Despite being just a pastor for a small parish in rural France, this humble saint became known all over Europe for his wisdom and sanctity. Catholics would travel great distances to go to confession to him, requiring him to stay in the confessional over 10 hours each day. Today, he is known as the Patron Saint of Priests.

1. **Blessed Adolph Kolping**
 2. **St. Alphonsus Ligouri**
 3. **St. Ambrose**
 4. **St. Anthony Mary Claret**
 5. **St. Augustine**
 6. **St. Blasé**
 7. **St. Damien**
 8. **Blessed Daniel Brottier**
 9. **St. Dominic**
 10. **St. Edmund Campion**
 11. **St. Eligius**
 12. **Blessed Fra Angelico**

13. **St. Francis Xavier**
 14. **Blessed Francis Xavier Seelos**
 15. **St. Gaspar del Buffalo**
 16. **Blessed Herman of Reichenau**
 17. **St. Isaac Jogues**
 18. **St. James the Greater**
 19. **St. John Bosco**
 20. **St. John of Matha**
 21. **St. John Vianney**
 22. **St. Lawrence of Brindisi**
 23. **St. Leo the Great**
 24. **St. Martin de Porres**

25. **St. Maximilian Kolbe**
 26. **St. Paul**
 27. **St. Paul Miki**
 28. **St. Peter Claver**
 29. **St. Peter Nolasco**
 30. **St. Phillip Neri**
 31. **St. Pius V**
 32. **St. Polycarp of Smyrna**
 33. **St. Robert Southwell**
 34. **St. Theophane Venard**
 35. **St. Thomas Aquinas**
 36. **Blessed Urban V**

Answer Key

1. St. Peter Nolasco	29
2. St. Gaspar del Buffalo	15
3. St. John of Matha	20
4. Blessed Urban V	36
5. St. Eligius	11
6. Blessed Adolph Kolping	1
7. St. Alphonsus Ligouri	2
8. Blessed Fra Angelico	12
9. St. Robert Southwell	33
10. St. Polycarp of Smyrna	32
11. Blessed Daniel Brottier	8
12. St. Theophane Venard	34
13. St. Blasé	6
14. St. Paul Miki	27
15. St. Maximilian Kolbe	25
16. St. Augustine	5
17. Blessed Herman Richenau	16
18. St. Francis Xavier	13
19. St. John Bosco	19
20. St. Damien	7
21. St. Lawrence of Brindisi	22
22. St. Anthony Mary Claret	4
23. St. Phillip Neri	30
24. St. Isaac Jogues	17
25. St. Dominic	9
26. St. Pius V	31
27. St. Peter Claver	28
28. St. Thomas Aquinas	35
29. St. Edmund Campion	10
30. St. John Vianney	21

In order to make the quiz a little easier, you may want to eliminate from the choices those which are numbers not used: 3, 14, 18, 23, 24, & 26.



VOCA TIONS
ARCHDIOCESE OF CINCINNATI

High School Lesson Plan
"You are a Priest Forever" Psalm 110

Purpose:

Upon completion of this lesson, students will have a deeper appreciation for:

- 1) the role and ministry of the Hierarchical Priesthood in the Catholic Church today;
- 2) the priest as a model of embracing the sufferings of Christ for the salvation of souls; and
- 3) suffering in their own lives as a means to their own salvation.

Catechetical:

At the Last Supper, Jesus Christ ordained His closest followers as the first priests and bishops. This gift was not offered without cost, however, for during His last instruction to them, He promised that each of them, in his own way, would have to embrace a cross of suffering however that suffering may manifest itself. By his willingness to embrace the particular cross that Jesus would give him, each of the Twelve would give greater glory to God, for 'no one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for a friend.' (John 15:13)

This commission, this promise that Jesus originally gave on the night He inaugurated His Paschal mystery, has echoed through the passage of time and continues to be given to those whom Jesus chooses for His work today: His priests and bishops. Just prior to his ordination, the new bishop, priest or deacon lays prostrate before the altar to submit His life completely to Christ. It is an act of complete submission of will; it is an act of laying down one's life for the sake of his brothers and sisters in Christ.

However, the priest is not the only one to accept this cross. Rather, the priest is a model of discipleship for all of Jesus' disciples, so as the priest willingly embraces his cross, he gives an example to the lay faithful to embrace their crosses as well. As we do so, we find that our burdens are made lighter by asking Jesus Himself to help us carry our crosses. In doing so, we come to a deeper awareness of life; we come to a deeper appreciation of Jesus dying for our sins so that we might have life through him. Ultimately, we discover that our sufferings, our anguishes, and our tears have meaning, a meaning that is inseparably tied to our salvation.

In fact, looking at the course of history, the greatest witness of evangelization, the greatest force for bringing others into the loving fold of the Church is the witness of those who have given their lives for Christ: the martyrs. The very word 'martyr' is derived from the Greek word for 'witness,' for they 'witnessed' their faith in the shedding of their blood for Christ. While today it is unlikely (although not impossible) that we will re-enter a period of actual physical martyrdom here in the United States, the witness of committed Christians, lay and ordained alike, living out their faith in a joyful way, can continue the evangelization begun by the first Christians, who lived in an age not totally unlike our own.

Assignment/Activity

PART I

John 17 is known as the 'Great Priestly Prayer of Jesus.' In this prayer, uttered just prior to His going to the Garden of Gethsemane and His arrest, Jesus prays to be glorified by His Father, so that He might return that glory back to the Father. In doing so, He is drawing us, His disciples, into that very same glory, consecrating us for the mission He will pass on to us from the Cross.

- 1) Have your students read through this Chapter, prayerfully considering each of the statements that Jesus makes.
- 2) Either through discussion or a written assignment, lead them through a conversation about suffering:
 - a. How did Jesus suffer for us? With what result?
 - b. In the example of the martyrs, how do we learn to "pick up our cross and follow after Him?"
 - c. God could have chosen any event to save us from our sins, yet He chose to suffer and die on the cross. What does that say about suffering to you?
 - d. In priestly life, a priest wears black as a sign of simplicity and as a sign of death to this world, how can we embrace a life of simplicity and death to this world for the sake of the Gospel?
- 3) Through this discussion, help them to understand that suffering is not an evil thing to be avoided, but yet is truly an unavoidable aspect of human life. If we unite our sufferings with Christ, we will be able to transcend the limits of our own suffering and embrace a new depth of awareness of how precious life truly is.

PART II

View the Rite of Ordination of a Priest (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u87iWVtaSWc> or <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mdNU54iBATI>)

- 1) In a journal entry, have the students write down their reactions and reflections to what they saw.
- 2) How does the priest model a life of humility in his ordination? In his living out of his life to lay down his life for his sheep?
- 3) What are ways they can embrace this same calling in their life?



Youth Ministry

“You are a Priest Forever” Psalm 110

Purpose:

1. Teens will understand the role of their parish priest and the role they play in priestly ministry.
2. Teens will value the sacrifices of their parish priest.
3. Teens will take on an active role in showing appreciation for their parish priest.

Supplies:

- **Seven Sacrament Taboo Game**
- “It’s a Wonderful Life” movie clip (as described below)
- Catholic Bible
- *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (sections referenced on the next page)
- *Lumen Gentium* (section 11 – as referenced on the next page)
- **Prayers for Priests**

Activity #1: Icebreaker - Seven Sacrament Taboo

Activity #2: A world without the Priesthood

1. This is a thought process activity.
2. First show a few minutes of “It’s a Wonderful Life” after George wishes he “had never been born.”
3. Have the students close their eyes and think about their lives as Catholics. Think about all that being Catholic involves. Now, ask them to take the priest out of the picture, as if the priesthood had never existed at all:
 - a. Is there still a leader? Who chooses the leader? On whose authority does the leader lead you in worship? How do you know he or she is right?
 - b. Do you receive the sacraments? How?
 - c. Who consecrates the Eucharist? What does the Eucharist become?
 - d. Who marries you and your spouse? Does the meaning change?
 - e. Do you go to church anymore? What is the purpose?
 - f. What effect does that have on your daily life? Freer? More confused? Any other effects?
4. Process with the teens about their ability to think of a world without priests.
 - a. Was it difficult to think about the world in this way? Why or why not?
 - b. Does that say something for the need for priests in today’s world?
 - c. What are some ways that a priest has helped you specifically?
 - d. What does the priest offer to the world?
 - e. What do you think the priest symbolizes in today’s culture?

