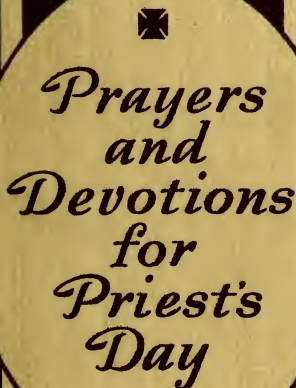


Priest's Saturday SERIES

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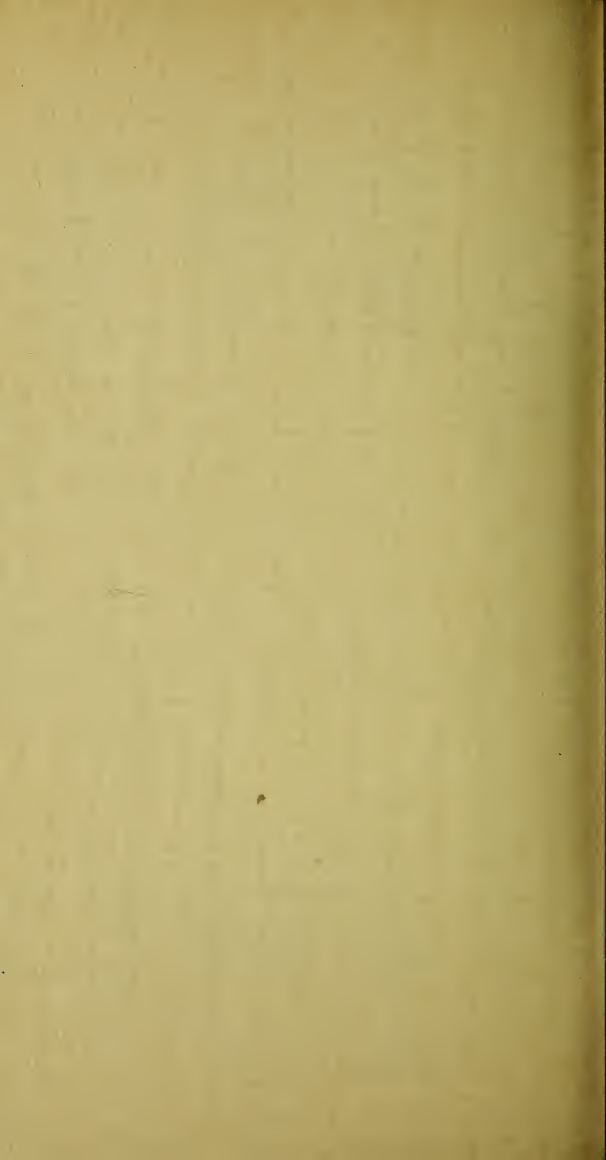
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Prayers and devotions...
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Prayers
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Priest's
Day

The SALVATORIAN FATHERS
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Prayers and Devotions
for
Priest's Day

From the Original of
P. Willibrord Menke, S. D. S.

by
Winfrid Herbst, S. D. S.



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Introduction

PRIEST'S SATURDAY

Divine Savior, Sanctify Thy Priests!

To Our Catholic People:

Listen to what our Holy Father, Pope Pius XI, says: "God in heaven and I on earth, we desire nothing more ardently than prayer and sacrifice for priests . . . Let us beg God that He may give us holy priests! If we have this, all else will follow; but if this be wanting, all else will avail nothing." It was from this trend of thought that the idea of the "Priest's Saturday" took its origin, which idea the Superior General of the Salvatorian Fathers placed before the Holy Father in special private audience on November 21, 1934. His Holiness was much pleased with the plan and said, in conclusion: "We heartily praise and bless the work . . . We repeat, the thing pleases Us, We praise and bless it heartily."—What is this plan?

The Priest's Saturday

It is something quite simple and easy, yet immeasurably great in its results. You should make it a point to offer the Saturday after the First Friday of each month to your Savior, through the hands of Mary, the great mediatrix of all graces, for the sanctification of all the priests and students for the priesthood throughout the whole world. For this purpose you should give the Saturday wholly and entirely to Him, that is to say, Holy Mass, Holy Communion, all prayers, labors, sacrifices, joys, and sorrows. Whatever you cannot do on this day (Holy Mass and Holy Communion) you ought to supply immediately on Sunday. So there is

really nothing new for you to do. You merely offer up this Saturday (or even every Saturday or some other day) for the sanctification of priests. It is not a case of any sodality or fraternity or anything like that. Like the First Friday in honor of the Sacred Heart, the Priest's Saturday seeks to become something religiously observed by all the Catholics of the world.

As the Holy Father, so also bishops and priests have greeted the Priest's Saturday with joy, have blessed it, and have recommended it to all. Bishop Dr. Nicholas Bares of Berlin, from whose diocese the Priest's Saturday went out into the world, said: "It is with great joy that I welcome this saving thought of the Priest's Saturday. If a holy priest is the gift of heaven to earth, then the efforts of the faithful, through prayer and sacrifice, for holy priests will be the fairest gift of earth to heaven . . . Therefore I wholeheartedly recommend and bless this work."

