

A Prayer in Honor of Priestly Vocation

From the depths of being, a niggling sense
a whisper so quiet as to evoke doubt
as a seed deep in the earth surrenders
opens to receive nurturing elements
pushes toward the beckoning light
bursts through all resistances
strives to erupt from dark cave into unconstrained freedom
so the sense emerges into a response to a call
and an inexplicable joy pervades.

Thank You, Dear Lord, for Your summons.

The affirmation of others,
the encouragement to respond
the dance in the bright daylight begins
a rhythm forms - gracefully, gently stretching, reaching
an assent generating still another response
an unending quest
without surcease
there is always more.

Thank You, Dear Lord, for their Yes.

A love so primal, so profound
as to expand beyond constraint
universal, infinite
timeless, unending
satisfaction only in ultimate union
one in Christ
one in Trinity eternally.

Amen.

PRAYERS FOR PRIESTS

PRAYER FOR PRIESTLY ORDINATION

Heavenly Father, thank you for the gift of our new shepherd, Father_____. Bless him in all his work and in everything he puts his hand to (Deuteronomy 15:10).

May Father _____'s hands and prayers bring us Your saving grace in the waters of baptism, Your infinite mercy in forgiving our sins and Your sustaining and saving grace in the most Holy Eucharist. Protect him from all spiritual and temporal attacks so that the fidelity he professes today and his faith in You will endure unwaveringly all the days of his life. (Luke 18:1)

Praise and thanksgiving to your Son, Jesus Christ for judging him faithful and appointing him to serve Your Church (1 Timothy 1:12). May Our Lady of Good Counsel intercede for him as he goes into the world to proclaim the good news to the whole creation. (Mark16:15)

Amen.

PRAYERS FOR PRIESTS

PRAYER WELCOMING A PRIEST TO THE PARISH

Thank you, Dear Lord, for Your gift of Father _____ this day. You have sent him into our midst to be Your presence to us. Help us to become more worthy.

As we are called to see Your image and likeness in him, help us to become Your image and likeness for him.

Please help us to love him. Please help us to see beyond our differences and embrace them as still more facets in Your diamond of universal You.

Please help us to surrender our individual wants and needs to more truly help him serve the wants and needs of us all.

Please help us to work together with him to more truly bring about Your Kingdom.

Help us to enter into his loneliness to provide Your companionship.

Help us to extend Your hospitality to him and offer him our gifts – the talents You have given us that his work may be carried out successfully. Please give us the grace to receive his hospitality and the gifts he offers us.

Help us to bring relief and true joy into the routine, mundane, sometimes tedious work he must do in service of You.

In the weeks and months and years to come, help us to be open and receptive to Your gift of Father _____ that time may find us more Your perfect body.

Please help Father _____ see You in us as we see You in him.

Amen.

PRAYERS FOR PRIESTS

PRAYERS FOR PRIESTS WHEN SICK

Merciful and ever-loving God of all Creation, creator of all Souls and the Source of All Life, we pray to You for the recovery of all priests who are facing illness or pain, who are passing into death or suffering through life's challenges.

We join our prayer with all those who love them. We join our prayer with You, Source of Compassion, Mercy, and Grace.

Grant them and all of us we pray a renewal of strength and courage to face whatever You have allowed or placed before us.

Strengthen in them Your Holy SPIRIT that You have placed within all.

Guide the hearts and hands of all Your holy priests who care for others in times of need.

Ever-loving God, let us offer our suffering up and join it on the cross of Your Son for the salvation of all Souls.

Holy Mother of God help us all become more like Jesus. We pray this through Christ our Lord.

Amen

Prayer for Healing or When Sick

Blessed are You O Lord our God, Eternity's Holy King.

Blessed are You O Lord our God whose Words bring on all healing.

You have made Father _____ in Your image, O Lord.

You have fashioned and sustained all of our lives for Your Glory.

You, O Fountain of Mercy, Source of our health, heal Lord, heal.

Let Father _____ be healed and renewed.

Heal Father _____, O Lord, and we all will be healed;

Save Father _____, O Lord, and we all will be saved.

Holy Mother of God, pray for Father _____.

Holy Mother of God, pray for us.

Amen.

