

Prayers for the Sanctification of Priests



Our Lady of the New Advent

*Our Lady of the new Advent Icon
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*Prayers for the Sanctification of Priests
for the Spiritual Mothers of the Archdiocese of Denver*

“Pope St. Pius X said: ‘Every priestly vocation comes from the heart of God, but passes through the heart of a mother.’ This is true with regard to obvious biological motherhood, but it is also true of the ‘birth’ of every form of fidelity to the Vocation of Christ. We cannot do without a spiritual motherhood for our priestly life: Let us entrust ourselves confidently to the prayer of the whole of Holy Mother Church, to the motherhood of the People, whose pastors we are but to whom are entrusted our custody and holiness; let us ask for this fundamental support.”

Pope Benedict XVI, “Message on the Day of Prayer for Priests for the Feast of the Sacred Heart of Jesus,” May 30, 2008.

“For the priestly office is indeed discharged on earth, but it ranks among heavenly ordinances; and very naturally so: for neither man, nor angel, nor archangel, nor any other created power, but the Paraclete Himself, instituted this vocation, and persuaded men while still abiding in the flesh to represent the ministry of angels. Wherefore the consecrated priest ought to be as pure as if he were standing in the heavens themselves in the midst of those powers.”

St. John Chrysostom

Oh Jesus, form Your Priests according
to the Love of your Most Sacred Heart. Amen.

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St. Thérèse did not despair upon discovering this aspect of the priesthood, but rather began to understand the importance of praying for priests. If even holy priests “show in their conduct their extreme need for prayers,” she wrote, “what is to be said of those who are tepid?” As Thérèse eventually came to understand the vocation of her community, “the sole purpose of our prayers and sacrifices is to be the apostle of the apostles.”

Ordination to the priesthood, although it bestows a special grace of the Holy Spirit that configures the priest to Christ, does not remove the human defects that a man possesses before ordination. When exercising ministry in the Church, a priest acts in the power and place of the person of Christ himself, and his personal unworthiness or even sinfulness does not prevent Christ from acting in the sacraments. Nevertheless, as the Catechism forthrightly admits, “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” (CCC 1550).

“I understood my vocation in Italy and that’s not going too far in search of such useful knowledge,” St. Thérèse wrote. Thanks to the revelations of recent years, one no longer needs to travel to Italy to perceive the human weaknesses of priests. Our response to this, however, should not be cynicism or despair, but, like St. Thérèse, we should develop a renewed awareness of the need to pray for priests.

*Fr. Innocent Smith, O.P
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On Praying for Priests

One of the decisive moments in the life of St. Thérèse of Lisieux was when she realized that priests could sin. As a fourteen-year-old girl, Thérèse had a great desire to enter the Carmelite monastery at Lisieux where several of her sisters were already nuns. The local bishop, despite her pleadings, was cautious about allowing such a young girl to enter religious life. Nevertheless, he encouraged her to take part in a pilgrimage to Rome to strengthen her vocation.

Near the end of her life, Thérèse reflected on the importance of this pilgrimage: “Ah! what a trip that was!” she wrote in the memoir that was later published as *The Story of a Soul*. “It taught me more than long years of studies; it showed me the vanity of everything that happens and that everything is affliction of spirit under the sun.” The trip also gave her a new sense of the continuity of the Church: “I trod the same soil as did the holy apostles, the soil bedewed with the blood of martyrs. And my soul grew through contact with holy things.”

The most important result of this trip, however, was the clarity that it gave St. Thérèse about the purpose of her vocation. Despite her desire to become a Carmelite, before the trip to Rome Thérèse did not understand why St. Teresa had established a special mission for Carmelite nuns to pray for priests. “Having never lived close to [priests], I was not able to understand the principle aim of the Reform of Carmel. To pray for sinners attracted me, but to pray for the souls of priests whom I believed to be as pure as crystal seemed puzzling to me.” She now came to understand the humanity of priests: “I lived in the company of many saintly priests for a month and I learned that, though their dignity raises them above the angels, they are nevertheless weak and fragile men.”


Prayer for Priests

Jesus, Eternal Priest, keep all Your priests within the shelter of Your Sacred Heart where none may harm them. Keep unstained their anointed hands which daily touch Your Sacred Body. Keep unsullied their lips purpled with Your Precious Blood. Keep pure and unearthly their hearts sealed with the sublime marks of Your glorious 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 have ministered be here below their joy and consolation and in Heaven their beautiful and everlasting crown. O Mary, Queen of the Clergy, pray for us; obtain for us many holy priests. Amen.