Concern about the holiness of priests is the concern of the Heart of the Divine Savior and of His Blessed Mother. Therefore, you also should be sure to take part in this "apostolate to the apostles." The Holy Father, all bishops, all priests, all students for the priesthood, and especially also your own pastor, earnestly beg of you thus to participate.

Remarks

1. The Priest's Saturday brings about an intimate union between priests and people. Surely the people will welcome with great joy the opportunity thus given to co-operate, by prayer and sacrifice, with the priest in all the work that he does for the parish. They will thus merit to have, and will efficaciously make, zealous and holy priests. Experience shows that also the children easily understand the Priest's Saturday and enter with joy upon this apostolate.

2. Especially the sick, the convalescent, and the bodily disabled, who are often so deeply pious and abounding in virtue, will find Priest's Saturday a great and apostolic field of holy endeavor and their lonely days will take on a new and profound significance as they realize that a marvelous life-work lies open before them. Such unselfish and holy effort in behalf of priests, such prayers and sacrifices, will yield most glorious fruits and the world will soon feel the blessed influence of the Priest's Saturday.

3. New vocations to the priesthood will be aroused and fostered, and surely in many a woman's soul, as she prays and sacrifices for the sanctification of priests, the hidden wish will be felt: "Oh, if I myself might become the mother of a priest!"

4. God grant that all take part in this great "apostolate to the apostles"! Surely it is a thing most pleasing to God and most fruitful in blessings here upon earth, even as it redounds to the salvation of countless souls. Spread this idea wherever and whenever you can. Be a promoter. Get others to spread and promote it. Remember that concern for the sanctification of priests is most dear to the Sacred Heart of the Divine Savior and to the Sweet Heart of His Blessed Mother. It is their concern.

The Holy Priesthood

Among all the various callings on earth the vocation to the priesthood is first in holiness and dignity. The priest is the mediator between God and men. He is the dispenser of the mysteries of God. The teacher of men. The preacher of the word of God. The confessor. The friend of the sick and the comforter of the dying. The offerer . . . the representative of Christ.

“How great is the dignity of priests, to whom is given that which to the angels is not granted! For priests alone, rightly ordained in the Church, have the power of celebrating and consecrating the Body of Christ.—A priest clad with the sacred vestments, is Christ’s vicegerent, that he may suppliantly and humbly pray to God for himself and for all the people.—When a priest celebrateth, he honoreth God, he rejoiceth the angels, he edifieth the Church, he helpeth the living, he obtaineth rest for the departed and maketh himself partaker of all good things.” (*The Following of Christ*, Bk. 4, Chap. 5.)

On the first Holy Thursday the Savior gave to His Apostles the power to offer the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass when He said: “Do this for a commemoration of Me.” On the evening of the first Easter Sunday He gave them the power to forgive sins. And during the time that remained before His ascension into heaven He bestowed upon

them other powers: to teach, to baptize, to govern.

It is therefore the defined teaching of the Church that "There is in the Church of God a special priesthood with special powers, a Sacrament of Orders, which bestows upon the recipient the necessary graces of vocation and also power over the Sacrifice of the Church and her Sacraments as well as the office of teaching and governing the faithful."

The Apostles exercised their priesthood. In the Acts of the Apostles we read (2:42): "And they were persevering in the doctrine of the Apostles, and in the communication of the breaking of bread, and in prayers."

By the imposition of hands and prayer the Apostles communicated the priestly powers to others and handed on what they had received. Thus the Apostle Matthias was chosen to take the place of Judas the traitor. By fasting, prayer, and the imposition of hands their office was conferred upon Paul and Barnabas. The Apostles themselves ordained new priests and installed them in the newly established parishes. Paul admonishes Timothy, upon whom he had conferred the priesthood: "Neglect not the grace that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with imposition of the hands of the priesthood." (1 Tim. 4:14.) "For which cause I admonish thee, that thou stir up the grace of God which is in thee, by the imposition of my hands." (2 Tim. 1:6.) As the Apostles, so also their successors transmitted these powers to others and constantly endowed new priests, new

apostles, with the powers given by Christ.

Of the first deacon, St. Stephen, Holy Writ tells us that all those who sat in the council, looking on him, saw his face as if it had been the face of an angel. As a bright light, has the great and unmerited grace of the priesthood shone down through the centuries. That it may continue so to shine in many devout and holy priests depends to a great extent also upon the prayers of the faithful for the priests. Wherefore, in the words of St. Gregory:

“Faithful people, pray for your priests!”

First Devotion

Introductory Prayer

Almighty and eternal God, our Father, we come before Thee in order to thank Thee for the great grace of the holy priesthood. And at the same time we humbly beg of Thee to grant Thine assistance and Thine abundant blessings to those who serve Thee in Thy sanctuary.