PRAYERS FOR PRIESTS

PRAYER FOR ANNIVERSARY OF PRIESTLY ORDINATION

Father of mercy, we come before You with gratitude on the anniversary of Your faithful servant, (Priest name).

Praise and thanksgiving for him fervently tending the flock of God that is in his charge.
(1Peter 5:2)

Because of the grace that has been given him in Christ Jesus, (1Corinthians 1:4) he has touched countless hearts and inspired so many souls.

Bless (Priest name) abundantly for so generously sharing his God-given charismas and sharing the Good News - the joy of Jesus.

Please continue to shower him with the same abundant joy and zeal with which he has blessed so many in his priestly ministry.

May Our Lady of Good Counsel intercede for him that he may be filled with wisdom, compassion, fortitude and fidelity as he continues to shepherd Your people.

May he never be afraid to speak the truth in love. (2 Timothy 1:8)

Amen.

PRAYERS FOR PRIESTS

PRAYER FOR A PRIEST LEAVING THE PARISH
(Reassignment, Promotion, Retirement)

Dear Lord, the most difficult cross of all – the letting go – the ultimate surrender to Your will.

You have called Father _____ from our midst. He has loved us like You. We have loved him like You. And through him, we have loved You more.

Together we have shared every suffering and cross of life – disappointment, fear, rejection, sinfulness, sickness and death. Together we have rejoiced in every celebration – marriages, births, graduations, sacraments.

Father _____ has freely offered us his gifts (some examples include: preaching, song, administration, compassion, etc.), and we have been made better by them.

Now You ask that we relinquish our future together – comforted by the past, we share in the hope of the eternity we will live together forever.

Please grant Father _____ gratitude and satisfaction for what we have had, for the work he has accomplished in our midst and excitement for the next season of his life.

In this present moment of loss and anticipation, please grant us the consolation of peace in fulfilling Your will. In this tension, let us more truly love You and ask and seek and find – in order to receive the consolation that is Your gift.

Please help us to embrace the sacredness of this parting – You have shown us the way. With trust and faith and hope we release Father _____ into Your hands.

Amen.

PRAYERS FOR PRIESTS

In Thanksgiving for Our Priests

Inspired by Luke 13: 18-21

Blessed...the Father who imaged; the Son who inspired; and the Holy Spirit who enflames you.

Blessed...the father who sired, the mother who bore and nurtured you into being.

Blessed...the men and women who saw the potential for a man of God and gently prodded, nudged, kneaded and molded into strong and vibrant growth.

Blessed...your first, hesitant, courageous “yes...” only the tiniest whisper of an infinite lifetime of “Yes!” to each moment, each person, each divine expression that you cherish and bless with your love and your life.

Blessed...your worldly sacrifice, struggle, suffering continually crucified, crushed, transformed into the manna of surrender, obedience and hope.

Blessed...your magnanimous sheltering and comforting of all who find rest, safety, peace in your care.

Blessed... the seeds of your very being scattered and sown, impregnating the universe with more love, mercy, life.

Blessed...your self-donation to immolation.

Blessed...are we...because of You.

Blessed...are You...Eucharist...

Amen.

PRAYERS FOR PRIESTS

**INSTALLATION OF NCCW SPIRITUAL ADVISOR AND
PRESENTATION OF PIN**

This resource may be adapted to be used to honor religious sisters and brothers who also serve as Spiritual Advisors.

Father _____

You have been invited to serve the _____ Council of Catholic Women as Spiritual Advisor.

May you be inspired by the Holy Spirit in offering support encouragement and guidance to the Board of Directors, officers and members of Council.

The _____ Council of Catholic Women is an important work in the mission of Christ's Church. May your collaboration in Council activities bring growth and blessing to the members and their communities.

Heavenly Father, we ask You to please sustain Father _____ with Your divine grace and grant him peace and joy in serving You. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ, through the intercession of our patroness, Our Lady of Good Counsel. Amen.

Place pin on his left side.

PRAYERS FOR PRIESTS

PRAYER FOR PRIESTS IN TIME OF DISTRESS

Dear Lord,

Powerless over a disease, which arbitrarily invades a human host to live and proliferate, You have blessed us with Your holy priests to witness to Your presence – with and within each and every one of us – universal, omnipresent – not arbitrary.