St. Therese of Lisieux



Prayer for Holy Priests

 my God, pour out in abundance Thy spirit of sacrifice upon Thy priests. It is both their glory and their duty to become victims, to be burnt up for souls, to live without ordinary joys, to be often the objects of distrust, injustice, and persecution.

The words they say every day at the altar, “This is my Body, this is my Blood,” grant them to apply to themselves: “I am no longer myself, I am Jesus, Jesus crucified. I am, like the bread and wine, a substance no longer itself, but by consecration another.”

O my God, I burn with desire for the sanctification of Thy priests. I wish all the priestly hands which touch Thee were hands whose touch is gentle and pleasing to Thee, that all the mouths uttering such sublime words at the altar should never descend to speaking trivialities.

Let priests in all their person stay at the level of their lofty functions, let every man find them simple and great, like the Holy Eucharist, accessible to all yet above the rest of men.


O my God, grant them to carry with them from the Mass of today, a thirst for the Mass of tomorrow, and grant them, laden themselves with gifts, to share these abundantly with their fellow men. Amen.

Father William Doyle, S.J.


“Keep Them, O Lord”

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 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.


Prayer for Seminarians

 Jesus, Eternal High Priest, I offer You, through Your Immaculate Mother Mary, Your own Precious Blood, in all the Masses throughout the world, as a petition for graces for all seminarians, Your future priests. Give them humility, meekness, prudence, and a burning zeal for souls. Fill their hearts with the Gifts of the Holy Spirit. Teach them to know and love the Church so that they may always and everywhere speak, act, and think with her, the glorious spouse of Christ. Teach them generosity and detachment from the miserable things of this world; but above all, teach them to know You and love You, the one and only Eternal Priest. Do You, Good Shepherd of souls, hear this my prayer for saintly priests. Amen.

Prayer for Vocations

 Heavenly Father, Your Divine Son taught us to pray to the Lord of the harvest to send laborers into His vineyard. We earnestly beg You to bless our archdiocese and our world with many priests who will love You fervently; and gladly and courageously spend their lives in service to Your Son's Church under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. We pray that their lives may be always centered on our Eucharistic Lord; that they be always faithful to the Holy Father; and that they may be devoted sons of Mary, our Mother, in making You known and loved; and that all may attain Heaven. Bless our families and our children and choose from our home those whom You desire for this holy work. We ask this in the Holy Name of Jesus, Your Son, in the unity of the Holy Spirit. Amen.


Intercessory Prayer for Priests

 loving God, look upon the face of your Christ and for the love of Him Who is the Eternal High Priest, have pity on Your priests. 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 You, 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 for your faithful and fervent priests, for your unfaithful and tepid priests, for your priests laboring at home or abroad in distant mission fields, for Your tempted priests, for Your lonely and desolate priests, for Your young priests, for Your aged priests, for Your sick priests, for Your dying priests, for the souls of Your priests in Purgatory.

But above all, I commend to You the priests dearest to me: the priest who baptized me, the priests who absolved me from my sins, the priests at whose Masses I attended and who gave me Your Body and Blood in Holy Communion, the priests who taught me and instructed me or helped me and encouraged me, all the priests to whom I am indebted in any other way, particularly _____. O Jesus, keep them all close to your Heart, and bless them abundantly in time and in eternity. Amen.

Prayer for the Sanctification of Priests

 Jesus, Eternal High Priest, You Who in an unspeakable burst of love for Your Church, did cause the Christian priesthood to spring forth from Your Sacred Heart: pour forth upon Your priests continual living streams of infinite love.

Live in them, transform them into You; make them, by Your grace, fit instruments of Your mercy. Act in them and through them, and grant that they may become wholly one with You by their faithful imitation of Your virtues. In Your Name and by the strength of Your Spirit, may they do the works which You did accomplish for the salvation of the world.

Divine Redeemer of souls, behold how great is the multitude of those who still sleep in the darkness of error; reckon up the number of those unfaithful sheep who stray to the edge of the precipice; consider the throngs of the poor, the hungry, the ignorant and the feeble who groan in their abandoned condition.


Return to us in the person of Your priests. Truly live again in them; act through them and pass once more through the world, teaching, forgiving, comforting, sacrificing and renewing the sacred bonds of love between the Heart of God and the heart of man. Amen.