Help us to understand those sacred words of Thine which we are about to read and lend a gracious ear to our prayers through Christ our Lord. Amen.

First Reading

“All power is given to me in heaven and on earth. Going therefore, teach ye all nations: baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and behold I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world.” (St. Matt. 28:18-20).

Faith then cometh by hearing; and hearing by the word of Christ.” (Rom. 10:17.)

“And he gave some apostles, and some prophets, and other some evangelists, and others some pastors and doctors. For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of

Christ. Until we all meet into the unity of faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the age of the fullness of Christ." (Ephes. 4:11-13.)

Let us pray.

Divine High Priest and Teacher of mankind, Thou hast given to Thine Apostles and their successors for all time the power to proclaim Thy word to men, to teach, and to baptize in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost.

Behold us at Thy feet, beseeching Thee to fill Thy priests with wisdom and strength, that they may conscientiously fulfill the duties of their sublime office according to Thy will. Let them defend Thy word with apostolic courage before the great and the mighty, before the poor and the lowly. Enkindle in them the fire of true love of God and the neighbor. Bestow upon them the seven gifts of the Holy Ghost. Grant them a truly apostolic zeal for souls, one that seeks only the glorification of Thy name and the salvation of the human race for heaven. Strengthen them in sufferings and persecutions and grant that they as well as we may ever be ready, if it be Thy will, to lay down our lives for our holy faith.

Raise up zealous missionaries who will announce the glad tidings of the Gospel to infidels and heretics. Strengthen them in all dangers. Be their unfailing comfort in sufferings and adversities.

But as for us, grant that we may never cease to pray for them, so that together with

them we may strive manfully for the preservation and spread of the kingdom of God upon earth. Amen.

All ye holy apostles and evangelists, pray for us!

All ye holy bishops and confessors, pray for us!

All ye holy priests and levites, pray for us!

Second Reading

“The Lord said to my Lord: Sit thou at my right hand: until I make thy enemies thy footstool. The Lord will send forth the scepter of thy power out of Sion: rule thou in the midst of thy enemies . . . The Lord hath sworn, and he will not repent: thou art a priest forever according to the order of Melchisedech.” (Ps. 109:1-4.)

Jesus, “for that he continueth for ever, hath an everlasting priesthood. Whereby he is able also to save for ever them that come to God by him; always living to make intercession for us. For it was fitting that we should have such an high priest, holy, innocent, undefiled, separated from sinners, and made higher than the heavens. Who needeth not daily (as the other priests) to offer sacrifices first for his own sins, and then for the people’s: for this he did once, in offering himself.” (Heb. 7:24-27.)

“Therefore we also give thanks to God without ceasing: because that when you had received of us the word of the hearing of God, you received it not as the word of men, but (as it is indeed) the word of God, who worketh in you that have believed.” (1 Thess. 2:13.)

“And whilst they were at supper, Jesus took bread, and blessed, and broke: and gave to his disciples, and said: Take ye, and eat. This is my body. And taking the chalice, he gave thanks, and gave to them, saying: Drink ye all of this. For this is my blood of the new testament, which shall be shed for many unto remission of sins.” (St. Matt. 26:26-28.)

Let us pray.

Divine Savior, eternal High Priest of the New Testament, Thou hast purchased redemption and salvation for us through Thy bloody Sacrifice upon the tree of the cross. In the Holy Mass this Sacrifice is daily renewed upon the many altars of the world. Thy priests are Thy representatives. In Thy name they stand at the altar. In Thy name they offer up the adorable Sacrifice to the heavenly Father. But Thou art both the High Priest and the Victim.

With all reverence and humility we participate in these sacred mysteries, in order thus to obtain the fruits of Thy redemption. We will never exclude ourselves from Thy holy Sacrifice out of sloth or negligence, lest we be excluded from the graces of Thy redemption.

In every priest we will see and reverence Thine own Self.

Grant that also in their earthly life they may always imitate and walk worthy of Thee, their Divine Exemplar, and that together with us they may merit to be found just and holy. Amen.

All ye holy apostles and evangelists, pray for us!

All ye holy bishops and confessors, pray for us!

All ye holy priests and levites, pray for us!

Third Reading

“And I will gather together the remnant of my flock, out of all the lands into which I have cast them out: and I will make them return to their own fields, and they shall increase and be multiplied. And I will set up pastors over them, and they shall feed them: they shall fear no more, and they shall not be dismayed: and none shall be wanting of their number, saith the Lord.” (Jer. 23:3,4.)

“Take heed to yourselves, and to the whole flock, wherein the Holy Ghost hath placed you bishops, to rule the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.” (Acts 20:28.)

“Obey your prelates, and be subject to them. For they watch as being to render an account of your souls; that they may do this with joy, and not with grief.” (Heb. 13:17.)

Let us pray.

Great God, good Father! We thank Thee for Thy wise ordinance, whereby Thou hast placed over us priests to be the shepherds of our souls. Grant us the grace to listen to their words, to follow their precepts, to cooperate with their work for the salvation of our souls by a truly Christian life, and in

joy and sorrow to persevere with them on the way to heaven.

