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**PRAYING FOR OUR PRIESTS:**

**A GUIDE TO PRAYING**

**FOR THE PRIESTHOOD**

**IN UNION WITH MARY**

**QUEEN OF THE CLERGY**

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## *INTRODUCTION TO THE ROSARY FOR PRIESTS*

Jesus established His Sacred Priesthood at the Last Supper when he instituted the Holy Eucharist and told His apostles, “Do this in memory of me.”

Since the Last Supper, men of every age and time have been chosen by God to stand in Jesus’ place, in persona Christi, to offer sacrifice to God and to pray and intercede for the faithful as He did.

The Sacred Priesthood of Jesus Christ is inseparable from the Eucharist and absolutely vital to the life of the Church. Each and every priest needs the love and support of each and every member of the faithful.

Let us turn, then, to Mary, Queen of the Clergy, and join with her in praying for her priest sons, the Priesthood of Jesus Christ.

## THE JOYFUL MYSTERIES

### *The Annunciation*

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The angel announces to Mary that She will conceive in her womb and bear a son who will be called Son of the Most High. Mary's "Yes", Her great "Fiat", reverberates for all time and eternity; and the Word is made flesh - God becomes Man and dwells among us.

We pray that all young men who are being called by God to the priesthood will give their consent to the will of God.

We pray that all priests will truly love and cherish their participation in the Sacred Priesthood, conscious that their "Fiat", like Mary's, resounds through all time and eternity: "You are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek."<sup>1</sup>

### *The Visitation*

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Mary, with the infant Jesus in Her womb, travels in haste to the home of Elizabeth. The infant John the Baptist in the womb of Elizabeth leaps for joy, and Elizabeth herself is filled with the Holy Spirit at the sound of Mary's voice and the presence of the Lord so near.

We pray that all priests might live and love to bring Jesus to others - that they might be the merciful, healing presence of Christ as they visit the sick, the elderly, the imprisoned and the dying.

We pray that all priests might work reverently and tirelessly to protect and defend all human life.

### *The Birth of Jesus*

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Mary gives birth to the Prince of Peace, the Light of the World, in the darkness and poverty of a stable in Bethlehem. Through Her, the Eternal Word of the Father comes as a little child to bring us the Father's message of love and forgiveness. This is the true gift of Christmas.

We pray that all priests will place their hope and trust in this message of the Father's love and forgiveness that they, too, may become as little children of God.

And we pray that as they live out this Christmas message in their own lives throughout the year, they will inspire in others the hope Christ came to bring us.

### *The Presentation*

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Mary and Joseph present Jesus in the Temple according to the Law of Moses. Simeon, a holy and devout man “awaiting the consolation of Israel”<sup>2</sup>, takes the child in his arms and blesses God, telling Mary that Her Son will be a “sign that will be contradicted”<sup>3</sup> and that Her own heart will be pierced.

We pray that all priests - “signs of contradiction” in the world today - might be messengers of God’s love and peace and consolation to the whole world.

We pray that all priests might unite themselves to the Heart of Mary when their hearts, too, are pierced by the pain and suffering that is both around and within them.

### *The Finding of the Boy Jesus in the Temple*

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Mary and Joseph, after three days of anxious searching, find the child Jesus sitting among the teachers in the Temple. He returns with Mary and Joseph to Nazareth and is obedient to them.

We pray that all priests may be found teaching the faith in word and action wherever they may be.

We pray that all priests might turn to Mary and Joseph with obedient and childlike trust in all their needs as Jesus surely did, and that, like Jesus, they may grow in wisdom and age and grace in the sight of God.<sup>4</sup>

## THE LUMINOUS MYSTERIES

### *The Baptism of Jesus*

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The Son of God, in profound humility, approaches John the Baptist and descends into the waters of the Jordan to be baptized by him. The Beloved Son sanctifies for all time the waters of baptism “while the Spirit descends on him to invest him with the mission which he is to carry out.”<sup>5</sup>

We pray that all priests, like Jesus, will humbly and lovingly accept the mission of their vocation to serve and suffer for the people of God.

We pray that every priest might be a voice in the spiritual wilderness of today’s society, calling souls to repentance and inviting them to meet and recognize Jesus as John the Baptist did - “Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world.”<sup>6</sup>

### *The Wedding Feast at Cana*

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Mary, with simplicity and genuine concern, says to Her Son, “They have no wine.”<sup>7</sup> And with faith in Her Divine Son, She turns to the servants at the wedding and says, “...do whatever He tells you.”<sup>8</sup> Jesus responds with the first of His public miracles – changing water into wine.

