



Book of Prayer for Vocations

**“Before I formed you in the womb I knew you,
before you were born I dedicated you,
a prophet to the nations I appointed you...**

Say not, “I am too young.”

-Jeremiah 1: 5, 7

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What is a Vocation?

Vocation comes from the Latin “vocare,” meaning “to call.” The Lord calls each of us to dedicate our lives to Him in different ways. First and foremost, these ways include being single, married, consecrated, religious, or a priest.

What is a priest?

A priest is a man who gives his life for God. He receives the Sacrament of Holy Orders, which gives him certain powers of Christ. Some of the most important of these “powers” are to consecrate the bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Christ as well as to forgive sin. He leads God’s people to live better lives. He celebrates the Mass for God’s people. He celebrates the Sacraments with God’s people. When he celebrates the Sacraments, he acts in the Person of Christ.

What is a Religious?

The people who live religious life are called “Religious.” Religious seek to follow Christ more closely by publicly professing the vows of poverty, chastity and obedience in a recognized religious order (Vocation.com).

Male Religious are called priests or brothers. Female Religious are called nuns or sisters.

What is a Nun?

A nun is a woman who gives her life to God. She lives in constant prayer and rarely visits the world outside of her home, which is called a convent. Nuns do things like make the priests’ vestments and make the bread that will become the Body of Christ.

What is a Religious Sister?

A sister, like a nun, is a woman who gives her life to God. Unlike a nun, sisters go out into the world to do apostolic work. That means they do things that the apostles were called to do. Those things include teaching Catholics to better understand their faith, helping the poor, and spreading the word of God to non-Christians.

What is Marriage?

Marriage is a very sacred vocation established in the beginning of the Bible. It is a Sacrament between a man and a woman. Marriage, like being a priest, nun, or sister, is sometimes very challenging. The Church does not allow people to break the Sacrament of Marriage. As in the other vocations, married people are called to lead chaste lives.

Why do we pray for an increase in vocations?

All vocations are important. Especially the vocations to the priesthood. Unfortunately, our world has come to a place where self-satisfaction is more important than fulfilling the call of our Lord... if we even hear the call. In a time when public prayer is banned and intolerance of the Christian faith is on the rise, it is necessary to ask, even beg, that God open our eyes, ears, and hearts to do His will. As St. John Vianney said, "When people wish to destroy religion, they begin by attacking the priest, because where there is no longer any priest there is no sacrifice, and where there is no longer any sacrifice there is no religion."

Prayer is the strongest weapon we have. Nothing is impossible with God's help. Therefore, we turn our needs, and the needs of the Church, over into His hands, asking Him to guide us and provide for us, His flock.

Monday

God,

Please help us to see You in our lives. Show us how to love one another. We know that you have a special plan for each of us. Please help us to hear your call throughout our lives. We love you God! Amen.

Tuesday

Jesus,

Please help us to love one another and follow your example, because sometimes we forget. Please bless our world with a new understanding of Your love. Please help everyone to hear your loving call. We love you, Jesus! Amen.

“Our Father”

Wednesday

Holy Spirit,

Please come down upon all of Jesus’ friends. Open our eyes to see when people need help. Open our ears to hear Our Lord’s call. Open our hearts so that we can always be loving. We love you, Holy Spirit! Amen.

“Glory Be”

Thursday

Mary, Mother of God,

You said “yes” to God. Please pray for us that we may also say “yes” to God. In honor of your “yes” to God,

“Hail Mary...”

Pray for us and an increase in religious vocations, Mary Mother of God. Amen.

Friday

Loving and Most Holy God,

Thank you for the priests and religious we do have. We pray that more of us hear your call and that, in the future, we see more priests and religious join our Church. We love you, dear God. Amen.

St. John Vianney, pray for us.

St. Scholastica, pray for us.

Monday:

Opening Prayer

Loving God,

Please help us to see You in our life. Show us how to love one another. We know that you have a special plan for each of us. Please help us to hear your call throughout our lives. Draw us into your heart, protect us from the Satan's lies and tricks. Give us the strength and courage to proclaim "yes!" even when it seems difficult. Aid us in honoring you with our actions, words, and works. Amen.

Reading for Reflection: Jeremiah 1: 4-10; The Call of Jeremiah

The word of the Lord came to me thus:

"Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I dedicated you, a prophet to the nations I appointed you.

"Ah, Lord God!" I said, "I know not how to speak; I am too young."

But the Lord answered me,

Say not, "I am too young." To whomever I send you, you shall go; Whatever I command you, you shall speak.

Have no fear before them, because I am with you to deliver you, says the Lord.