In our bishops and priests we recognize Thy representatives, given to us by the Holy Ghost. Grant that we may always be loyal and devoted to them in childlike love. Fill them anew each day with Thy Spirit, in order that they may minister unto Thee in all fidelity and be found holy on the day when Thou comest again to judge the living and the dead. Amen.

All ye holy apostles and evangelists, pray for us!

All ye holy bishops and confessors, pray for us!

All ye holy priests and levites, pray for us!

Second Devotion

Introductory Prayer

Almighty and eternal God, our Father, we come before Thee in order to thank Thee for the great grace of the holy priesthood. At the same time we humbly beg of Thee to grant Thine assistance and Thine abundant blessings to those who serve Thee in Thy sanctuary.

Help us to understand those sacred words of Thine which we are about to read and lend a gracious ear to our prayers through Christ our Lord. Amen.

First Reading

“For every high priest taken from among men, is ordained for men in the things that appertain to God, that he may offer up gifts and sacrifices for sins. Who can have compassion on them that are ignorant and that err: because he himself is also compassed with infirmity. And therefore he ought, as for the people, so also for himself, to offer for sins. Neither doth any man take the honor to himself, but he that is called by God, as Aaron was. So Christ also did not glorify himself, that he might be made a high priest: but he that said unto him: Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee. As he saith also in another place:

Thou art a priest for ever, according to the order of Melchisedech." (Heb. 5:1-6.)

"Amen, amen I say to you: He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up another way, the same is a thief and a robber. But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out. And when he hath let out his own sheep, he goeth before them: and the sheep follow him, because they know his voice." (St. John 10:1-4.)

"For Christ therefore we are ambassadors, God as it were exhorting by us. For Christ, we beseech you, be reconciled to God. Him, who knew no sin, he hath made sin for us, that we might be made the justice of God in him." (2 Cor. 5:20,21.)

Let us pray.

Divine Savior, Jesus Christ, in Thy priests Thou hast clothed poor human nature with wondrous dignity, inasmuch as Thou didst institute the holy priesthood. But no one may assume this sacred office unless Thou Thyself callest him. And Thou hast admonished us to pray for worthy laborers in Thy vineyard. Behold, we beseech Thee to raise up worthy priests from the midst of Thy people. Grant that they may prepare themselves for their sacred ministry by striving diligently after learning and piety. Do Thou Thyself send them, lest any one who is not called take upon himself the office of shepherd of souls.

Preserve in us a profound veneration for the priesthood of Thy Church. Grant that we, overlooking the frailties of the human person, may come to realize ever more clearly the surpassing holiness of this sublime Sacrament and the dignity of this exalted calling. Let none of Thy parishes be without priests. Behold, we hunger for the Bread of Life, which Thy priests administer to us. We thirst for the fountains of Thy graces, which Thy priests transmit to us in the holy Sacraments. With empty hands we daily stand in Thy presence and thank Thee for having given us priests to offer up to Thy heavenly Father gifts and sacrifices for our sins.

Give us devout priests, give us holy priests, and grant that together with them we may always walk the way of Thy commandments. Amen.

All ye holy apostles and evangelists, pray for us!

All ye holy bishops and confessors, pray for us!

All ye holy priests and levites, pray for us!

Second Reading

“For I think that God hath set forth us apostles, the last, as it were men appointed to death: we are made a spectacle to the world, and to angels, and to men.

“We are fools for Christ’s sake, but you are wise in Christ; we are weak, but you are strong; you are honorable, but we without honor.

“Even unto this hour we both hunger

and thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted, and have no fixed abode.

“And we labor, working with our own hands; we are reviled, and we bless; we are persecuted, and we suffer it.

“We are blasphemed, and we entreat; we are made as the refuse of this world, the offscouring of all even until now.

“I write not these things to confound you; but I admonish you as my dearest children. For if you have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet not many fathers. For in Christ Jesus, by the gospel, I have begotten you.”
(1 Cor. 4:9-15.)

“But we have this treasure [of the Gospel] in earthen vessels, that the excellency may be of the power of God, and not of us.

“In all things we suffer tribulation, but are not distressed; we are straitened but are not destitute. We suffer persecution, but are not forsaken; we are cast down, but we perish not. Always bearing about in our body the mortification of Jesus, that the life also of Jesus may be made manifest in our bodies. For we who live are always delivered unto death for Jesus' sake; that the life also of Jesus may be made manifest in our mortal flesh. So then death worketh in us, but life in you. But having the same spirit of faith, as it is written: I believed for which cause I have spoken; we also believe, for which cause we speak also. Knowing that he who raised up Jesus, will raise us up also with Jesus, and place us with you. For all things are for your sakes; that the grace abounding through many, may

abound in thanksgiving unto the glory of God.