Prayer to Saint John Mary Vianney, Patron of Parish Priests

Saint John Marie Vianney, beloved Curé of Ars, beg Jesus to send upon us the burning Spirit of love, Who so consumed you with pastoral zeal for souls as to make you a shining example of prayer and penance. By your example and intercession, obtain that we may be able to gain the souls of our brethren for Christ and with them attain to everlasting glory.

We ask you, dear saint, to obtain for priests a share of that extraordinary zeal and consuming charity, which you so efficaciously exerted in the confessional. Pray that the Holy Spirit pour down upon priests the graces and the wisdom they need to direct, enlighten, and inflame souls with love, so that forsaking the paths of sin, they may perseveringly follow the road of righteousness that leads to the heart of God. Amen.

Prayer to be said at a Priest's Holy Communion

 Lord, may You find shelter and rest within the heart of Your priest. Make him, O Lord, a priest according to Your Heart: meek, humble, zealous, so that all he does will be for Your honor and glory. Mold him into a man of prayer and labor, insensible to earthly things and sensible only to Your Love and to the graces of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Spiritual Communion

*M*y Jesus, I believe that Thou art present in the most holy sacrament. I love Thee above all things, and I desire to receive Thee into my soul. Since I cannot now receive Thee sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace Thee as if Thou wert already there, and unite myself wholly to Thee: never permit me to be separated from Thee. Amen.

St. Alphonsus Liguori

Thanksgiving after Confession

© Lord Jesus Christ, bless, I ask You, Your servant who has now ministered to me in Your Name. Help me to remember his good counsel and advice, and to perform duly what he has rightly laid upon me. And grant him the abundance of Your grace and favor, that his own soul may be refreshed and strengthened for Your perfect service, and that he may come at last to the joy of Your heavenly kingdom. Who lives and reigns with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. Amen.

Prayers for the Spiritual Protection of Priests

In the name of the Most Holy Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, we beseech Thee, O Christ, Eternal High Priest, that Thou keep hidden within the Wound in Thy Heart Thy priests whom Thou hast ordained to Thy Eternal Priesthood.

Preserve them, protect them as the dispensers of the mysteries of God and keep them faithful in their mission as Thy expiatory victims for the sins of men. Together with Thee, O Christ, they are continually offered on Thy Altar on high in the sight of the Father, a propitiation of love rising as incense from men to God. Ever increase in Thy faithful priest-victims Thy power to draw all hearts into Thy Own that Thou may perfect Thy work of grace among the sons of God, whose inheritance is the Kingdom of Heaven.

Have pity, O Christ, on those of Thy privileged ones who have strayed from Thy Heart and torn open the Wound in Thy Side by their infidelity to Thee. Release upon them the torrents of Thy love and compassion, drowning their souls in Thy ocean of mercy that they may not escape. Draw them back into the fullness of the Life and the Light that is of God. Amen.

Prayer for a Deceased Priest

© Lord, we ask that the soul of Your priest, _____, whom, while he lived in this world, You did adorn with sacred gifts, may ever rejoice in a glorious place in heaven. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Prayer for Thursday

*L*ord Jesus Christ, moved by the Holy Spirit, and full of confidence in the help of Thy Most Holy Mother, I offer Thee this Thursday, and every Thursday for the rest of my life, in thanksgiving for the Sacrament of Thy Most Holy Body and Blood, and in adoration and reparation for all the priests of Thy Church, especially for those who do not adore Thee, for those who are wounded in their souls, and for those who are exposed to the attacks of the powers of darkness.

For them and in their place, allow me to abide before Thy Eucharistic Face. In their name, let me draw near to Thy open Heart, ever-flowing with the Blood and the Water that purify, heal, and sanctify all souls, but, first of all, those of Thy priests.

Eternal High Priest, make me an entirely Eucharistic soul, according to the desires of Thy Sacred Heart and the designs of Thy merciful goodness upon my life. I desire only to love Thee more each day, and to be, by Thy grace, the faithful adorer of Thy Eucharistic Face and the consoling friend of Thy Sacred Heart hidden in the tabernacles of the world, where it beats, wounded by love, forgotten, forsaken, and waiting for the adoration and for the love of even one priest. Amen.

Fr. Mark Kirby, OSB

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Silverstream Priory, Stamullen, County Meath, Ireland

Morning Offering

Most merciful Father,
I offer Thee the prayers, works,
joys, and sufferings of this day
by placing them in the holy and venerable hands of Jesus,
the Eternal High Priest,
and by saying, as He did upon entering the world,
“Behold, I come to do Thy will” (Hebrews 10:9).