Where there is the darkness of death, You give us Your light and life.

With the most profound gratitude, we treasure even more their total selfless donation of self.

All the money, all the knowledge, all the skill, all the medicine cannot and does not and will not guarantee life – but You do. And Your humble servant priests witness to the only life that matters – eternal life – through, with and in You.

Please bless our priests with Your faith, Your strength, Your courage, Your self-sacrificing perseverance to what appeared to be the end – that resurrection might come for all.

Please fill them with Your grace that You might be in all and ALL for all.

Only You give meaning and purpose and the meaning and purpose of Your holy priests is to give YOU.

Dear Lord, please bless Your holy priests, our holy priests that they might be more truly Yours.

Amen.

PRAYERS FOR PRIESTS

A ROSARY FOR PRIESTS

Joyful Mysteries

Annunciation – We pray in thanksgiving for your call and the recognition of that call and that Yes to the call to become priest.

Visitation – We pray in thanksgiving for your sharing the news with parents, family, friends and community and their support of you in your vocation.

Birth of Christ – We pray in thanksgiving for your daily moment-by-moment surrender and unspeakable joy of bringing Christ into the world.

Presentation in the Temple – We pray in thanksgiving for the day you were presented to the community as a seminarian answering the call; as a transitional deacon in final preparation; as ordained priest.

Finding Jesus in the Temple – We pray in thanksgiving for your commitment, your vow that all would recognize Christ in you.

Sorrowful Mysteries

Agony in the Garden – We pray in contemplation that as Your holy priests enter into the woundedness of each and all, they will see only Christ and empathize, comfort and share the agony.

Scourging at the Pillar – We pray in contemplation that as Jesus was scourged with the sins of humanity, so too Your holy priests are scourged in body, mind and spirit to more closely emulate God's mercy.

Crowning with Thorns – We pray in contemplation that just as Jesus' very being was mocked in a torturous crown of thorns that Your holy priests also endure the mockery of those who do not understand or respect their very being and, like Jesus, seek to love.

Jesus Carries the Cross- We pray in contemplation that just as Jesus carried the cross of sinful humanity, your holy priests model surrender and acceptance.

Crucifixion – We pray in contemplation that just as You are crucified by this world, Your holy priests die to self that others might live.

PRAYERS FOR PRIESTS

Glorious Mysteries

Resurrection – We pray in adoration of You that just as You were resurrected, on ordination day Your holy priests are born to new life.

Ascension – We pray in adoration that living a life focused on returning to the Father, Your holy priests will accomplish the will of the Father in the world.

Coming of the Holy Spirit – We pray in adoration that Your Holy Spirit will be poured out upon Your holy priests and through them upon the world.

Assumption – We pray in adoration that as Mary surrendered her life, Your holy priests will surrender their lives to draw all whom they meet closer to You.

Crowning of Mary – We pray in adoration that crowned with the gift of eternal life Your holy priests are chosen to bring all with them into eternity.

Luminous Mysteries

Baptism – We pray in intercession that just as John baptized Jesus, Your holy priests baptize others in Your name.

Wedding Feast at Cana – We pray in intercession that as Jesus filled every need, so too Your holy priests minister to the needs of all.

Proclamation of the Kingdom – We pray in intercession that Your holy priests will proclaim You and Your Kingdom in word and deed.

Transfiguration – We pray in intercession that just as You were transfigured for Peter, James and John, Your holy priests become more and more In persona Christi.

Institution of the Eucharist – We pray in intercession for the incalculable gift of Yourself and the privilege You grant to Your holy priests to enflesh You and nurture all.