“For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man is corrupted, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. For that which is at present momentary and light of our tribulation, worketh for us above measure exceedingly an eternal weight of glory. While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen, are eternal.” (2 Cor. 4:7-18.)

Let us pray.

O God, Lord and Master of all things, the life of men is in Thy hands. And yet Thou dost daily endure their wickedness and their sins.

We beg of Thee to open the eyes of the world to the shamefulness of the hatred which it bears towards Thy priests. Let all men know that Thy Church and her priests are the greatest benefactors of the human race.

But to Thy bishops and priests grant the virtues of fortitude and of prudence in all the persecutions they endure at the hands of wicked men, so that they may only tend to the welfare of Thy Church and the glory of Thy name.

Send them an angel of comfort in all their Gethsemane hours. Give them the grace to persevere on life's way of the cross and finally arrive victorious at the end.

All the perishable things of earth and all the sufferings of mankind are as nothing

compared with the glory to which Thou hast called Thy servants. Keep them from discouragement and dejection; place words of blessing upon their lips when they are cursed, words of consolation when they are calumniated, words of peace when they are maltreated.

Be Thou with them in all their endeavors and let them become like unto Thine Only-begotten Son both in the cross and in glory. Through the same Christ our Lord. Amen.

All ye holy apostles and evangelists, pray for us!

All ye holy bishops and confessors, pray for us!

All ye holy priests and levites, pray for us!

Third Reading

“At that time Jesus went through the corn on the sabbath: and his disciples being hungry, began to pluck the ears, and to eat. And the Pharisees seeing them, said to him: Behold thy disciples do that which is not lawful to do on the sabbath days. But he said to them: Have you not read what David did when he was hungry, and they that were with him: How he entered into the house of God, and did eat the loaves of proposition, which it was not lawful for him to eat, nor for them that were with him, but for the priests only? O have ye not read in the law, that on the sabbath days the priests in the temple break the sabbath, and are without blame? But I tell you that there is here a greater than the temple. And if you knew what this meaneth: I will

have mercy, and not sacrifice: you would never have condemned the innocent. For the Son of man is Lord even of the sabbath. And when he had passed from thence, he came into their synagogues. And behold there was a man who had a withered hand, and they asked him, saying: Is it lawful to heal on the sabbath days? that they might accuse him. But he said to them: What man shall there be among you, that hath one sheep: and if the same fall into a pit on the sabbath day, will he not take hold on it and lift it up? How much better is a man than a sheep? Therefore it is lawful to do a good deed on the sabbath days. Then he saith to the man: Stretch forth thy hand; and he stretched it forth, and it was restored to health even as the other. And the Pharisees going out made a consultation against him, how they might destroy him." (St. Matt. 12:1-14.)

Let us pray.

Good Savior, Thou hast made charity the fundamental precept of Christianity, in the observance of which Thou wouldst recognize Thy true disciples. Preserve in Thy Church, we beg of Thee, the spirit of Christian charity. Grant that Thy priests may persevere faithfully in the service of the poor and the needy. Inspire the hearts of the faithful with a spirit of generous almsgiving, in order that Thy servants may keep up the works of charity and ever extend their influence for good.

But be Thou Thyself, O merciful Jesus, their exceeding great reward in all their

cares and exertions. Let each one of them at the end of his priestly labors hear these words of Thine: "Well done, good and faithful servant: because thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will place thee over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." Amen.

All ye holy apostles and evangelists, pray for us!

All ye holy bishops and confessors, pray for us!

All ye holy priests and levites, pray for us!

Third Devotion

Introductory Prayer

Almighty and eternal God, our Father, we come before Thee in order to thank Thee for the great grace of the holy priesthood. At the same time we humbly beg of Thee to grant Thine assistance and Thine abundant blessings to those who serve Thee in Thy sanctuary.

Help us to understand those sacred words of Thine which we are about to read and lend a gracious ear to our prayers through Christ our Lord. Amen.

First Reading

“Blessed are you when they shall revile you, and persecute you, and speak all that is evil against you, untruly, for my sake. Be glad and rejoice, for your reward is very great in heaven. For so they persecuted the prophets that were before you.

“You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt lose its savor, wherewith shall it be salted? It is good for nothing anymore but to be cast out, and to be trodden on by men. You are the light of the world. A city seated on a mountain cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle and put it under a bushel, but upon a candlestick, that it may shine to all that are in the house. So let your light shine before men, that they

may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven." (St. Matt. 5:11-16.)

Let us pray.

Divine Savior, Thou didst foretell to Thine Apostles sufferings and persecutions from the hands of the wicked men. Grant that Thy priests may remain steadfast in all the afflictions Thou permittest to befall them, in all the persecutions wherewith the world assails them. When they are reviled and persecuted, may they be comforted by Thy sacred, infallible words and by the consciousness of Thy nearness and Thy love.

Grant that they may never become unfaithful to their sacred obligations. They are the salt of the earth. Without their priestly ministrations our spiritual life would become empty and die out. They are the light of the world. Grant that they may ever be our light on the road to heaven.