Activity #3: Role of the Priest and Role of the Laity

1. Read John 13: 1-15 – The Institution of the Priesthood.
2. View the video on the Institution of the Priesthood and the Eucharist (found on our **Catholic YouTube™ Videos** document).
 - a. Priest is a servant of the people, the last among the group.

- b. The example for all of us to sacrifice his life for those whom he loves and for whom he is responsible.
 - c. Carrying on Christ's example as given to them at the Last Supper..
- 3. So, Christ set up an institutional, ministerial priesthood called to serve, not to be served, so who does the priest serve?
 - a. Read the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* 1539-53.
- 4. The priest therefore stands in the person of Christ as the one high priest. How does the priesthood work if in fact the human priest is not perfect (which is always the case)?
 - a. Read CCC 1577-89.
- 5. As participants in the common priesthood we attain in our baptism, we are called to be a priestly people (which is not to say that all can be priests).
 - a. Read CCC 1546-47 and *Lumen Gentium* 11.

Activity #4: What can we do for our priests?

1. Priests are not perfect but they have a large role in forming and leading their sheep down the path of Truth and Holiness. Their responsibility is great and requires support.
2. What can we do for our parish priest?
3. Spend time thinking of ways in which you can support your parish priest visibly and with prayers. Some ideas include:
 - a. Making a video montage of members of the youth group saying thank you for a special way in which your parish priest has affected their lives.
 - b. Creating and handing your priest a spiritual bouquet which mentions various ways in which your group will commit to praying for your priest:
 - i. Spend 15 minutes in adoration praying for him.
 - ii. Offer up suffering on behalf of the priest (joyfully give up soda for one week on his behalf).
 - iii. Say a decade of the rosary on his behalf at each of your meetings for 5 meetings.
 - c. Hosting a dinner in honor of your priest.
 - i. Have parents bring in the food for those invited (ideally, this could be open to the entire parish, but could be just for your youth group families).
 - ii. Present him with some sort of gift/honor – this could be anything and doesn't have to be more than a thank you card for all that he does for the parish.
 - d. Writing letters of thanks to your priest.
 - e. Making meals for your priest throughout the year.
 - i. Ask him what he likes and if he has any dietary restrictions.
 - ii. Deliver the food to the rectory.
 - f. Encourage teens to simply give words of gratitude to their priest at the end of Mass on Sundays.
4. Make a full plan with the idea(s) you have decided on as a group. In the plan be sure to include: what you'll be doing; who is responsible for each part of the plan; and when you will put this plan into action.

Activity #5: Prayer for Priests

1. Include one of the prayers from our **Prayers for Priests** document in your usual end of meeting prayers and make enough copies for your teens to pray at home.



Seven Sacrament Taboo *"You are a Priest Forever" Psalm 110*

Purpose: The students will:

- Demonstrate a basic knowledge of the seven sacraments.
- Interact with their fellow students in a relaxed atmosphere.
- Appreciate the outward signs of the sacraments as reminders of divine reality.

Directions:

1. Print and cut out clue cards on card stock (thick paper) or paste clue cards onto note cards, construction paper, etc. Make sure you make enough copies for your group size. (Feel free to come up with more clues to better suit your group.)
2. Divide the large group into small groups of three: clue giver, guesser, and buzzer.
3. Clue giver will then place the cards face down and flip up one at a time.
4. Just like taboo, each card includes buzz words they are not able to use; the buzzer will interrupt the clue giver if he/she says the buzz words (or part of the word in the answer or buzz words, such as saying "oil" when the answer is "Holy Oil").
5. The rules for giving clues are the same as taboo:
 - No "sounds like" or "starts with."
 - No hand motions which give away the clue (such as flapping arms for "flying" or "bird").
 - No telling the number of words in the answer.
 - No pointing at objects in the room.
 - You may say the buzz word if the guesser says it first.
6. Rotate roles and have each person take turns being the clue giver for 30 seconds.
7. A point is given to the clue giver for each correct guess and to the buzzer for each buzzed word. Those not guessed are not awarded to anyone. The clue giver may pass only once in his turn.
8. Give a prize to the person with the most points out of each group.

Discussion:

- The definition of a sacrament is "an outward sign instituted by Christ to give grace." Several of the clues did not allow the students to say the word priest (who is intimately involved in making present all of the sacraments) and required them to think of a way to describe what happens without using words that make up the outward signs of the sacraments. In the Catholic Church we rely heavily on the material world to represent divine reality. Why do you think this is so? Did you find it difficult to get your partners to guess the clues without using those outward signs? We need outward signs (the material world) so that we can start to grasp, in some small way, the divine reality that occurs when we receive the sacraments and whenever we see, hear, smell, and touch those outward signs we are reminded of that same reality once again.

<p style="text-align: center;">Holy Orders</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Priest Bishop Deacon Ordination Seminary</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Holy Spirit</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Dove Ghost Trinity Father Son</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Chrism (Holy oils used for Baptism, Confirmation and Holy Orders)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Oil Baptism Confirmation Ordination Head</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Holy Water</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Blessed Sign of the Cross Priest Church Baptism</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Wedding Rings</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Husband Wife Married Finger Circle</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Confirmation</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Oil Bishop Soldier Christ Name</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Baptism</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Water Candle Oil Godparents Baby</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Anointing of the Sick</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Dying Priest Oil Blessing Hospital</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Marriage</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Bride and groom Wedding Rings Church Husband and wife</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Eucharist</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Bread and wine Body and blood Jesus Priest Mass</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Reconciliation</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Sins Priest Forgive Confessional Conscience</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Absolution</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Priest Forgive Confession Grace Sin</p>

<p style="text-align: center;">Grace</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Holy Spirit Sacrament Jesus God Outpouring</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Jesus Christ</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Son Savior Crucified Miracle Resurrection</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Last Supper</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Night Died Wash Crucified Jesus</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Jordan River</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Baptized John the Baptist Jesus Water Michael</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Cana</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Wedding Water Wine Jesus Mary</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Crucifixion</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Death Nail Crown Scourge Spear</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Pentecost</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Holy Spirit Tongues Fire Apostles Mary</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Priest</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Mass Sacraments Homily Preach Sunday</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Bishop</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Ordination Hat Stick Diocese Cathedral</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Deacon</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Priest Baptize Marriage Parish Man</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Source and Summit</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Faith Mass Bread and Wine Body and Blood Communion</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Salvation</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Jesus Resurrection Heaven Hell Faith and Works</p>



VOCATIONS
ARCHDIOCESE OF CINCINNATI

Family Faith Formation
“You are a Priest Forever” Psalm 110

As it is mentioned in several Church documents, the home is the domestic church and the original source of faith for all of us. It is the duty of the parents to pass along their faith to their children and to raise their children to know, love and serve the Lord.

Often times this is a big struggle and we are faced with busy schedules, challenging social environments, and very few notions of what “being a Catholic family” really looks like. The secret answer to this, of course, is that no two “Catholic families” look the same, but all of them do have some things in common: prayer, weekly Mass attendance (if not more often), and time spent together. These are the essential pieces to passing on the Faith tradition. Each of these aspects can easily be expanded with several great ideas from your own creativity or the creativity of those who have tried and succeeded (see our resource section below). Here are just a few practical suggestions on what these may look like in your home:

Prayer

- Offer a prayer before and after every meal, no matter where the meal is eaten – consistency in praying before meals and after shows your children that faith is not something meant only for home and church, but always and everywhere.
- Each morning before everyone starts to get ready for school and work, come together and ask God to bless your day and all that you do. Ask each child to offer any special prayers he or she has for that day. (This can take as few as 3-5 minutes and begins the day positively with a focus on God. The trick to this is making sure everyone’s alarm is set a few minutes earlier. This can also be done at the breakfast table before the meal begins.)
- At the end of the day, set a specific, non-negotiable time, to come together as a family and pray a rosary or at least a short prayer of thanksgiving for the day and for all the ways God has blessed you. Again, ask each child to add his or her own special intentions.
- Spend some time on Saturday briefly studying the readings for Sunday Mass. Encourage your kids to ask questions about the readings and do your best to answer them. If you don’t know an answer, do what you can to find it.
- After Sunday Mass, take time to discuss the priest’s homily or your children’s experience at Mass. Perhaps use the quizzes on CatholicMom.com (found in our resources section below) to help your children and you pay attention even more to the readings and other aspects of the Mass.
- Read the Bible together and act out some of your favorite scenes.
- Pray together some of the traditional prayers of the Church that you like (e.g. Angelus, Divine Mercy Chaplet, Act of Faith, Act of Hope, Act of Love, Memorare, etc.). This may require a little research on your part, or you can purchase the *Catholic Household Blessings and Prayers* which offers a multitude of prayers for nearly every occasion.