We pray that all priests, with loving simplicity, will follow Mary’s counsel to “...do what ever He tells you.” They, too, will see miracles.

We pray for all priests as they teach and prepare couples for the Sacrament of Marriage.

We pray that every priest will cherish his own spousal relationship with Holy Mother Church and live it out with sensitivity, chastity and love.

### *The Proclamation of the Kingdom of God and Call to Discipleship*

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Jesus came to reconcile mankind to the Father, ushering in this ministry of reconciliation with the first words of his public ministry, “...the Kingdom of God is at hand. Repent and believe in the Gospel.”<sup>9</sup>

We pray that all priests will be gentle and compassionate ministers of the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

We pray that all priests throughout their lives of ministry will pray and study the Gospels with fervor, and that as they break open the Gospel message for the faithful each day, they will preach it with truth and boldness and live it with love.

### *The Transfiguration*

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Jesus takes Peter, James, and John up the mountain where, in the presence of Moses and Elijah, He reveals to them His glory, thus strengthening their faith for the road to Calvary which lies ahead.

We pray that all priests can and will immerse themselves in prayer daily and experience in this the love and peace of God that strengthens them for their daily trials.

We pray that as each priest prays and listens to the voice of the Beloved Son, he will be transfigured into a more perfect image of the love of Christ, his eyes ever on Jesus and the glory that follows a life lived in fidelity to Him.

### *The Institution of the Holy Eucharist*

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Jesus institutes the Eucharist and the ministerial priesthood at the Last Supper. These two – the Eucharist and the priesthood – can NEVER be separated.

The priest must find his happiness – his JOY – in his oneness with Christ. This oneness realizes its fullest expression at the moment of Consecration at every Mass when the priest, in persona Christi, offers himself as both priest and victim for the salvation of souls.

We pray that every priest will believe in the True Presence of Jesus in the Holy Eucharist and will faithfully and reverently celebrate Mass each day, adoring the Lord whom he holds in his hands and witnessing his love for Christ in the Most Blessed Sacrament.

We pray for priests preparing souls of all ages for their First Communion and for those priests preparing seminarians for the Sacrament of Holy Orders.

# THE SORROWFUL MYSTERIES

## *The Agony in the Garden*

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Jesus, in fervent prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane, sweats blood as He sees the suffering, torture and humiliation that awaits Him. He feels the weight of the sins of mankind and knows that His sacrifice will be a scandal to some, misunderstood and rejected by others. In the midst of this dark and bitter agony, Jesus surrenders - "Not my will, [Father,] but thine, be done."<sup>10</sup>

It is the privilege and obligation of every priest everywhere to give his life for the sanctification and salvation of souls. We pray that all priests will surrender themselves into the hands of the Father each day, no matter what it costs.

We pray that every priest can place his trust fully in the Lord, especially in the midst of darkness, misunderstanding or humiliation - when his best efforts for the good of souls appear to be in vain.

## *The Scourging at the Pillar*

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Jesus is bound to a pillar and his sacred flesh is mercilessly scourged. His Precious Blood flows freely from His open wounds.

We pray that all priests will remain faithful to the discipline of celibacy and be diligent by their words and their example in promoting purity and chastity in all vocations.

We pray that every priest, who through weakness and neglect of his relationship with Christ, has fallen into sin, ignored or rejected the teachings of the Church, or abandoned his vocation, may repent and return to the merciful love of God.

## *The Crowning with Thorns*

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Jesus' sacred head is pierced deeply with a crown of thorns. Again, his Precious Blood flows freely for us. He is mocked and spat upon, but the "man of sorrows, despised and rejected, opens not His mouth."<sup>11</sup>

We pray that all priests will strive for and cherish the virtue of humility, shunning every show of pride and seeking always to carry out their duties with humble and sincere

obedience, in the sure knowledge that the least assignment for the Kingdom is no less than the greatest when all is done for the love of God.

We pray that all priests, like Jesus, will look with kindly and fatherly eyes on the great and the small, the rich and the poor alike in their ministry.

### *The Carrying of the Cross*

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Jesus carries his heavy cross up the hill of Calvary, falling again and again under the weight of our sins. He is exhausted, in terrible pain, and surrounded by brutality.

We pray here especially for priests who, being falsely accused or having actually fallen in some way, must yet endure scorn, gossip, and rejection rather than the love and prayer they need.