Do not punish us with a lack of priests. Give us worthy and enlightened spiritual guides, who advise us in our difficulties, comfort us in our sufferings, and bless us with the fullness of Thy grace during life and at the hour of our death. Amen.

All ye holy apostles and evangelists, pray for us!

All ye holy bishops and confessors, pray for us!

All ye holy priests and levites, pray for us!

Second Reading

"Now when it was late that same day, the first of the week, and the doors were

shut, where the apostles were gathered together, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in the midst, and said to them: Peace be to you. And when he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side. The disciples therefore were glad, when they saw the Lord. He said therefore to them again: Peace be to you. As the Father hath sent me, I also send you. When he had said this, he breathed on them; and he said to them: Receive ye the Holy Ghost. Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them; and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained." (St. John 20:19-23.)

"Amen I say to you, whatsoever you shall bind upon earth, shall be bound also in heaven: and whatsoever you shall loose upon earth, shall be loosed also in heaven." (St. Matt. 18:18.)

Let us pray.

Divine Savior, Redeemer of the human race, Thou hast appointed Thy priests to administer the holy Sacrament of Penance and hast bestowed upon them the power of forgiving sins.

We thank Thee for having given to sinful mankind this truly divine Easter gift of Thy love. Grant that all the days of our life we may hold sacred this Sacrament of peace and receive its benefits with grateful hearts.

Enlighten Thy priests and let them exercise their exalted office in the confessional as good shepherds and as Thy representatives. Enlighten them, that they may know the state of our souls, give counsel to us in all our faults. Help them to be patient with

the weak, merciful with sinners, lovable with the children! For it is Thou that speakest through them. It is the grace of Thy redemption that they administer to us. Therefore, let us not be kept away from this holy Sacrament by those human imperfections wherewith all Thy works are marred as long as they are in human hands here on earth, lest in the end we be kept away from Thy eternal redemption and the everlasting bliss of heaven. Amen.

All ye holy apostles and evangelists, pray for us!

All ye holy bishops and confessors, pray for us!

All ye holy priests and levites, pray for us!

Third Reading

“And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying: Say to Aaron and his sons: Thus shall you bless the children of Israel, and you shall say to them: The Lord bless thee, and keep thee. The Lord show his face to thee, and have mercy on thee. The Lord turn his countenance to thee, and give thee peace. And they shall invoke my name upon the children of Israel, and I will bless them.” (Num. 6:22-27.)

“With all thy soul fear the Lord, and reverence his priests. With all thy strength love him that made thee: and forsake not his ministers. Honor God with all thy soul, and give honor to the priests, and purify thyself with thy arms. Give them their portion, as it is commanded thee, of the first fruits and of purifications: and for thy negligences purify thyself with a few. Offer

to the Lord the gift of thy shoulders, and the sacrifice of sanctification, and the first fruits of the holy things." (Ecclesiasticus 7:31-35.)

"And we beseech you, brethren, to know them who labor among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you. That you esteem them more abundantly in charity, for their work's sake. Have peace with them." (1 Thess. 5:12,13.)

Let us pray.

Divine Savior, Thou hast bestowed great powers upon Thy priests. They are not only the preachers of Thy word, the dispensers of Thy mysteries; nay, more, through them Thou dost also communicate to us Thy divine blessing.

From the cradle to the grave they accompany us with their priestly blessing. They bless our children and our houses, our labors and our crops, our life and our death. Reward them abundantly for all the good they do us in body and soul. Be Thou Thyself the greatest joy in their labors, the sweetest consolation in their sufferings, the strongest support in their adversities; be their light in darkness and their exceeding great reward in the hour of death. Do Thou Thyself extend Thy hands in blessing over Thy royal priesthood even to the end of time. Amen.

All ye holy apostles and evangelists, pray for us!

All ye holy bishops and confessors, pray for us!

All ye holy priests and levites, pray for us!

Fourth Reading

The Prayer of Christ, the High Priest, for His Diciples

“Father, the hour is come, glorify thy Son, that thy Son may glorify thee. As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he may give eternal life to all whom thou hast given him. Now this is eternal life: That they may know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent. I have glorified thee on the earth; I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. And now glorify thou me, O Father, with thyself, with the glory which I had, before the world was, with thee. I have manifested thy name to the men whom thou hast given me out of the world. Thine they were, and to me thou gavest them; and they have kept thy word. Now they have known, that all things which thou hast given me, are from thee: because the words which thou gavest me, I have given to them; and they have received them, and have known in very deed that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me. I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them whom thou hast given me: because they are thine. And all my things are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them. And now I am not in the world, and these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep them in thy name whom thou hast given me; that they may be one, as we also are. While I was with them, I kept them in thy name. Those whom thou gavest me have I kept; and none of them is