Attend Sunday Mass

- “Play Mass” with your kids at home to get them used to the motions and activities of each Mass. This may make them more attentive at Mass and less fidgety.
- Sit up towards the front to lessen the number of distractions for your younger children. As Mass goes on, you may want to explain what is happening (especially at the consecration and elevation of the Eucharist).
- Utilize the cry room only when necessary to calm an upset child. Using this room as a play room during Mass makes it difficult to teach them later of the sacredness of the Mass and takes away from your ability to participate fully in the Mass.
- To keep little hands busy, get some religious toys (e.g. plastic statues of saints, plush Noah’s ark sets, etc.) and coloring books so that their minds are still on the sacredness of the Mass.
- Again, have a follow up discussion about the Mass, the readings and the homily each Sunday. This can easily be done over breakfast after Mass or even on the drive home.

Spend time together

- Schedule family dinner as often as possible. At least 3 or 4 times per week have everyone sit down together and share a meal. Just be with your kids and talk about their day and about what’s going on in their lives. Again, take some time at the beginning and end of the meal to pray. See the video at www.familydinnermovie.com to see the benefits of this time spent together.
- Get help from your children in preparing the meal.
- Plan a family game night at least once a week. Make sure that there are no distractions and that all members are present. Be creative with this idea; make the night themed with special treats or costumes for the family just to enjoy.
- Celebrate birthdays and the feast days of your child’s patron saint. Make these days special for the child by letting him or her lead prayers throughout the day or pick the menu for dinner, etc.
- If one of your children is in sports, attend the games as a family.
- Volunteer together at local charities and pass on the importance of showing love and generosity to all God’s children.

All these things (and many more that you may come up with on your own) will help to develop the idea of a personal call that God has for each one of us. He is asking each of us to hear him and step out in faith and follow his will. This is an act that requires courage and knowledge of who God is, who *I* am in relation to God and a desire to know what God has planned for *my* life. All of these questions must arise in the home and be nurtured by parents through their constant example of seeking and doing God’s will in their own lives.

Resources

- www.familylifecenter.net
- www.catholicparenting.com
- www.catholicparents.org
- www.catholicmom.com – Weekly liturgy quizzes. Good for discussing the Mass with your family each week.
- <http://www.familylifecenter.net/families.asp> - Pope John Paul II’s Letter to Families
- www.gracebeforemeals.com – Great site for food recipes as well as ideas on how to make meal time even more meaningful.



VOCA TIONS
ARCHDIOCESE OF CINCINNATI

Young Adult Discussion Guide
"You are a Priest Forever" Psalm 110

Purpose:

The Second Vatican Council, in its decree 'On the Apostolate of the Laity,' offers a clear distinction between the ministry of priests and the apostolates of the laity. These two dimensions of life within the Catholic Church are meant to be mutually enriching of one another, but yet the Council Fathers also had clearly identified roles that belonged in each dimension. This guide is meant to help clarify these dimensions, as outlined in the Council documents, and to help young adults of today implement and embrace the mission they have been given by the Council, in support of their priests.

Resources:

The Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity can be found here:

http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_decree_19651118_apostolicam-actuositatem_en.html

The Decree on the Ministry of Priests can be found here:

http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_decree_19651207_presbyterorum-ordinis_en.html

See also the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 871-945 on 'Christ's Faithful – Hierarchy, Laity, Consecrated Life:

<http://www.vatican.va/archive/catechism/p123a9p4.htm>

The above links can also be found here: <http://www.papalencyclicals.net/vatican2.htm>

Discussion Points

The 'economy of salvation' is the Church's understanding of how the salvation wrought by Christ's Passion, Death, Resurrection and Ascension is merited out through the Church to the individual believer. This understanding has been developed over the centuries as theologians have reflected upon the 'Christ event,' as well as the commission which Jesus gave to the Twelve at the end of His public ministry: "Then Jesus approached and said to them, "All power in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age." (Matthew 28:18-20)

United with the Commissioning of Peter, we see Jesus passing along the authority that he had been given by His Father in Heaven onto the Twelve. The Twelve, in turn, pass their authority, through the laying on of hands, to the Bishops, their descendants, in Apostolic Succession. The Bishops, in turn,

share their authority with the priests, who then pass it along to the laity, all with the goal of bringing souls to Christ. This is the Church's mission: to bring about salvation of souls.

In order to accomplish this mission, Christ established a hierarchy within the Church, each segment of which has its own responsibility to accomplish the overall task of salvation:

- 1) "Christ is himself the source of the ministry in the Church. He instituted the Church, He gave her authority and mission, orientation and goal." (CCC 874)
- 2) In order to accomplish this goal, Jesus works through the headship of the pope, united with the college of bishops.
 - a. The pope continues the primacy given to Peter by Christ near the headwaters of the River Jordan, near Caesarea Philippi.
 - b. The college of bishops, as a whole, can gather in an Ecumenical Council, but only with the authority, or at least the recognition, of the pope.
 - c. Individually, the bishops represent the universality and variety of the People of God; as well as the unity of the Church, assembled under the headship of the pope.
- 3) The office of bishop, and by extension to his priest co-workers, follows a three-fold dimension:
 - a. Teaching:
 - i. They are commissioned to teach in the name of the Christ, for "the mission of the Magisterium is linked to the definitive nature of the covenant established by God with his people in Christ. It is this Magisterium's task to preserve God's people from deviations and defections and to guarantee them the objective possibility of professing the true faith without error." (CCC 890)
 - b. Sanctifying:
 - i. Through Holy Orders, the bishop becomes the steward of the grace found in the supreme priesthood, especially through the Eucharist, the source and summit of Catholic life. He, along with His priests, do this through their prayer and work, by their ministry of word and sacraments. Also, their example of giving their lives for the sake of their brothers and sisters in Christ helps to bring about the sanctity in the Church.
 - c. Governing:
 - i. The bishops govern the particular Churches placed in their care by counsel, exhortation and example. They are responsible for all the souls in their particular Church, and for ordering the structure of the Church and the world to help bring about the salvation wrought by Christ.
- 4) The role of the clergy, as outlined above, is to build up the Body of Christ so that it may be a leaven in the world, a light set on a hill. These men have been given a specific and unique mission to lay down their lives and to be conduits of grace for Catholics, so that the lay faithful may be more configured to Christ as well. But, it is not up to the clergy alone.
- 5) The lay faithful, by reason of their special vocation, are to seek the kingdom of God by engaging in temporal affairs and directing them according to God's will. They are to take the knowledge and wisdom gained through their own discipleship of Christ and bring it to the world, to be the leaven in the world, calling all to repentance and conversion.
- 6) By virtue of their Baptism and Confirmation, Christ's lay faithful also have a share in His priestly, prophetic and governing role.
 - a. Sanctifying:
 - i. The lay faithful are called to consecrate the world itself to God. By bringing with them the graces they have received through their prayerful reception of the Eucharist and the Sacraments, they are to offer spiritual sacrifices by the example of the holiness of their lives.

- b. Teaching:
 - i. “Lay people... fulfill their prophetic mission by evangelization, ‘that is, the proclamation of Christ by word and the testimony of life.’ For lay people, ‘this evangelization ...acquires a specific property and peculiar efficacy because it is accomplished in the ordinary circumstances of the world.’” (CCC 905, quoting *Lumen Gentium* 35)
- c. Governing:
 - i. The Laity, by virtue of their living and working out in the world, are called to order the secular world by the principals of the Gospel. By striving for virtue in their daily life, they ‘will impregnate culture and human works with a moral value.’ (CCC 909)
 - ii. The laity can be called to share in the exercise of ecclesiastical authority through sharing in the mission and ministry of priests; nevertheless, their proper sphere of influence is, in fact, out in the midst of the world.

