

A Pastor's Perspective

January 10, 2021 Bulletin



Dear sisters and brothers in Christ,

What does it mean for a deacon or priest to be a man of prayer for and with the Christian community of faith? Fundamentally, prayer is a sacred conversation with God; when prayer is most fruitful, prayer yields an intimate communion with the Lord. Many volumes have been written about this topic. In this column, I highlight the solemn promises regarding prayer that every candidate for holy orders makes at the time of his ordination (whether as a deacon or priest).

At the time of his ordination as a deacon, the candidate makes his first commitment to prayer by answering this question:

- *Do you resolve to maintain and deepen the spirit of prayer that is proper to your way of life and, in keeping with this spirit and what is required of you, to celebrate faithfully the Liturgy of the Hours with and for the People of God and indeed for the whole world?*

Answering “Yes” to this question places a serious obligation on the deacon (which continues into priesthood) to be a man of prayer, offering praise and petition to God through personal devotions (i.e., a Holy Hour, the Rosary, contemplation, reflection on Scripture, etc.) and especially by being faithful to offering the Liturgy of the Hours every day (i.e., Office of Readings, Morning Prayer, Midday Prayer, Evening Prayer, Night Prayer).

At the time of his ordination as a priesthood, the man expands his commitment to prayer by answering these three questions:

- *Do you resolve to celebrate faithfully and reverently, in accord with the Church's tradition, the mysteries of Christ, especially the Sacrifice of the Eucharist and the Sacrament of Reconciliation, for the glory of God and the sanctification of the Christian people?*
- *Do you resolve to implore with us God's mercy upon the people entrusted to your care by observing the command to pray without ceasing?*
- *Do you resolve to be united more closely every day to the High Priest, who offered himself for us to the Father as a pure Sacrifice, and with him to consecrate yourself to God for the salvation of all?*

Each question refers to various aspects of the ordained life; however, the necessity of prayer is at the heart of the promises made by the candidate. Without a healthy prayer life, the deacon/priest will struggle to be faithful to his ordination promises or to fulfill the ministry entrusted to him by the Lord Jesus.

Implicit in every celebration of holy orders is the assurance given by the Christian community to pray for all in ordained ministry, that they may be faithful to their commitments. Let us, clergy and laity, pray ceaselessly for each other

Peace and blessings,
Msgr. Andrew

P.S.: Please pray for Fr. Tony Kanagaraj, HGN, who traveled to India on January 6 and will return on February 5. Fr. Tony was chosen by his brother priests in the Heralds of Good News to represent them at special meetings during which his community will elect their leadership for the next six years (as well as vote on other important matters). His presence and participation at these meetings speaks highly of the esteem in which he is held within his community. While in India, Fr. Tony will also take a few days of vacation to rest and to visit with his family.