Then the Lord extended his hand and touched my mouth, saying, "See, I place my words in your mouth! This day I set you over nations and over kingdoms,

To root up and to tear down, to destroy and to demolish, to build and to plant.

The Word of the Lord.

Tuesday:

Opening Prayer:

Jesus, Lamb of God,

Please help us to love one another and follow your example. When we forget, please pick us up and direct us back onto the path of love and Truth. Please bless our world with a new understanding of Your love, an understanding of Your call. Bless us and those throughout the world that we may find the strength to respond to Your call—whatever it may be. Amen.

Reading for Reflection: Romans 12:3-8 Many Parts in One Body

For by the grace given to me I tell everyone among you not to think of himself more highly than one ought to think, but to think soberly, each according to the measure of faith that God has apportioned. For as in one body, we have many parts, and all the parts do not have the same function, so we, though many, are one body in Christ and individually parts of one another. Since we have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us exercise them: if prophecy, in proportion to the faith; if ministry, in ministering; if one is a teacher, in teaching; if one exhorts, in exhortation; if one contributes, in generosity; if one is over others, with diligence; if one does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness.

The Word of the Lord.

Wednesday:

Opening Prayer:

Holy Spirit,

Please come down upon all disciples. Open our eyes to see when people need help. Open our ears to hear Our Lord's call. Open our hearts so that we can always be loving. Nourish our spirit that we may live fully for the Lord, our God. Enable our inner strength, that we may be able to stand through the storms that pull us from our callings. Be the light that guides us toward Truth and Life, that we may effectively share your love with those around us. That we may honestly respond to Your callings. Amen.

Reading for Reflection:

The discernment of a vocation is above all the fruit of an intimate dialogue between the Lord and his disciples. Young people, if they know how to pray, can be trusted to know what to do with God's call. – Pope Benedict XVI, Response to questions by the bishops of the United States in Washington, D.C. on April 16, 2008.

Thursday:

Opening Prayer:

Mary, Mother of God,

You accepted your vocation with the utmost trust. Please pray for us that we may be as courageous as you. In honor of your “yes” to God we pray, “Hail Mary...”

Pray for us and our vocations, Mary Mother of God.

Reading for Reflection: Luke 1:26-38: Announcement of the Birth of Jesus

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a town of Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man named Joseph, of the house of David, and the virgin’s name was Mary. And coming to her he said, “Hail, favored one! The Lord is with you.” But she was greatly troubled at what was said and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. Then the angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. Behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give him the throne of David his father, and he will rule over the house of Jacob forever and of his kingdom there will be no end.” But Mary said to the angel, “How can this be, since I have no relations with a man?” And the angel said to her in reply, “The holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. Therefore the child to be born will be called holy, the Son of God. And behold, Elizabeth, your relative, has also conceived a son in her old age, and this is the sixth month for her was called barren; for nothing will be impossible for God.” Mary said, “Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word.” Then the angel departed from her.

The Word of the Lord.

Friday:

Opening Prayer:

Loving and Most Holy God,

Thank you for the priests and religious we do have. We pray that more of us hear your call and that, in the future, we see more priests and religious say Yes. But not just see, we hope actively to participate in our vocations, no matter what they are. We love you, dear God. We want to serve you in all we do. Amen.

St. John Vianney, pray for us.

St. Scholastica, pray for us.

Reading for Reflection: From St. Alphonsus Liguori, Doctor of the Church

It is necessary for you to pray diligently to God to make you know his will as to what state he wants you in. But take notice that to have this light, you must pray to him with indifference. He who prays to God to enlighten him in regard to a state of life, but without indifference, and who, instead of conforming to the divine will, would sooner have God conform to his will, is like a pilot that pretends to wish his ship to advance, but in reality does not want it to: he throws his anchor into the sea, and then unfurls his sails. God neither gives light nor speaks his word to such persons. But if you entreat him with indifference and resolution to follow his will, God will make you know clearly what state is better for you.

Monday:**Opening Prayer**

Loving God,

Please help us to see You in our life. Show us how to love one another. We know that you have a special plan for each of us. Please help us to hear your call throughout our lives. Draw us into your heart, protect us from the Satan's lies and tricks. Give us the strength and courage to proclaim "yes!" even when it seems difficult. Aid us in honoring you with our actions, words, and works. Amen.

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To root up and to tear down, to destroy and to demolish, to build and to plant.

The Word of the Lord.

Closing Prayer

Holy Father, look upon this humanity of ours
that is taking its first steps along the path of the Third Millennium.
Its life is still deeply marked
by hatred, violence, and oppression,
but the thirst for justice, truth and grace
still finds a space in the hearts of many people,
who are waiting for someone to bring salvation,
enacted by you through your Son Jesus.