In examining the two ‘spheres of influence’ discussed above, we see a complimentary in the life of the Church between the lay faithful and the priesthood: each gives life to the other.

Discussion Questions:

- 1) While the Bishop and the priest have the official roles in teaching the faith, what are ways you can teach others the importance of the faith?
- 2) How does the ministry of the priest help you as a lay Catholic make Jesus Christ present to your world?
- 3) What are ways you can help the priest govern the parish so that the mission of proclaiming the Gospel to the entire world can be fulfilled?
- 4) What are specific ways you can support your pastor in his mission?
- 5) How does it help you as a lay Catholic to know a priest is available to you to answer your questions, respond in a time of need, or challenge you to live your faith to its fullness?



VOCATIONS
ARCHDIOCESE OF CINCINNATI

Adult Faith Formation
“You are a Priest Forever” Psalm 110

Purpose:

In this current day and age when the priesthood has been under attack by reforming agents both within and outside the Church, what is needed is not reform, but a greater understanding of the role that priests play both in the Church and in the world today. Recognizing this need for renewal, rather than reform, Pope Benedict XVI has declared a ‘Year for Priests,’ during which he also declared St. John Vianney as Patron of All Priests. These reflections are designed to give the laity a better understanding of the role of priests in the Church, as well as a deeper understanding of how the laity and the clergy are to cooperate in the building of the Kingdom of God within the context of the modern Catholic Church.

Resources:

For a list of books on the priesthood from The Catholic Shop in Madeira, see this link:
http://www.mycatholicshop.com/index.php?target=categories&category_id=232

Fishers of Men DVD – available from the Vocation Office

Catechetical:

“The priest exists for one main purpose: to offer the Sacrifice of the Mass.”

With this rather bold statement, Fr. John Hardon, S.J., begins a short discourse on ‘The essential role of the Catholic priest.’¹ He continues that, without the priesthood, there would not only be no Sacrifice of the Mass, but there would also be no Catholic Church. While hyperbolic in nature, this approach is certainly in line with the Second Vatican Council’s realization that the Eucharist is both source and summit of the life of both the individual Catholic and the Catholic Church as a whole, for in the Eucharist, both in celebration and Adoration, we come face to face with our need for salvation, wrought for us upon the Cross of Christ.

In His wisdom, Jesus did not want to leave us orphans and unaware of our need for salvation, therefore He established the priesthood as a perpetual reminder of the gift of salvation He won for us on the Cross. In this light, we see the priest as a ‘living icon of Christ,’ as one who stands before us all and calls us to repentance, to a recognition of our need for salvation. In imitation of Christ himself, the priest has been ‘set apart’ to offer his life in ransom for the world. In this, he participates in the one Sacrifice of Christ through a complete ordering of self to Christ.

¹ http://www.ad2000.com.au/articles/2001/feb2001p20_145.html

But the priest does not do this for himself. As he gives his life for his people, he is called to be a living example of how the lay faithful are to model their lives on Christ, each in his or her own way. In the Church's understanding of the economy of salvation, in the way that salvation is played out in history, the priest is called to sanctify and bless the laity, while the laity then take this blessing into the world so that they may sanctify and bless the society in which they live. Hence, we see a dynamic parallel: the priest is a leaven of holiness for his people, while they are then a leaven of holiness for the world. It is a magnificent interchange of gifts through which the Church, as the living Body of Christ, is made manifest in and to the world.

St. John Vianney, Patron of All Priests

During this 'Year for Priests,' as called for in the Church by Pope Benedict XVI, let us turn to the new patron of all priests, St. John Vianney.² Born in the tumultuous time of the late 18th Century, St. John Vianney is a perfect antidote to the horrors unleashed by the French Revolution. Not particularly gifted as a student and academician, he was dismissed from seminary three times during his formation, for fear that he was not smart enough to serve as a priest, especially with the demands of studying in Latin.

His dogged pursuit of the priesthood would not be denied, he was ordained to the priesthood on August 13, 1815, serving for a time as an assistant to the man who sponsored his vocation to the priesthood. Upon his patron's death in 1818, he was sent to the small village of Ars, a short distance outside the city of Lyon, France. The area was particularly hard hit by the French Revolution, in which a vast majority of the clergy and religious in France were disbarred from the clerical state, exiled or executed for their practice of the Faith, so that St. John found a sort of 'spiritual vacuum' existing as he arrived in his new assignment.

However, his lack of academic ability during seminary formation was not paralleled in his spiritual life. His deep and profound prayer life led to a rapid increase in the fame of this humble 'Curé of Ars,' as he saw his chief duty being the direction of souls. Soon after his arrival, pilgrims started to arrive from neighboring parishes, across France and even from far distant parts of Christendom. So massive were the throngs coming to see him, that he would spend up to 16 hours a day during the summer in the Confessional to free the people from their sins. Amongst his gifts in the Confessional was his ability to read the souls of those who would come to him, often with the result that he would assign penances that would highlight a particular sin that the penitent might not have even confessed. While this sounds rather harsh, he always did so with a remarkable love and charity that grew from his own love for Christ. It is said "his instructions were simple in language, full of imagery drawn from daily life and country scenes, but breathing faith and that love of God which was his life principle and which he infused into his audience as much by his manner and appearance as by his words, for, at the last, his voice was almost inaudible."

St. John Vianney died on August 4, 1859, was declared Venerable by Pius IX on October 3, 1874, Beatified by Pius X on January 8, 1905 (at which time he was declared patron of parish priests, and Canonized by Pius XI in 1925. During this 'Year for Priests,' Pope Benedict XVI has declared him Patron of All Priests.

² <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/08326c.htm>

Application for Today

In his address³ to the Bishops of Brazil, Northeast Region 2, on the occasion of their once every five years *ad limina apostolorum* visit on September 17, 2009, Pope Benedict addresses the complimentary role of priest and laity. He stresses that there is a fundamental difference between the ministerial priesthood and the lay faithful, and hence it is necessary to avoid the “secularization of the priests and the clericalization of the laity.” By this, the Holy Father is stressing the importance of each person knowing where they fit in the Body of Christ, and that each fulfills his or her mission according to this position.

Discussion Questions:

- 1) In your life as a Catholic, how has a priest made a positive impact in growing and developing your faith?
 - a. Who have been priests that have made this impact and what is memorable about the role he has had in your life?
- 2) What are positive steps you can take in regards to support of the priests in your parish?
- 3) How does the priesthood enable your role as an “evangelizer of culture” in your home, workplace and/or school?
- 4) What can you do to encourage your pastor to “be a St. John Vianney” for your parish?

³ For the Italian text: http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/speeches/2009/september/documents/hf_ben-xvi_spe_20090917_ad-limina-brasile2_it.html.

A summary in English can be found here: http://212.77.1.245/news_services/press/vis/dinamiche/d0_en.htm.



Bulletin Announcements

"You are a Priest Forever" Psalm 110

December 20, 2009, 4th Sunday of Advent:

Our Lord's coming is near, fulfilling the plan laid down since the foundation of the world. He comes as the priest of the New and Eternal Covenant, and from His humble beginnings in the manger at Bethlehem, He will come to rule the world from the Throne of the Cross. As we approach *Vocation Awareness Week* from January 10-16, 2010, let us pray for one another that we might all come to recognize our vocations, and especially that the young men and women called to lay down their lives in imitation of Christ for the sake of their brothers and sisters might have the courage to do so joyfully.

December 27, 2009, Holy Family:

Vocations to the priesthood and religious life grow in families. Just as Jesus was raised in a family and was taught to pray and serve His Father in the midst of a family, let us make our families 'holy' by centering everything we do on Christ, that our homes may be houses of prayer. Then, as we prepare to send our children and grandchildren into the world, we may do so knowing that they will be about their Father's business in spreading the Kingdom of God with all that they say and do. During the upcoming *Vocation Awareness Week*, may parents be courageous in offering their children to God, the Father, and allowing Him to choose them to serve as priests and religious.

January 3, 2010, Epiphany:

The coming of the Messiah was so splendid that travelers from far distances came to witness this miracle, and all creation bowed down in worship of this newborn King of the Jews. During the upcoming *Vocation Awareness Week*, from January 10-16, 2010, let us be aware of the manifestations of God coming to us through the young people in our midst whom He has set aside to serve in a particular religious vocation as a priest, brother or sister.