PRAYERS FOR PRIESTS

DYING TO LIVE:

THE ANIMA CHRISTI STATIONS OF THE CROSS

1. Jesus is condemned to death. *Soul of Christ, sanctify me.*
The whole church is a priestly people. As Christians we are called to die to self in order for Christ to live in us. For our holy priests who enter into the sacrament of Holy Orders, dying to live is literal. Just as Jesus was condemned to death so, too, these men who answer the call to the priesthood, must give up their worldly lives to serve Christ and the Church.
2. Jesus carries his cross. *Body of Christ, save me.*
In doing so, our priests participate in the triple priesthood of Christ as priest, prophet and king. The priest is configured to Christ by a special grace of the Holy Spirit, so that he may serve as Christ's instrument for his Church (CCC. No. 1581). We, too, through baptism participate in these three offices of Christ, with the corresponding responsibilities for mission and service.
3. Jesus falls for the first time. *Blood of Christ, inebriate me.*
Dying to live, each of our holy priests has been called by God and received an indelible mark through the sacrament of Holy Orders. They are an *alter Christus*, another Christ.
4. Jesus meets his mother. *Water from the side of Christ, wash me.*
This special priesthood in the sacrament of Holy Orders calls each priest to an invitation of Christ in every step they take on their very own Stations of the Cross. With each faithful step they become ever more conformed to Jesus Christ.
5. Simon of Cyrene helps Jesus to carry his cross. *Passion of Christ strengthen me.*
As his representatives of the triple office of priest, prophet and king each priest can and must walk this path of Calvary as their own very human soul surrenders and submits to the will of God.
6. Veronica wipes the face of Jesus. *O Good Jesus, hear me.*
Using the Stations of the Cross as a personal model we can see Christ in our priests who minister the means of salvation to the People of God. As women of the Church, we can, like St. Veronica support our priests through our own personal prayer and sacrifice.
7. Jesus falls for the second time. *Within thy wounds hide me.*
Though it is ultimately Christ who acts and effects salvation through the ordained priest, our holy priests strive to empty themselves of their own desires and spend their lives offering a pure and undivided heart to the Lord and to the Church.

PRAYERS FOR PRIESTS

8. Jesus meets the women of Jerusalem. *Suffer me not to be separated from thee.*
Like so many of our dedicated women who serve the Church selflessly meeting each need that arises, let us pray that all our priests stand faithful and firm, answering the call to holiness by imitating Jesus as they empty and pour themselves out for others.
9. Jesus falls a third time. *From the malignant enemy defend me.*
Like Jesus, our priests pour themselves out and offer themselves for others. They show us the path of holiness through their ministry and especially as they unite themselves in the Eucharist with Christ the priest and victim.
10. Jesus is stripped of his garments. *In the hour of my death call me.*
Let us pray for their strengthening and humility as our priests submit their lives to the Father's will.
11. Jesus is nailed to the cross. *And bid me come unto thee.*
As we pray for our priests, let us bear in mind that we too, can offer ourselves saying, "I no longer live, but Christ lives in me."
12. Jesus dies on the cross. *That with all thy saints.*
Each priest, as every baptized person, must imitate Christ crucified as St. Paul wrote, "In my flesh I complete what is lacking in Christ's afflictions for the sake of his body, that is, the church." (Col. 1:24).
13. The body of Jesus is taken down from the cross. *I may praise thee*
In the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, One God in three Divine Persons who creates and sanctifies all souls.
14. Jesus is laid in the tomb. *Forever and ever.*
In body, mind and spirit let us die to ourselves that Christ lives again in His one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church.
15. The Resurrection. *Amen.*
So be it and so it is.

By Marianne Paradise
2019 – 2020 NCCW Spirituality Commission
Published in *Catholic Woman* magazine Vol. 46, Issue 1
Anima Christi is a prayer written by St. Ignatius of Loyola in the 14th century

PRAYERS FOR PRIESTS

A ROSARY FOR MOTHERS AND NCCW SPIRITUAL MOTHERS OF PRIESTS

Because so many NCCW members spiritually adopt priests to pray for as their own sons, these meditations transcend the physical to include their spiritual motherhood.

Joyful Mysteries

Annunciation – Who is this child You have consecrated in the womb of my soul? This day I surrender him into Your hands to be wholly Yours. He will teach me all things.

Visitation – The inexpressible joy of being chosen to bear Your child and the comfort of sharing this joy with another – mothers united in bearing Your Word become flesh.

Birth of Jesus – The second surrender into Your hands – from sheltering womb into waiting world. There will be so many surrenderings into Your hands...

Presentation in the temple – We bring him for consecration to You. The community celebrates and receives him as one of their own and we surrender his life to You and the community.

