

OUR LADY OF THE HOLY CROSS WOMEN'S PRAYER MINISTRY FOR PRIESTS



CHRIST MEETS HIS MOTHER WHILE HE CARRIES THE
CROSS, BARTOLOME ESTEBAN MURILLO, 1617-1682.

Mission: Our Lady of the Holy Cross Women's Prayer Ministry for Priests is imaged after the spiritual motherhood of Our Heavenly Mother in relation to Her Divine Son under her title of Our Lady of the Holy Cross. Our Heavenly Mother, during Her Divine Son's earthly life, and now from eternity, is always united to the Eternal High Priest, Jesus Christ, through her Immaculate and Sorrowful Heart. Our priests are called to full union with Christ Crucified on the High Altar of the Cross by virtue of their priestly ordination and through the celebration of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, which is the re-presentation of Christ's sacrifice on the Cross for the salvation of souls.

Our priests are called to a sacrificial life of spiritual fatherhood in the supernatural order of grace. By virtue of their ordination, priests undergo an ontological (deepest levels of being) change, which allows them to act *in persona Christi* (in the person of Christ) in the Mass and the Sacraments, and they become an *alter Christus* (another Christ) to the world.

Priests are called to surrender their entire being to Christ in order to bring countless souls into communion with the Most Holy Trinity. The priests of this diocese make promises of celibacy and obedience in order to live out this mission for the sake of their bride, the Church. They are called to live their priestly ministry through the threefold mission of word, sacrament, and pastoral charity (*Pastors Dabo Vobis*, 26), but they are not meant to fulfill this mission alone.

By our intercessory prayers, we offer our petitions to Our Heavenly Mother, so that through them, she may draw her priest-sons more deeply into her Immaculate and Sorrowful Heart in order to lead them into deeper union with Her Son's Most Sacred Heart where their ultimate strength lies. Our prayers and sacrifices are also meant to be a source of strength for them in the supernatural order so that they may faithfully live out their priestly ministry and become the priest-saints they are called to be in order to lead countless souls to salvation and attain



their Crown of Glory in eternity.

St. Andrew's has been blessed by God with a holy relic of the True Cross, which is also from where Our Lord entrusted His Mother with the priesthood through her first priest-son, St. John the Apostle. We seek, by God's grace, to live out this prayer ministry in the image of Our Lady united to Christ on the Cross, as well as throughout His earthly ministry, and her entrustment as both Mother and Queen of the Clergy. We are called to help carry the Cross of our priests and walk beside them through our prayers and sacrifices.



CLONMEL SS. PETER AND PAUL'S CHURCH WEST
AISLE WINDOW, HEART OF IMMACULATE MARY,

The women in our ministry dedicate time each day to prayer—especially the Rosary—for our bishop, priests, seminarians, and an increase in priestly vocations in the Diocese of Richmond, as well as the universal Church. Along with prayers, we also offer sacrifices and penances on their behalf for their increased sanctification, which will be prayerfully discerned by each member individually.

Each member is asked to make a holy hour at least once a month, either at Eucharistic Adoration or before the Tabernacle, dedicated to the clergy of the diocese. The Holy Eucharist and Holy Orders are inextricably linked. One would not exist without the other. The lifeblood of the priesthood is the Holy Eucharist and this holy hour is meant to be a time of prayer offered

up for our priests to grow in deeper union with Christ in the Most Blessed Sacrament and in greater intimacy with God through their prayer lives.

As needs come to our attention, we also provide spiritual resources for priests and seminarians. We send care packages to seminarians that include some of these spiritual resources, as well as other items to help them in their discernment process.

We encourage spiritual adoption of priests through prayerful discernment within the group, the Fraternity of St. John Men's Prayer Ministry for Priests, the parish, and the diocese. Spiritual adoption of a specific priest allows a spiritual mother or father to provide more dedicated prayerful attention to the needs of one particular priest while also praying for the priests of the diocese and the universal Church.

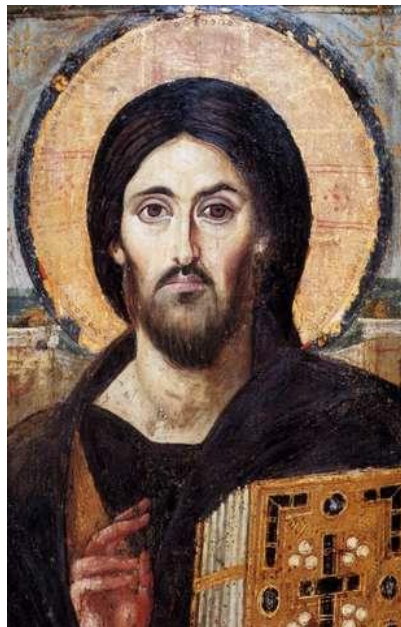
Organizations with Spiritual Adoption of Priests:

Foundation of Prayer for Priests

Handmaids for the Precious Blood

Crusade for Priests in Opus Angelorum

The ministry also seeks to encourage regular prayer for our bishop, priests, seminarians, and priestly vocations in our own parishes and communities. It is the responsibility of the laity to pray for our priests on a regular basis. Holier priests lead to holier parishes and a holier Church overall. The laity and the priesthood (as well as consecrated religious) share in communion with one another through the Holy Trinity. This communion is most tangibly realized on this side of eternity through the celebration of the Mass and especially in our reception of the Holy Eucharist.



CHRIST PANTOCRATOR, 6TH CENTURY

St. John Vianney's Prayer for Priests

God, please give to your Church today
many more priests after your own heart.