January 10, 2010, Baptism of the Lord:

Iconographers have traditionally represented the descent of Jesus into the waters of the Jordan River for Baptism by John as if He were entering a tomb; for from this moment on, His life is marked by the shadow of the Cross. Even though He knows the struggles that will be His, Jesus still willingly embraces the mission He has been given by the Father for the salvation of the world. To be called to the priesthood and religious life in this day and age involves a life of sacrifice for the salvation of one's brothers and sisters in Christ. During this *Vocation Awareness Week*, let us all pray that those who are called have the courage to lay down their lives so that Christ's love may shine forth in all that they do.



Web Resources on Priesthood and Catholic Faith

“You are a Priest forever” Psalm 110

Listed below is a good start for the many resources available to Catholics about the priesthood and the Catholic Faith. This is not meant to be a comprehensive resource, but is meant as a guide for your further exploration into the teachings and practices of the Catholic Faith, especially in regards to the Priesthood.

Note: Be sure to cross check information about the Catholic church found on all sites with Official Church teachings found in the Holy Bible, Papal Documents, the Catechism of the Catholic Church, USCCB Documents (with the Imprimatur), or Code of Canon Law. All the sites listed below have been viewed by the Vocation Office to be doctrinally safe.

Catholic Encyclopedia Articles:

- <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/12409a.htm> - Priesthood
- <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/03481a.htm> - Celibacy of the Clergy
- <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/11279a.htm> - Holy Orders
- <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/04647c.htm> - Deacons

Catechism:

- <http://www.usccb.org/catechism/text/pt2sect2chpt3.shtml#art6> – Article 6 of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* on Holy Orders.
- http://www.vatican.va/archive/compendium_ccc/documents/archive_2005_compendium-ccc_en.html#The%20Sacraments%20at%20the%20Service%20of%20Communion%20and%20Mission – Part 2, Sec. 2, Chapter 3 of the *Compendium* on Holy Orders.

Celibacy:

- <http://www.catholicchronicle.org/content/view/389/> - Article written by Bishop Leonard Blair of Toledo.
- http://www.catholic.com/library/Celibacy_and_the_Priesthood.asp - Article with Imprimatur from Bishop Brom.
- <http://www.catholiceducation.org/articles/facts/fm0014.html> - Catholic Education Resource Center on Refutations of 5 Arguments Against Celibacy.
- <http://www.catholiceducation.org/articles/sexuality/se0114.html> - Article written by Christopher West on JPII's Theology of the Body.
- http://www.cincinnati vocations.org/women_celibacy.shtml - Article by Archbishop Pilarczyk on Priestly Celibacy.

Male-only Priesthood

- <http://www.ewtn.com/library/curia/cdfinsig.htm> - *Inter Insigniores* - Declaration on the Admission of Women to the Ministerial Priesthood by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, 1976.
- http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/apost_letters/documents/hf_jp-ii_apl_22051994_ordinatio-sacerdotalis_en.html - *Ordinatio Sacerdotalis* - Pope John Paul II On Reserving Priestly Ordination to Men Alone.
- http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/audiences/alpha/data/aud19940727en.html - Pope John Paul II General Audience on Women and the Ministerial Priesthood.
- <http://www.archny.org/media/files-seminary/Mar7dunwoodie.doc> - Article by Sr. Sara Bulter, M.S.B.T., "Women's Ordination: Is it Still an Issue?" Examines the claims for women's ordination and why the Church is not free to change the doctrine.
- <http://catholiceducation.org/articles/apologetics/ap0001.html> - Article by Joanne Bogle – "Women Priests – No chance."

Vestments:

- <http://www.osv.com/Portals/0/images/pdf/Vestments.pdf> - Brief descriptions of various priestly vestments.
- <http://www.angelqueen.org/mass/vestments.shtml> - Basic vestments with historical descriptions, vesting prayers and description of colors.
- <http://www.catholicdoors.com/courses/roman.htm> - Many other priestly vestments along with a quiz at the end.

Role of the Laity in the Church

- http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_const_19641121_lumen-gentium_en.html - *Lumen Gentium* promulgated by Pope Paul VI.
- http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/audiences/alpha/data/aud19931215en.html - Pope John Paul II General Audience on The Laity Share in the Priesthood of Christ.
- <http://www.ignatius.com/cfe/documents/Disciples%20web%20pages.pdf> – Article from *Today's Disciples* on the role of the Essential Role of the Laity.
- <http://www.siena.org/library/ssspr98/roles.html> - Fr. Michael B. Sweeney, OP explains the differences between the Common and Ministerial priesthood and their roles.
- <http://www.daughtersofstpaul.com/growinginfaith/basicqas/sacraments/holyorders131.html> - Question and Answer Document by the Daughters of St. Paul on all aspects of the Priesthood.

St. John Vianney

- http://www.sjvdenver.edu/_metadot_/attachment/download/60661 - On page 53 of this document there is a fantastic article on St. John Vianney written by the current Bishop of Belley-Ars in France.
- <http://www.fisheaters.com/holyorders2.html> - St. John Vianney's words on the Sacrament of Holy Orders.
- <http://www.catholicsun.org/bishop/080609bishop.html> - Bishop Olmstead of Phoenix writes a series on the Patron of Priests.
- <http://www.domestic-church.com/CONTENT.DCC/19980701/SAINTS/VIANNEY.HTM> - a brief description of St. John Vianney for various age levels. Great resource for parents who want to teach their children about him.
- <http://www.osv.com/YearforPriestsNav/YearforPriests/StJohnVianney/tabid/7780/Default.aspx> - Another link to the life of St. John Vianney. Check out their [Year for Priests Links](#) as well.

Catholic Games:

- <http://www.memorare.com/games/cardgames.html> - Card Games to teach catechetical lessons.
- <http://www.ewtn.com/ewtnkids/> - Interactive website for kids ages 4-12.

General Catholic Websites:

- www.vatican.va – Official website of the Vatican – contains all Papal Encyclicals, letters, homilies and public addresses in addition to Council documents and up to date news from the Holy See.
 - o www.vatican.va/special/anno_sac/index_en.html - Special section of Vatican Website on the Year for Priests.
- www.usccb.org – Website of the United States Council of Catholic Bishops – contains links and articles on official church teachings, and other relevant and useful Catholic information.
 - o <http://www.usccb.org/yearforpriests/> - A special section on the USCCB site for the Year for Priests.
- www.cincinnati vocations.org – Official website of the Cincinnati Vocation Office with information about the priesthood and numerous links to religious orders and other Catholic websites.
- www.catholiccincinnati.org – Official website of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati.
- www.newadvent.org – Online version of Catholic Encyclopedia and St. Thomas Aquinas' *Summa Theologica* as well as writings of the Early Church Fathers and recent articles on various aspects of the current Catholic world.
- www.catholic.com – Catholic Answers Live.
- www.catholic.org – Catholic News, information on saints, and much more.
- www.ewtn.com – Eternal Word Television Network official website. Archived videos of regular program, live TV and Radio. Faith section for information about the Catholic faith, apologetics and prayers of the Church.
- www.wf-f.org – Women for Faith and Family – great resource for helping build the domestic Church. Geared toward and written for women, but good material for all Catholics.
- www.catholiceducation.org – Catholic Education Recourse Center.
- www.catholicexchange.com – Great Catholic articles on various aspects of the catholic faith and up to date news coverage.
- www.catholic-kids.com – A good resource for ideas on how to share the Catholic faith with children with lots of good links to other Catholic sites.
- www.catholicparenting.com – Full of ideas on how to build up the domestic Church in any household. In addition to lots of great links, it also has a good book section for various aspects of raising Catholic children.