Finding Jesus in the temple – Just as Jesus recognized Your call at the expense of parental concern, so too our son. We provided roots to grow and relinquished him to fly to You.

Sorrowful Mysteries

Agony in the Garden – His simple yes to You requires so many no's to all else.

Scourging at the pillar – The excruciating denial of the physical self to allow the fecundity of the spiritual.

Crowning with thorns - The excruciating denial of the will – of the intellect that rebels against surrender.

Carrying the cross – The most difficult cross – surrendering to who he most truly is – Your priest, consecrated for all – especially those who would kill him.

Crucifixion – You call him to extend Your mercy to all – even unto death.

PRAYERS FOR PRIESTS

Glorious Mysteries

Resurrection – The unspeakable joy as he is ordained Your priest – conceived in the womb of my soul, nurtured in my mind, heart, soul and with the prayers of Your Spirit.

Ascension - The unspeakable joy of witnessing his deepening relationship with our heavenly Father and his unspeakable joy as he lives into that peace.

Coming of the Holy Spirit – As a mother delights in the little accomplishments and fulfillment of her child’s dreams and destiny, the moment-by-moment witness of Your son’s acquiescence and response to the Holy Spirit within himself and others.

Assumption- The drawing of mother ever closer to the Father in the growth in holiness of Your son.

Crowning of Mary – There is no greater crown for a mother than to have borne and raised Your child consecrated to God. Truly, he is a model for all others as priest and especially for all those who respond with Yes! to God’s call.

Luminous Mysteries

Baptism – This mystery evokes a mother’s joy as she recalls presenting her child for baptism, but in this mystery, we acknowledge the child’s own commitment – the moment he publicly steps forward to acknowledge he is God’s beloved son.

Wedding Feast at Cana – We acknowledge a mother’s encouragement of her son to become who he is called to be – to relieve shame, guilt and fear that others might rejoice in God’s mercy and provision.

Proclamation of the Kingdom – Recalls the many little and big instances in which the priest chooses the Kingdom in word and deed – the most powerful proclamation.

Transfiguration – A mother’s profound experience of witnessing her son mature and become more closely transfigured into the son God intended.

Institution of the Eucharist – No greater joy, no greater miracle than witnessing the child of her soul womb “In persona Christi” offering his life for all.

PRAYERS FOR PRIESTS

PRAYER IN HONOR OF PRIESTHOOD

Dear Lord,

You call your priests to love like You – in all things to ponder what would Jesus do? and respond. You call them to model You so we too can learn and grow more fully into Your image and likeness.

More than we can ever imagine, we know You bless them – still as Our Blessed Mother intercedes for others, we too implore Your blessing upon Your priests.

Dear Jesus, as You prayed for Peter that his faith not fail, please pray for Your priests that their faith not fail and please grant us the grace to ask that You pray for us that our faith not fail.

Please grant them a merciful heart – aware of their own need for Your mercy – that they may extend Your mercy to all.

Please grant them an understanding mind – that they may know the brokenness at the root of all behavior that falls short of You and that they find the way to bring healing.

Please grant them Your ears to hear and eyes to see – only You in all whom they meet.

Please grant them the gentleness to reach out and touch Your wounds in all.

Please bless them with the empathy to perceive feelings that may be foreign to them but cry out for kindness and compassion.

Please help them to relinquish the self – all that is not of You – that Your image and likeness might more truly emerge and radiate to all.

Amen.

PRAYERS FOR PRIESTS

PRAYER FOR BIRTHDAY OF A PRIEST

O God of infinite grace and mercy, look kindly on Father _____ on the anniversary of the day of his birth. In his mother's womb, You placed on his heart the call to follow You, (Matthew 4:19) and he became a steward of the gifts and ministry that You have entrusted to him.

His holy service to You touches so many hearts and inspires so many lives. Please shower Father _____ with abundant joy and blessings on his birthday and throughout the year.

Our Lady of Good Counsel, on this day and always, intercede for Father _____ that he may continue to let his light shine glorifying our Heavenly Father. (Matthew 5:16)

Thank you for his zealous care for all souls entrusted to him. (2 Timothy 1:6) Please sustain him in his daily ministry, and help him to feel your deep and tender love every moment of every day.

Amen.