For the sake of all His priests,
and in particular for the priests
entrusted to my intercession,
I entreat Thy beloved Son to unite my offering
to the Sacrifice of the Cross,
renewed upon the altars of Thy Church
from the rising of the sun to its setting (Malachy 1:11).

Holy Father,
look upon these men chosen by Thy Son
to show forth His death until He comes (1 Cor 11:26);
keep them from the Evil One (John 17:15)
and sanctify them in the truth (John 17:17).

Bind them by a most tender love
to the Virgin Mary, their Mother
that, by her intercession,
they may be overshadowed by the power of the Holy Spirit
(Luke 1:35)
in every act of their sacred ministry;
thus may their priesthood reveal
the Face of Jesus and the merciful love of His Heart,
for the fruitfulness of His spouse, the Church,
and the praise of Thy glory. Amen.

Father Mark Kirby, OSB

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Prayer to Our Lady for Priests

*D*ear Lord, we pray that the Blessed Mother wrap her mantle around Your priests and through her intercession strengthen them for their ministry. We pray that Mary will guide Your priests to follow her own words, "Do whatever He tells you." May Your priests have the heart of St. Joseph, Mary's most chaste spouse. May the Blessed Mother's own pierced heart inspire them to embrace all who suffer at the foot of the Cross. May Your priests be holy, filled with the fire of Your love, seeking nothing but Your greater glory and the salvation of souls. Amen.

Consecration to the Blessed Virgin Mary

*O*Mary, my Queen and my Mother, I give myself entirely to you, and, in proof of my affection, I give you my eyes, my ears, my tongue, my heart, my whole being without reserve. Since I am your own, keep me and guard me as your property and possession. O Mary, Queen of the Clergy, pray for us; obtain for us many holy priests. Amen.

Prayer to the Sacred Heart of Jesus

Sacred Heart of Jesus, Divine and Eternal High Priest, let the life-giving waters of Your love flow into the hearts of Your priests and transform them into living images of You. By Your grace, make them true apostles of Your Sacred Heart.

Save souls through Your priests; accompany them through life. Give them the special grace of drawing sinners to Your Sacred Heart, the Refuge of Sinners, that they may find forgiveness and salvation.

Sacred Heart of Jesus, I pray for the fulfillment of this promise which You did make to Saint Margaret Mary: "I will give to priests the gift of touching the most hardened hearts." May Your Kingdom come to the hearts of men through the activity of truly saintly priests.

Jesus, Savior of the world, sanctify Your priests and sacred ministers.

Mary, Queen of the Clergy, pray for us; obtain for us many and holy priests. Amen.

The Holy Rosary



The Joyful Mysteries *(Mondays and Saturdays)*

The Annunciation
(Lk 1:26-38)

The Visitation
(Lk 1:39-53)

The Birth of our Lord
(Lk 2:6-19; Mt 2:11)

The Presentation of our Lord
(Lk 2:22-40)

The Finding of our Lord in the Temple
(Lk 2:41-52)

The Luminous Mysteries *(Thursdays)*

The Baptism of the Lord
(Mt 3:11-17; Lk 3:16-17)

The Wedding at Cana
(Jn 2:1-11)

The Proclamation of the Kingdom
(Lk 4:16-18, 36; Mt 26:31,33-34)

The Transfiguration
(Mk 9:2-5; Mt 17:5-9)

The Institution of the Eucharist
(Jn 6:32-33, 35, 47-58)

The Sorrowful Mysteries *(Tuesdays and Fridays)*

The Agony in the Garden
(Mt 26:36-41; Lk 22:41-44)

The Scourging at the Pillar
(Is 53:3-7; Jn 18:36-38)

The Crowning with Thorns
(Mt 27:24-28; Jn 19:5,15)

The Carrying of the Cross
(Lk 9:23; Luke 23:26-31; Mt 11:29-31)

The Crucifixion and Death of our Lord
(Lk 23:33-39, 44-46; Jn 19:25-27)

The Glorious Mysteries *(Wednesdays and Sundays)*

The Resurrection
(Jn 16:20-22; Mt 28:2-8)

The Ascension
(Mt 28:18-20; Acts 1:9; Mk 16:19)

The Descent of the Holy Spirit
(Acts 2:1-5, 11, 14, 38, 41)

The Assumption of our Blessed Mother into Heaven
(Songs 2:10-14; Rev 12:1; Judith 13:23, 25)

The Coronation of Mary as Queen of Heaven and Earth
(Songs 6:10; Eccles 24:4, 9, 17, 19-20; Prv 8:32-35)