Resources on the Lives of the Saints:

- <http://www.catholic.org/saints>
- <http://www.catholic-forum.com/saints>
- <http://www.magnificat.ca/cal/engl/liste-sts.htm>
- http://www.vatican.va/news_services/liturgy/saints/index_saints-blesseds_en.html
- *The Golden Legend¹ Vol. 1* (ISBN: 0691001537) by Jacobus de Voragine
- *The Golden Legend Vol. 2* (ISBN: 0691001545) by Jacobus de Voragine
- *Modern Saints: Their Lives and Their Faces, Vol. 1 and 2* (ISBN: 0895552221) by Ann Ball
- *Saints Behaving Badly* (ISBN: 9780385517201) by Thomas J. Craughwell
- *Saints for Every Occasion* (ISBN: 9781580870597) by Thomas Craughwell
- *Lives of the Saints for Every Day of the Year* (ISBN: 0895555301) by Alan Butler
- *Loyola Kids Book of Saints* (ISBN: 0895555301) by Amy Welborn

Loyola Kids Book of Heroes (ISBN: 082941584X) by Amy Welborn

¹ <http://www.catholic-forum.com/saints/golden000.htm>



Catholic YouTube™ Videos
"You are a Priest Forever" Psalm 110

1. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cEjwEnGTlQ> – Pope John Paul II talks about his Vocation to the Priesthood.
2. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=on8IWUCliW8> – Short Priesthood video showing the everyday life of the priest and the many ways he serves.
3. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sWoNAe-9lnQ> – Promo advertisement for year of Vocations to the Priesthood and Religious life.
4. http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AsrLX_VZ5mM – Different aspects of the priesthood. Lots of young faces. Good thoughts and information presented here.
5. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QLr2cffA1HY> – Great video on vocational discernment. Where is God calling you? Good pictures, good message, good music.
6. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0Sp-BXeYuYI> – Interview of Chase Hilgenbrinck who left pro soccer to enter the seminary for the Diocese of Peoria, Illinois.
7. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XptrJNoLBeI> – Can you really beat the preaching style of Fr. John Corapi? Great images, great challenging statement from Fr. Corapi. A little long but...WOW!
8. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H8W6wlrCy8o> – A video in honor of the institution of the Priesthood and the Eucharist.
9. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gLsoz2QWHnk> – NYPriest.com Theatrical Trailer. This presents a great message in very little time.
10. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iQ1UygBT7SE> – A great video on the rite of ordination from the Archdiocese of New York with strong words from Archbishop Dolan.



Prayers for Priests

“You are a Priest forever” Psalm 110

***Jesus, Savior of the world, sanctify Thy priests and sacred ministers.
O Mary, Queen of the clergy, pray for us; obtain for us many and holy priests.***

PRAYER FOR PRIESTS

O Jesus, our great High Priest, hear my humble prayers on behalf of your priests. Give them a deep faith, a bright and firm hope and a burning love which will ever increase in the course of their priestly life.

In their loneliness, comfort them. In their sorrows, strengthen them. In their frustrations, point out to them that it is through suffering that the soul is purified, and show them that they are needed by the Church; they are needed by souls; they are needed for the work of redemption.

O loving Mother Mary, Mother of Priests, take to your heart your sons who are close to you because of their priestly ordination and because of the power which they have received to carry on the work of Christ in a world which needs them so much. Be their comfort, be their joy, be their strength, and especially help them to live and to defend the ideals of consecrated celibacy. (By J. J. Cardinal Carberry)

Prayer for Priests by St. Therese of Lisieux

O Jesus, eternal Priest,
keep your priests within the shelter of Your Sacred Heart,
where none may touch them.

Keep unstained their anointed hands,
which daily touch Your Sacred Body.

Keep unsullied their lips,
daily purpled with your Precious Blood.

Keep pure and unearthly their hearts,
sealed with the sublime mark of the priesthood.

Let Your holy love surround them and
shield them from the world's contagion.

Bless their labors with abundant fruit and
may the souls to whom they minister be their joy and
consolation here and in heaven their beautiful and
everlasting crown. Amen.

A Prayer for Priests

(By the late John J Cardinal Carberry)

Keep them; I pray Thee, dearest Lord.
Keep them, for they are Thine

The priests whose lives burn out before
Thy consecrated shrine.

Keep them, for they are in the world,
Though from the world apart.

When earthly pleasures tempt, allure --
Shelter them in Thy heart.

Keep them and comfort them in hours
Of loneliness and pain,

When all their life of sacrifice
For souls seems but in vain.

Keep them and remember, Lord,
they have no one but Thee.

Yet, they have only human hearts,
With human frailty.

Keep them as spotless as the Host,
That daily they caress;

Their every thought and word and deed,
Deign, dearest Lord, to bless. Amen.

Novena For Priests (With Ecclesiastical Approval Most Reverend Daniel R. Jenky, C.S.C. Bishop of Peoria)

Jesus, Good Shepherd, You sent us the Holy Spirit to guide Your Church and lead her faithful to You through the ministry of Your priests.

Through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, grant to Your priests wisdom in leading, faithfulness in teaching, and holiness in guarding Your sacred Mysteries.

As they cry out with all the faithful, "Abba, Father!" may Your priests be ever more closely identified with You in Your divine Sonship and offer their own lives with You, the one saving Victim.

Make them helpful brothers of one another, and understanding fathers of all Your people.

On each Pentecost Sunday, renew in Your priests deeper faith, greater trust in You, childlike reliance on our Mother Mary, and unwavering fidelity to the Holy Father and his bishops.

Holy Mary, intercede for your priests.

St. Joseph, protect them.

St. Michael, defend them.

St. John Vianney, pray for them.

Rosary for Priests

Jesus, Good Shepherd, You sent us the Holy Spirit to guide Your Church and lead her faithful to You through the ministry of Your priests.

Through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, grant to Your priests wisdom in leading, faithfulness in teaching, and holiness in guarding Your sacred Mysteries.

As they cry out with all the faithful, "Abba, Father!" may Your priests be ever more closely identified with You in Your divine Sonship and offer their own lives with You, the one saving Victim.

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With Ecclesiastical Approval Most Reverend Daniel R. Jenky, C.S.C. Bishop of Peoria

THE JOYFUL MYSTERIES

First Joyful Mystery - THE ANNUNCIATION: The Angel Gabriel announces to Mary, a virgin, that she will become the mother of God, Word Made Flesh. For all centuries to come, Jesus will become flesh in the Holy Eucharist to nourish us in a most intimate union with Him.

We pray for all priests who daily through the words of the consecration at Mass, and through Holy Communion, bring us the Body and Blood of Christ. We pray for all future priests now being formed in the wombs of their mothers that they may be safe from physical harm, and come to Ordination as God intends. We pray for all future generations of priests. We pray also that priests may treasure the gift of celibacy.

Second Joyful Mystery - THE VISITATION: Mary visits her cousin, Elizabeth, who recognizes Mary as the living tabernacle for their Divine Lord.

We pray especially for priests who bring Holy Communion to the sick, the shut-ins, and Viaticum to the dying. We pray for all the priests who minister to the sick in other ways, counsel, comfort and console them.

Third Joyful Mystery - THE NATIVITY OF JESUS: Jesus is born in Bethlehem. The angels announce His birth; kings and shepherds come to adore Him.

We pray that all seminarians grow in knowledge and love of God to become holy priests. We pray especially for those who will be ordained soon, that they remain faithful all their lives to the sublime privilege of being "other Christs" among us. We pray that everyone will come to value the Eucharistic Feast and the Priesthood among God's greatest gifts to us. We pray that every priest will consider himself a member of the Holy Family, a true son of Mary and Joseph, and a brother-priest of Jesus, the great High Priest.

Fourth Joyful Mystery - PRESENTATION IN THE TEMPLE: Mary and Joseph, in obedience to the Law, bring Jesus to the temple to be dedicated to God. Simeon expresses his gratitude to God for revealing the Messiah to him before he dies.

We thank God for all priests who, like Simeon, have given us decades of faithful service. We pray that they may be rewarded for their generosity and self-sacrifice. We pray also for all priests whose hearts are pierced by loneliness, depression and rejection.

Fifth Joyful Mystery - FINDING JESUS IN THE TEMPLE: Jesus is found among the teachers in the temple; He returns home and is obedient to Mary and Joseph.

We pray that priests will always be found going about their Father's business, and will be obedient to the teaching of the magisterium of the Church, our Holy Father and the bishops in communion with him. We pray for all young priests that the love and dedication they experience in the first years of their priesthood may increase in the future. We pray for all priests who teach the Faith to children and adult

THE LUMINOUS MYSTERIES

by Court of Our Lady of Guadalupe, 2250, CDA

First Luminous Mystery - THE BAPTISM OF JESUS: Jesus descended into the waters to be baptized by John. He took up the challenge of His Father. He knew He would suffer on behalf of us and His suffering would lead to the forgiveness of sins. He knew He was king but His Throne was to be a cross.