We pray that every priest, when he sees a fallen brother, will come to his aid with the fraternal charity and prayer he needs for support and healing.

### *The Crucifixion and Death of Jesus*

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Jesus came into the world to show us the way to the Father. Now, in His final hour, hanging in agony on the cross, He reveals the depth of God's love and mercy by giving his life to redeem us from sin and death.

We pray for all priests as they administer the Anointing of the Sick and carry Viaticum to the dying.

For all priests who are now on their deathbed and those who will die this day, we ask for the grace of final perseverance. We pray, too, that through their union with Christ on the cross, they may find the strength to forgive all who have offended them throughout their ministry.

And we pray for the souls of all priests in Purgatory.



## THE GLORIOUS MYSTERIES

### *The Resurrection*

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Jesus Christ is risen! We sing Alleluia!!

Here is the foundational truth of our faith. Jesus has broken the power of death, reconciled God and mankind, and opened for all the gates of Heaven.

We pray that all priests who suffer through painful trials will unite themselves to the suffering Christ that they may come to know with Him the light and joy of the Resurrection.

We pray that all priests will celebrate the Resurrection with Easter joy every Sunday.

### *The Ascension*

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If the truth of the Resurrection is the foundation of our faith, the Ascension is surely the basis for our hope.

Jesus came to show a lost and fallen humanity the way to the Father. Now, as He returns to the Father, he takes our restored humanity with him, leaving his apostles with the instructions to carry the Gospel into the whole world, making disciples of all the nations and baptizing in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.<sup>12</sup> To this very day, every priest is ordained and sent for this same purpose.

We pray for all priests as they open the doors of salvation to countless souls through the saving waters of Baptism.

We pray for the safety and protection of all priests, especially missionary priests who carry the Gospel message into dangerous and sometimes violent areas of the world.

We lift up, in a special way, those priests who will shed their blood for the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

### *The Descent of the Holy Spirit*

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The Holy Spirit descends in tongues of fire on the apostles, filling them with the love of God, sanctifying them and empowering them to go forth to announce and explain the Word of God with authority.<sup>13</sup> In a similar way, the Holy Spirit descends on every priest at his ordination to remain with him for all time in his ministry to the people of God.

We pray for all priests as they prepare souls for a new infilling of the Holy Spirit at Confirmation.

We pray that every priest might prayerfully beg for the gifts of the Holy Spirit and seek opportunities to gather with his brother priests and the faithful to pray, to praise God, and to call forth the gifts of the Holy Spirit to help build up the Body of Christ.

### *The Assumption*

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Mary is assumed, body and soul into Heaven.

The language of true love - the PROOF of true love - is sacrifice. Like Her crucified Son who sacrificed all to redeem us, Mary has sacrificed Her entire life to God. And when, at the foot of the cross, Jesus said to Her, "Woman, behold, your son,"<sup>14</sup> She took into her heart not just John, but all of humanity and, in a special way, every priest for all time and eternity.

We pray that every priest will cherish deeply his filial relationship with Mary, that he will love Her, turn to Her in all his needs, spread devotion to Her, and at last commend himself into Her maternal arms at the hour of his death.

### *The Coronation*

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Mary, most humble of all God's children, is crowned Queen. She is exalted forever over every creature in the heavens above and on earth below!

As Queen and Mother of all priests, Mary remains at the side of each of Her sons throughout his life of ministry, guiding, inspiring, and exhorting him, and interceding for him before the throne of God.

We pray for the holiness and fidelity of every priest from the day of his ordination to the day he, too, enters eternity where he may take his place with Mary and the entire Communion of Saints to experience forever the incomprehensible love of God. "*Deus meus et omnia...my God and my all!*"

## REFERENCES

- 1 Hebrews 7:17 (NAB\*)
- 2 Luke 2:25 (NAB)
- 3 Luke 2:34 (NAB)
- 4 Luke 2:52 (NAB)
- 5 *Rosarium Virginis Mariae*, 21
- 6 John 1:29 (NAB)
- 7 John 2:3 (NAB)
- 8 John 2:5 (NAB)
- 9 Mark 1:15 (NAB)
- 10 Luke 22:42 (RSV<sup>†</sup>)
- 11 Isaiah 53:3,7 (RSV)
- 12 Matthew 28:19 (NAB)
- 13 Directory on the Ministry and Life of Priests, 9
- 14 John 19:26 (NAB)

\*New American Bible (NAB)      †Revised Standard Version (RSV)

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