lost, but the son of perdition, that the scripture may be fulfilled. And now I come to thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they may have my joy filled in themselves. I have given them thy word, and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world; as I also am not of the world. I pray not that thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that thou shouldst keep them from evil. They are not of the world, as I also am not of the world. Sanctify them in truth. Thy word is truth. As thou has sent me into the world, I also have sent them into the world. And for them do I sanctify myself, that they also may be sanctified in truth. And not for them only do I pray, but for them also who through their word shall believe in me. That they all may be one, as thou, Father, in me, and I in thee; that they also may be one in us; that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou hast given me, I have given to them; that they may be one, as we also are one: I in them, and thou in me; that they may be made perfect in one: and the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast also loved me. Father, I will that where I am, they also whom thou hast given me may be with me; that they may see my glory which thou hast given me, because thou hast loved me before the creation of the world. Just Father, the world hath not known thee; but I have known thee: and these have known that thou hast sent me. And I have made known thy name to them, and will make it known;

that the love wherewith thou hast loved me, may be in them, and I in them." (St. John 17:1-26.)

Let us pray.

Divine Savior, Jesus Christ, on the night before Thou didst die for the salvation of the world Thou didst pray so fervently to Thy heavenly Father for Thine Apostles and for all priests! Behold, we unite our poor supplications with Thy sublime prayers for Thy priests and ours. Bless their labors in Thy vineyard. Let them never grow weary in their endeavors for souls. Fill their hearts with joy in their holy vocation. Preserve them from the corruption of the world and the deceits of the devil. If they become weak, may Thy grace be their strong support; if sickness and want overtake them, be Thou unto them comfort and healing. Let them always find a secure abode in Thy Sacred Heart. Grant that they with us and we with them may at last happily arrive at our eternal home. Amen.

All ye holy apostles and evangelists, pray for us!

All ye holy bishops and confessors, pray for us!

All ye holy priests and levites, pray for us!

Litany for the Priests

(Only for private use.)

God the Father,
Son,
and Holy Ghost,
we beseech Thee, hear us.

Jesus, our High Priest,
Sacrifice,
and Teacher,
we beseech Thee, hear us.

Bless our Holy Father,
our bishops,
and priests,
we beseech Thee, hear us.

Give them the strength of Thy grace,
the love of Thy Heart,
and the spirit of sacrifice of Thine own
divine life,
we beseech Thee, hear us.

Make them firm in faith,
holy in conduct,
and faithful in Thy service,
we beseech Thee, hear us.

Fill them with the zeal of the Apostles,
with the courage of the martyrs,
with the spirit of the confessors,
we beseech Thee, hear us.

Grant that they may convert the sinners,
correct the erring,
teach the ignorant,
we beseech Thee, hear us.

Strengthen them with joy in their labors,
with patience in their sufferings,
with endurance in their struggles,
we beseech Thee, hear us.

Preserve them in love for the little ones,
in zeal for the education of youth,
in loyalty to people and country,
we beseech Thee, hear us.

Bless their words in the pulpit,
their instructions in school,
their admonitions in the confessional and at
the sickbed,
we beseech Thee, hear us.

Preserve them from the temptations of the
wicked enemy,
from the hostile plots of unscrupulous men,
from all occasions of sin,
we beseech Thee, hear us.

Make us one with them in faith,
loyal in divine service,
and holy in life,
we beseech Thee, hear us.

Give us holy bishops,
holy priests,
holy missionaries,
we beseech Thee, hear us.

Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of
the world,
have mercy on us!

Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of
the world,
have mercy on us!

Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of
the world,
have mercy on us!

Let us pray.

Jesus Christ, Son of God, Thou hast said:
The harvest is indeed great, but the laborers
are few; pray ye therefore the Lord of the
harvest that He send laborers into His vine-
yard.

Behold, we beg of Thee to increase the
number of holy priests who walk in Thy
footsteps and labor in Thy vineyard with
apostolic zeal.

Give them Thy light and Thy grace, that
they may convert unbelievers and heretics,
strengthen the weak, and spread Thy king-
dom ever more and more upon earth. Grant
that in unshakable fidelity we may stand
firmly by Thy representative, may listen to
his words, and support the labors of the
shepherds of our souls by a devout and
Christian life.

Let our prayers be acceptable to Thee and
hear our petitions. Who livest and reignest
forever and ever. Amen.

Prayers of the Church

For the Holy Father

O God, the Shepherd and Ruler of all the faithful, look propitiously upon Thy servant N., whom Thou hast been pleased to appoint pastor over Thy Church: grant, we beseech Thee, that both by word and example he may edify those over whom he is placed, and, together with the flock committed to his care, may attain unto life everlasting. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Almighty, everlasting God, have mercy upon Thy servant N., our Sovereign Pontiff, and direct him, according to Thy clemency, into the way of everlasting salvation; that by Thy grace he may desire those things that are pleasing to Thee, and perform them with all his strength. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Good Friday Supplication

Let us pray, also, for our most blessed Pope N., that our Lord God, Who hath chosen him in the order of the episcopacy, may preserve him safe and unharmed to His holy Church, to rule God's holy people.