May they be worthy representatives of Christ the Good Shepherd.
May they wholeheartedly devote themselves to prayer and penance;
be examples of humility and poverty;
shining models of holiness;
tireless and powerful preachers of the Word of God;
zealous dispensers of your grace in the sacraments.

May their loving devotion to your Son Jesus in the Eucharist
and to Mary his Mother be the twin fountains of fruitfulness for their ministry. Amen.

St. Therese of Lisieux's Prayer for Priests

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 dying priests;
for the souls of your priests in Purgatory.
But above all, I recommend to you the priests dearest to me:
the priest who baptized me;
the priests who've absolved me from my sins;
the priests at whose Masses I've assisted and who've given me Your Body and Blood in Holy
Communion;
the priests who've taught and instructed me;
all the priests to whom I am indebted in any other way, especially ____
O Jesus, keep them all close to your heart,
and bless them abundantly in time and in eternity. Amen.

Benedict XVI's Prayer for Priests

Lord Jesus Christ, eternal High Priest,
you offered yourself to the Father on the altar of the cross
and through the outpouring of the Holy Spirit
gave your priestly people a share in your redeeming sacrifice.
Hear our prayer for the sanctification of our priests.
Grant that all who are ordained to the ministerial priesthood
may be ever more conformed to you, the Divine Master.
May they preach the Gospel with pure heart and clear conscience.
Let them be shepherds according to your own heart,
single-minded in service to you and to the Church,
and shining examples of a holy, simple, and joyful life.

Through the prayers of the Blessed Virgin Mary, your Mother and ours,
draw all priests and the flocks entrusted to their care
to the fullness of eternal life where you live and reign
with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.
Amen.

St. Terese of Calcutta's Prayer for Priests

Mary, Mother of Jesus,
throw your mantle of purity over our priests.
Protect them, guide them, and keep them in your heart.
Be a Mother to them, especially in times of discouragement and loneliness.
Love them and keep them belonging completely to Jesus.
Like Jesus, they, too, are your sons, so keep their hearts pure and virginal.
Keep their minds filled with Jesus, and put Jesus always on their lips,
so that he is the one they offer to sinner and to all they meet.
Mary, Mother of Jesus, be their Mother, loving them and bringing them joy.
Take special care of sick and dying priests, and the ones most tempted.
Remember how they spent their youth and old age, their entire lives serving and giving all to
Jesus.
Mary, bless them and keep a special place for them in your heart.
Give them a piece of your heart, so beautiful and pure and immaculate,
so full of love and humility, so that they, too, can grow in the likeness of Christ.
Dear Mary, make them humble like you, and holy like Jesus.
Amen.

St. Faustina's Prayer for Priests

O my Jesus, I beg you on behalf of the whole Church:
Grant it love and the light of your Spirit, and give power to the words of priests so that
hardened hearts might be brought to repentance and return to you, O Lord.
Lord, give us holy priests; you yourself maintain them in holiness.
O Divine and Great High Priest, may the power of your mercy accompany them everywhere and
protect them from the devil's traps and snares which are continually being set for the souls of
priests.
May the power of your mercy, O Lord, shatter and bring to naught all that might tarnish the
sanctity of priests, for you can do all things.

Church Documents on the Ministerial Priesthood:

Eucharistic Adoration For the Sanctification of Priests and Spiritual Maternity

Pastores Vabo Dobis

Lumen Gentium

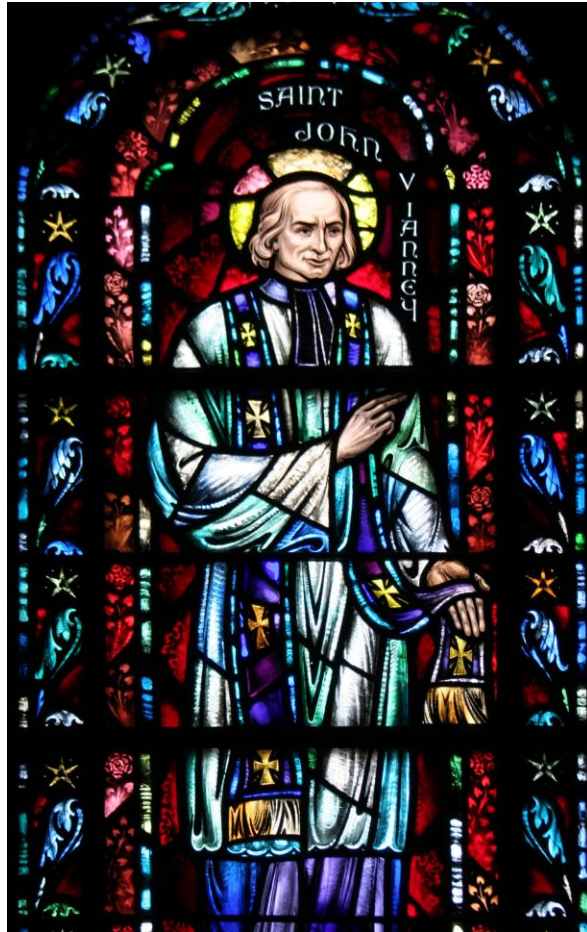
Optatam Totius

Presbyterorum Ordinis

Ordinatio Sacerdotalis

USCCB List of Documents for Priestly Formation

If you are interested in joining this ministry, please contact Constance Hull at ctanzy@gmail.com.



ST. JOHN VIANNEY, PATRON OF
PARISH PRIESTS. ORA PRO
NOBIS.
CATHEDRAL OF ST. PAUL, MN