There is the need for courageous heralds of the Gospel,
for generous servants of suffering humanity.

Send holy priests to your Church, we pray,
who may sanctify your people
with the tools of your grace.

Send numerous consecrated men and women,
that they may show your holiness in the midst of the world.

Send holy laborers into your vineyard,
that they may labor with the fervor of charity
and, moved by your Holy Spirit,
may bring the salvation of Christ
to the farthest ends of the earth.

Amen. – Bl. John Paul the Great; World Day for Vocations 2002.

Tuesday:

Opening Prayer:

Jesus, Lamb of God,

Please help us to love one another and follow your example. When we forget, please pick us up and direct us back onto the path of love and Truth. Please bless our world with a new understanding of Your love, an understanding of Your call. Bless us and those throughout the world that we may find the strength to respond to Your call—whatever it may be. Amen.

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The Word of the Lord.

Closing Prayer:

Jesus, Son of God,
in whom the fullness of the Divinity dwells,
You call all the baptized to " put out into the deep,"
taking the path that leads to holiness.

Waken in the hearts of young people the desire
to be witnesses in the world of today
to the power of your love.
Fill them with your Spirit of fortitude and prudence,
so that they may be able to discover the full truth
about themselves and their own vocation.

Our Savior,
sent by the Father to reveal His merciful love,
give to your Church the gift
of young people who are ready to put out into the deep,
to be the sign among their brothers
of Your presence which renews and saves.

Holy Virgin, Mother of the Redeemer,
sure guide on the way towards God and towards neighbor,
You who pondered his word in the depth of your heart,
sustain with your motherly intercession
our families and our ecclesial communities,
so that they may help adolescents and young people
to answer generously the call of the Lord.
Amen.

Wednesday:

Opening Prayer:

Holy Spirit,

Please come down upon all disciples. Open our eyes to see when people need help. Open our ears to hear Our Lord's call. Open our hearts so that we can always be loving. Nourish our spirit that we may live fully for the Lord, our God. Enable our inner strength, that we may be able to stand through the storms that pull us from our callings. Be the light that guides us toward Truth and Life, that we may effectively share your love with those around us. That we may honestly respond to Your callings. Amen.

Reading for Reflection: From St. Alphonsus Liguori, Doctor of the Church

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Closing Prayer:

O Holy Spirit, Spirit of wisdom and divine love, impart Your knowledge, understanding, and counsel to youth that they may know the vocation wherein they can best serve God. Give them courage and strength to follow God's holy will. Guide their uncertain steps, strengthen their resolutions, shield their chastity, fashion their minds, conquer their hearts, and lead them to the vineyards where they will labor in God's holy service. Amen.

– ewtn.com

Thursday:**Opening Prayer:**

Mary, Mother of God,

You accepted your vocation with the utmost trust. Please pray for us that we may be as courageous as you. In honor of your “yes” to God we pray,

“Hail Mary...”

Pray for us and our vocations, Mary Mother of God.

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the Lord God will give him the throne of David his father, and he will rule over the house of Jacob forever and of his kingdom there will be no end.” But Mary said to the angel, “How can this be, since I have no relations with a man?” And the angel said to her in reply, “The holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. Therefore, the child to be born will be called holy, the Son of God. And behold, Elizabeth, your relative, has also conceived a son in her old age, and this is the sixth month for her was called barren; for nothing will be impossible for God.”

Mary

said, “Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word.” Then the angel departed from her.

The Word of the Lord.

Closing Prayer:

My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord; My spirit rejoices in God my savior.

For he has looked upon his handmaid’s lowliness; behold from now on will all ages call me blessed.

The Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name.

His mercy is from age to age to those who fear him.

He has shown might with his arm, dispersed the arrogant of mind and heart.

He has thrown down the rulers from their thrones but lifted up the lowly.

The hungry he has filled with good things; the rich he has sent away empty.

He has helped Israel his servant, remembering his mercy, according to his promise to our fathers, to Abraham and to his descendants forever. Amen.

(The Canticle of Mary, from Luke 1:46-55)

Friday:

Opening Prayer:

Loving and Most Holy God,

Thank you for the priests and religious we do have. We pray that more of us hear your call and that, in the future, we see more priests and religious join our Church. But not just see, we hope actively

participate in our vocations, no matter what they are. We love you, dear God. We want to serve you in all we do. Amen.

St. John Vianney, pray for us.

St. Scholastica, pray for us.