We pray that our priests will imitate Our Lord's humility as they do their priestly duties by accepting their challenges from God.

Second Luminous Mystery - THE WEDDING AT CANA: Jesus' first miracle was made possible by the firm love and faith of Mary in her Divine Son.

Oh Lord, help our priests to develop an ever-increasing love for Mary. Help new priests to recognize that they may find their strength in Mary as they "Do whatever He tells..." them. Mary is our teacher and always leads us to her Son.

Third Luminous Mystery - THE PROCLAMATION OF THE KINGDOM: Christ came to bring mercy and forgiveness to mankind.

Oh God, bless our priests as they teach Jesus' message—baptizing, forgiving sins, and consecrating the Blessed Eucharist through the Holy Spirit. May they have a constant renewal of Life, aimed at an ever more perfect union with Christ—the Way, the Truth and the Life.

Fourth Luminous Mystery - THE TRANSFIGURATION: Jesus leads them up the mountain where he is transfigured before them. Peter wishes that three tents be built for Jesus and His two companions in order that all might come to see them.

Oh Lord, grant priests hearts that are open to the transforming power of Your grace at every celebration of Mass. May your Real Presence in the Eucharist and through the proclamation of your Word, inspire them to lives of faithful service.

Fifth Luminous Mystery - THE HOLY EUCHARIST: "I am the living bread that came down from heaven; whoever eats this bread will live forever; and the bread that I will give is my flesh for the life of the world." (John 6:51)

'There can be no Eucharist without the priesthood, just as there can be no priesthood without the Eucharist' Pope John Paul II's, Message to Priests for Holy Thursday 2004).

Christ said, "I will be with you all days, even to the end of the world," He is there in every tabernacle of the Catholic world. Oh, Lord, strengthen the faith of all priests so they may always believe that it is truly You, Jesus, in the Holy Eucharist.

Oh Lord, help our priests to celebrate Mass prayerfully that their hearts may be drawn ever closer to you and may their time, spent in Adoration, renew and uplift their spirits.

Lord, help our priests, to know how to guide us in reaching out to others. May we all imitate Christ in service, for we are the Body of Christ.

THE SORROWFUL MYSTERIES

First Sorrowful Mystery - The Agony in the Garden: The apostles fall asleep; Jesus sweats blood at the thought of His coming passion and death; angels come to comfort Him.

We pray that all priests may live only to do our Father's will, as Jesus always did.

Second Sorrowful Mystery - JESUS IS SCOURGED: Jesus is cruelly scourged and beaten by the soldiers.

We pray for priests who are persecuted, physically or mentally abused; those who are imprisoned or prevented from offering the Holy sacrifice of the Mass or receiving communion.

Third Sorrowful Mystery - JESUS IS CROWNED WITH THORNS: Jesus is mocked as king and precious Head is cruelly pierced by thorns.

We pray for priests who suffer for defending authentic Catholic doctrine. We pray that all Bishops will uphold the true teachings of the Catholic Church and resist temptations to compromise doctrine in the face of cultural and social pressures.

Fourth Sorrowful Mystery - JESUS CARRIES HIS CROSS: Bruised, bleeding and exhausted Jesus is forced to drag himself and His cross up the hill of Calvary.

We pray for all priests with heavy crosses; those who are weak, lonely, or have fallen from God's grace in some way.

We pray for the Holy Father, who perhaps has the heaviest of crosses; the widespread persecution and abandonment of the Church from within and without

Fifth Sorrowful Mystery - JESUS DIES ON THE CROSS: Jesus sheds his last drops of Precious Blood to redeem us from sin and death.

We pray for all priests who are in their last agony and those who will die today. We pray for those who thirst for the salvation of souls. We pray that the crucifixion of their wills may accomplish God's designs for the salvation of the whole world.

We pray that priests may take Mary into their hearts, as St. John the Apostle, one of the first priests, took Mary into his home.

GLORIOUS MYSTERIES

First Glorious Mystery - THE RESURRECTION: Jesus arises from the dead and appears to the Apostles.

We pray that priests will remember the Crucifixion is followed by the Resurrection: darkness is always followed by Light. We pray that all priests may share the joy of the Risen Christ.

The Second Glorious Mystery - THE ASCENSION: Jesus instructs His apostles and returns to His Father in Heaven.

We pray that priests may carry out Jesus' instructions to evangelize the whole world, instructing and baptizing countless souls. We pray for missionaries who live lives of utter poverty and deprivation to bring the Gospel to all people.

The Third Glorious Mystery - DESCENT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT: The Holy Spirit comes upon the Apostles, who are gathered with Mary.

We pray that priests may be open to the graces of the Holy Spirit to strengthen them for the task of bringing souls to God and God to souls. We pray that they may be on fire to convert the most hardened sinners and bring God's love to the whole world.

The Fourth Glorious Mystery - THE ASSUMPTION: Mary is taken, body and soul, to Heaven. While she was on earth, she loved and prayed for the Apostles, the first priests.

We pray that priests will be devoted to Mary and find in her the love and comfort of a mother, the most powerful intercession of our greatest saint, and the surest refuge against Satan and his cohorts who seek destruction of priests and the priesthood.

The Fifth Glorious Mystery - THE CORONATION: Mary is crowned Queen of Heaven and earth; she is rewarded for her faithfulness to God.

We pray that Mary, Queen of the Clergy, will be their model of faith and joy, and constant guide until they reach Heaven where a crown, jeweled with many souls entrusted to them on the day of Ordination, will be their reward for faithful and loving service.

A Prayer Before the Blessed Sacrament for the Increase of Priestly and Religious Vocations

(by Archbishop Justin Rigali, St. Louis)

Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the Eternal Father, Son of the Virgin Mary, we thank you for offering your life in sacrifice on the Cross, and for renewing this sacrifice in every Mass celebrated throughout the world.

In the power of the Holy Spirit we adore you and proclaim your living presence in the Eucharist. We desire to imitate the love you show us in your death and resurrection, by loving and serving one another.

We ask you to call many young people to religious life, and to provide the holy and generous priests that are so need in your Church today. Lord Jesus, hear our prayer Amen

A Prayer for Priests (from *Acfp2000.com*)

O my God, help those priests who are faithful to remain faithful; to those who are falling, stretch forth Your Divine Hand that they may grasp it as their support.

In the great ocean of Your mercy, lift those poor unfortunate ones who have fallen, that being engulfed therein they may receive the grace to return to Your Great Loving Heart. Amen.

Precious Blood of Jesus protect them!

ANOTHER PRAYER FOR PRIESTS

Divine Savior, Thou Friend of priests, send daily to all priests the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit, that they may become all things to all men, in life and in death. Give them patience with the little ones, compassion for the sick, humility with the poor, courage before the enemies of the Church.

Make them tireless in teaching, patient and kind in the confessional, generous in the administration of Holy Communion.

Let them appear terrible to hell and the powers of evil, let them be messengers of peace to all men of good will.

Wherever they go, may Thy blessing go with them, wherever they abide, may Thy peace enter in. Whomsoever they bless, may he also be blessed by Thee. Make them apostles, make them saints.

Eucharistic Heart of Jesus, model of the priestly heart, have mercy on us!

Morning Offering, Prayer for Priests (by Father Peter John Cameron, O.P)

Divine Savior Jesus Christ, who has entrusted the whole work of your redemption, the welfare, and salvation of the world to priests as Your representatives, through the hands of your most holy Mother and for the sanctification of your priests and candidates for the priesthood, I offer you this present day wholly and entirely, with all its prayers, works, joys, sacrifices, and sorrows. Give us truly holy priests who, inflamed with the fire of Your divine love, seek nothing but Your greater glory and the salvation of our souls.

And you, Mary, good Mother of priests, protect .all priests in the dangers of their holy vocation and, with the loving hand of a Mother, also lead back to the Good Shepherd those poor priests who have become unfaithful to their exalted vocation and have gone astray. Amen.