Reading for Reflections: Catechism on the Priesthood by St. John Vianney, Adapted from the Instructions on the Catechism

My Children, we have come to the Sacrament of Orders. It is a Sacrament which seems to relate to no one among you, and which yet relates to everyone. This Sacrament raises man up to God. What is a priest: A man who holds the place of God - a man who is invested with all the powers of God. "Go," said Our Lord to the priest; "as My Father sent Me, I send you. All power has been given Me in Heaven and on earth. Go then, teach all nations. He who listens to you, listens to Me; he who despises you despises Me." When the priest remits sins, he does not say, "God pardons you"; he says, "I absolve you." At the Consecration, he does not say, "This is the Body of Our Lord;" he says, "This is My Body." St. Bernard tells us that everything has come to us through Mary; and we may also say that everything has come to us through the priest; yes, all happiness, all graces, all heavenly gifts. If we had not the Sacrament of Orders, we should not have Our Lord. Who placed Him there, in that tabernacle? It was the priest. Who was it that received your soul, on its entrance into life? The priest. Who nourishes it, to give it strength to make its pilgrimage? The priest. Who will prepare it to appear before God, by washing that soul, for the last time, in the blood of Jesus Christ? The priest - always the priest. And if that soul comes to the point of death, who will raise it up, who will restore it to calmness and peace? Again, the priest. You cannot recall one single blessing from God without finding, side by side with this recollection, the image of the priest.

Go to confession to the Blessed Virgin, or to an angel; will they absolve you? No. Will they give you the Body and Blood of Our Lord? No. The Holy Virgin cannot make her Divine Son descend into the Host. You might have two hundred angels there, but they could not absolve you. A priest, however simple he may be, can do it; he can say to you, "Go in peace; I pardon you." Oh, how great is a priest! The priest will not understand the greatness of his office till he is in Heaven. If he understood it on earth, he would die, not of fear, but of love. The other benefits of God would be of no avail to us without the priest. What would be the use of a house full of gold if you had nobody to open you the door! The priest has the key of the heavenly treasures; it is he who opens the door; he is the steward of the good God, the distributor of His wealth. Without the priest, the Death and Passion of Our Lord would be of no avail. Look at the heathens: what has it availed them that Our Lord has died? Alas! They can have no share in the blessings of Redemption, while they have no priests to apply His Blood to their souls!

The priest is not a priest for himself; he does not give himself absolution; he does not administer the Sacraments to himself. He is not for himself; he is for you. After God, the priest is everything. Leave a parish twenty years without priests; they will worship beasts. If the missionary Father and I were to go away, you would say, "What can we do in this church? There is no Mass; Our Lord is no longer there:

we may as well pray at home." When people wish to destroy religion, they begin by attacking the priest, because where there is no longer any priest there is no sacrifice, and where there is no longer any sacrifice there is no religion.

When the bell calls you to church, if you were asked, "Where are you going?" you might answer, "I am going to feed my soul." If someone were to ask you, pointing to the tabernacle, "What is that golden door?"

You answer, "That is our storehouse, where the true Food of our souls is kept."

"Who has the key? Who lies in the provisions? Who makes ready the feast, and who serves the table?"

You answer, "The priest."

"And what is the Food?"

"The precious Body and Blood of Our Lord."

If I were to meet a priest and an angel, I should salute the priest before I saluted the angel. The latter is the friend of God; but the priest holds His place. St. Teresa kissed the ground where a priest had passed. When you see a priest, you should say, "There is he who made me a child of God and opened Heaven to me by holy Baptism; he who purified me after I had sinned; who gives nourishment to my soul. " At the sight of a church tower, you may say, "What is there in that place?" "The Body of Our Lord. " "Why is He there?" "Because a priest has been there, and has said holy Mass. "

What joy did the Apostles feel after the Resurrection of Our Lord, at seeing the Master whom they had loved so much! The priest must feel the same joy, at seeing Our Lord whom he holds in his hands. Great value is attached to objects which have been laid in the drinking cup of the Blessed Virgin and of the Child Jesus, at Loretto. But the fingers of the priest, that have touched the adorable Flesh of Jesus Christ, that have been plunged into the chalice which contained His Blood, into the pyx where His Body has lain, are they not still more precious? The priesthood is the love of the Heart of Jesus. When you see the priest, think of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

Closing Prayer:

Father, you call each one of us by name and ask us to follow you.

Bless your church by raising up dedicated and generous leaders from our families and friends who will serve your people as Sisters, Priests, Brothers, Deacons, and Lay Ministers.

Inspire us as we grow to know you and open our hearts to hear your call.

We ask this in Jesus' name. Amen. – USCCB website