PRAYER FOR PRIESTS (By Cardinal Cushing)

O Almighty, Eternal God, look upon the face of Thy Son, and for love of Him Who is the Eternal High-priest, have pity on Thy priests. Remember, O most compassionate God, that they are but weak and frail human beings. Stir up in them the grace of their vocation which is in them by the imposition of the Bishop's hands. Keep them close to Thee, lest the enemy prevail against them so that they may never do anything in the slightest degree unworthy of their sublime vocation.

O Jesus, I pray Thee for Thy faithful and fervent priests; for Thy unfaithful and tepid priests; for Thy priests laboring at home or abroad in distant mission fields; for Thy tempted priests; for Thy lonely and desolate priests; for Thy young priests; for Thy dying priests; for the souls of Thy priests in Purgatory.

But above all, I commend to Thee the priests dearest to me; the priest who baptized me; the priests who absolved me from my sins; the priests at whose Masses I assisted and who gave me Thy Body and Blood in Holy Communion; the priests who taught and instructed me or helped and encouraged me; all the priests to whom I am indebted in any other way. O Jesus, keep them all, close to Thy heart, and bless them abundantly in time and in eternity. Amen.

LITANY FOR PRIESTS

Let us pray for:

The Holy Father, fill him with courage and grace, Lord.
Cardinals, archbishops, and bishops, give them a shepherd's heart, Lord.
Diocesan priests, fill them with your Spirit, Lord.
Priests in religious orders, perfect them in their call, Lord.
Priests who are ill, heal them, Lord.
Priests who are in danger, deliver them, Lord.
Priests who are weak, strengthen them, Lord.
Priests who are poor, relieve them, Lord.
Priests who have lost their zeal, renew them, Lord.
Priests who are sad, console them, Lord.
Priests who are worried, give them peace, Lord.
Priests who are old, sustain them, Lord.
Priests who are alone, accompany them, Lord.
Missionary priests, protect them, Lord.
Priests who are preachers, enlighten them, Lord.
Priests who direct souls, instruct them, Lord.
Priests and religious who have died, bring them to glory, Lord.

For all priests, give them Your wisdom and knowledge.
For all priests, give them Your understanding and counsel.
For all priests, give them reverence and awe of You.
For all priests, give them patience and love.
For all priests, give them obedience and kindness.
For all priests, give them a burning zeal for souls.
For all priests, give them virtues of faith, hope and love.
For all priests, give them an intense love for the Eucharist.
For all priests, give them loyalty to the Holy Father and their Bishops in communion with him.
For all priests, give them respect for life and human dignity.
For all priests, give them integrity and justice.
For all priests, give them humility and generosity.
For all priests, give them strength in their labors.
For all priests, give them peace in their sufferings.
For all priests, give them great love for the Trinity.
For all priests, give them great love for Mary.
For all priests, let them be the light of Christ.
For all priests, let them be the salt of the earth.
For all priests, let them practice sacrifice and self-denial.
For all priests, let them be holy in body, mind and spirit.
For all priests, let them be men of prayer.
For all priests, may faith shine forth in them.
For all priests, may they be concerned for our salvation.
For all priests, may they be faithful to their priestly vocation.
For all priests, may their hands bless and heal.
For all priests, may they burn with love for you.
For all priests, may all their steps be for the glory of God.
For all priests, may the Holy Spirit fill them, and give them His gifts in abundance.

Let us pray.

Father, Son and Holy Spirit, hear the prayers we offer for our priests. Let them know clearly the work that You are calling them to do. Grant them every grace to answer Your call with courage, love, and lasting dedication to Your will. We ask Mary's intercession as their loving mother. Amen

Prayer for Priests

O my God, pour forth upon thy priests the spirit of sacrifice in its fullness. It is their glory as much as their duty to be victims, to consume themselves for souls, to live without human joys, to often undergo mistrust, injustice and persecution.

May they reflect upon what they say each day at the altar: "This is My Body; this is My Blood." May they reflect on it and apply it to themselves: "I am no longer myself, I am Jesus, and Jesus crucified. I am, like the bread and wine, a consecrated substance which has ceased to be itself"

O my God, I burn with the desire of the sanctification of Thy priests. I would that all those consecrated hands which touch

Thee be friendly hands whose contact be sweet to Thee, and that the mouths which pronounce at the altar words so sublime never lower themselves to trivial formulas.

May they keep in their entire person the habit of their noble functions. May one find them simple and great, like the Host, accessible to all and superior to other men. O my God, make them carry away from the Mass of today the thirst for the Mass of tomorrow, and may each of them, filled with gifts received, have the grace to communicate them generously to others. Amen.

Prayer for the Souls of Priests and Religious

Most Merciful Jesus, from whom comes all that is good, increase Your grace in men and women consecrated to Your service, that they may perform worthy works of mercy; and that all who see them may glorify the Father of Mercy who is in heaven.

Eternal Father, turn Your merciful gaze upon the company of chosen ones in Your vineyard upon the souls of priests and religious; and endow them with the strength of Your blessing. For the love of the Heart of Your Son in which they are enfolded, impart to them Your power and light, that they may be able to guide others in the way of salvation and with one voice sing praise to Your boundless mercy for ages without end. Amen.

Our Lady, Mother of Sorrows pray for Priests, your special sons.

Strengthen their faith and love of Jesus in the Most Blessed Sacrament, so that they may turn to Him for the grace they need to live a life faithful to their calling.

Bring comfort, consolation and courage to those who are suffering under the weight of the Cross. Give them the love of your Son and zeal for the honor and glory of God, and the salvation of souls. Amen.



Consecrated Religious Brother: A member of a men's religious order who is not in Holy Orders but engages in the work of the order. Members typically take vows of poverty, chastity and obedience.

Consecrated Religious Sister: A member of a religious order or congregation of women devoted to active service or meditation. Members typically take vows of poverty, chastity and obedience.

Discernment: The process of coming to know God's will via prayer and the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

Deacon, Diaconate: A third degree of the hierarchy of the Sacrament of Holy Orders, after bishop and priest. The deacon is ordained for ministry and service (but not to the priesthood). Deacons are ordained to assist the bishop and priests in celebrating the divine mysteries, above all the Holy Eucharist. They also can help distribute Holy Communion, proclaim the Gospel, preach, preside over funerals and perform charitable ministries.

Holy Orders: The Sacrament of Apostolic Ministry by which the mission entrusted by Christ to the Apostles continues to be exercised in the Church through the laying on of hands. This sacrament has three distinct degrees or orders: deacon, priest and bishop. All three confer a permanent, sacramental character.

Novice: A person who has been accepted into a religious order and who is undergoing a period of training and formation before taking vows.

Novitiate: The period a novice spends in training, usually 1-3 years, depending on the community

Ordination: The rite of the Sacrament of Holy Orders by which the bishop, through the imposition of hands and the prayer of consecration, confers the order of bishop, priest or deacon to exercise a sacred power which comes from Christ on behalf of the Church.

Priest: Someone who is ordained to minister within the Church. The main duties of the priest are preaching, leadership, and celebration of the Sacraments: baptizing, hearing confessions, offering the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, overseeing the exchange of marital vows and anointing the sick. In celebrating the sacraments, the priest acts in the person of Christ (*in persona Christi*).

Profession: The taking of vows upon joining a religious order.

Seminary: A school which offers theological studies, especially for the purpose of training priests.

Sister: A member of a religious order of women (see *consecrated religious sister*).

Transitional Deacon: For men moving toward the priesthood, this is a bridge to priesthood, not a permanent state of life. They spend six months to a year in the role before priestly ordination. At this time the man makes his permanent vow to live a life of obedience, celibacy and prayer for the Church.

Religious Priest: Those who belong to a religious order such as the Dominicans, Franciscans or Benedictines. They live according to the rules of the community and under the jurisdiction of their superiors in the community.

Vocation: The calling we have in this life. God has created us to love and serve Him, and He has a unique plan for each person's life -- a vocation. As God is the source of all lasting happiness, satisfaction and joy, then living according to God's plan for us will be the best life we can lead. Courage, obedience and persistent prayer are needed for us to live our vocation, whether it is to single life, to marriage or in service to the Church as a priest or religious.

Vow: An act of devotion in which persons dedicate themselves to God or promise God some good work. It is a deliberate and free promise made to God concerning a possible and better good which must be fulfilled by reason of the virtue of religion. Religious order vows are to chastity, obedience and poverty.