Almighty, eternal God, in Whose judgment all things are founded, look propitiously upon our prayers and, of Thy loving kindness, preserve unto us our chosen bishop, that the Christian people, who are governed

by Thine authority, may, under so great a pontiff, be increased in the merits of their belief. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Indulgenced Prayer for the Pope

V. Let us pray for our Pontiff N. The Lord preserve him and give him life, and make him blessed upon earth, and deliver him not up to the will of his enemies.

Our Father. Hail Mary.

(Indulgence of three years, each time. Plenary, once a month under the usual conditions, if said every day for a month.)

For the Bishop

O God, the Shepherd and Ruler of all the faithful, look propitiously upon Thy servant N., whom Thou hast been pleased to appoint pastor of the diocese: grant, we beseech Thee, that both by word and example he may edify those over whom he is placed, and, together with the flock committed to his care, may attain unto life everlasting through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

For the Clergy

Almighty, everlasting God, Who alone performest what is great and wonderful, pour forth upon Thy servants and upon the congregations entrusted to them the spirit of Thy strengthening grace, and, that they may ever be truly pleasing to Thee, send down upon them the everabiding dew of Thy blessing. Amen.

Good Friday Supplication for Clergy and People

Let us pray, also, for all bishops, priests, deacons, subdeacons, acolytes, exorcists, lectors, ostiaries, confessors, virgins, widows, and for all the holy people of God.

Almighty, eternal God, by Whose Spirit the whole body of the Church is ruled, hearken unto us while we make our supplications for all its orders, that, by the gift of Thy grace, Thou mayest be faithfully served by all degrees. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

For Sick Priests

O almighty and everlasting God, the eternal salvation of them that believe, hear our prayers for Thy sick servants for whom we implore Thy mercy, that with restored health they may render Thee thanks in Thy Church.

O God, Thou at Whose will the moments of our life run on, receive the prayers and sacrifices of Thy servants; for whom we beseech Thy mercy in their sickness, that, as we have feared for their peril, we may rejoice for their safety.

O God, the sole defense of human infirmity, show forth Thy power upon Thy sick servants, that, being assisted by the help of Thy mercy, they may be found worthy to be brought back in health to Thy holy Church. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

For a Deceased Bishop

O God, Who in the apostolic priesthood

didst cause Thy servant N. to be honored with the pontifical dignity, grant, we beseech Thee, that he may be joined forever more to the fellowship of Thine apostles. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

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May Thy clemency, which we implore, O Lord, benefit the soul of Thy servant, the pontiff N., that, by Thy mercy, he may attain to everlasting fellowship with Him in Whom he hoped and believed. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

For a Deceased Priest

O God, Who didst will that Thy servant N. should flourish with the sacerdotal dignity in the apostolic priesthood, grant, we beseech Thee, that he may be joined forever to the fellowship of Thine apostles. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, Thy Son, Who liveth and reigneth with Thee in the unity of the Holy Ghost world without end. Amen.

Grant, we beseech Thee, O almighty God, that, by Thy command, the soul of Thy servant N., Thy priest, may be a sharer of everlasting beatitude in the company of the just. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, Thy Son, Who liveth and reigneth with Thee in the unity of the Holy Ghost world without end. Amen.

INDULGENCED PRAYERS

For the Sanctification of the Clergy

O Jesus, eternal Pastor of souls, hear our prayer on behalf of our priests and hear in

it Thy own eternal desire. Are not priests the object of Thy most tender and exquisite care, that profound love in which are summed up all Thy affections for souls? Let us confess our unworthiness to have good priests. But Thy mercy is infinitely greater than our folly and wickedness.

O Jesus, grant that only those ascend to Thy priesthood who are called by Thee; enlighten pastors in their choice, inspire directors with a spirit of 'counsel, and teachers in the cultivation of vocations. Give us priests who are angels of purity, models of humility, seraphs of holy love, heroes of self-sacrifice, apostles of Thy glory, and saviors and sanctifiers of souls.

Have pity on the ignorant who should be enlightened, on the sons of toil who call for someone to save them from error and redeem them in Thy name, on all the children and youths who cry for such as may save them and bring them to Thee, on so many who suffer and have need of a heart which will find them consolation in Thine. What a number of souls would arrive at perfection through the ministry of holy priests! Then, O Jesus, have compassion again on the crowds who hunger and thirst. Grant that Thy priesthood may bring to Thee fainting humanity, and let the earth be once again renewed, the Church exalted, and the reign of Thy Heart established in peace.

Immaculate Virgin, Mother of the Eternal Priest, who hadst for thy first son of adoption St. John, the beloved priest of Jesus, who didst preside in the cenacle, Mistress and Queen of the Apostles; deign to utter with

thy sacred lips this our humble prayer; do thou make its accents to penetrate to the Heart of thy divine Son, and, all-powerful in thy supplication, obtain for the Church of thy Son Jesus a perennial renewal of Pentecost. Amen.

(To the faithful who piously recite any prayer approved by ecclesiastical authority, for priestly and religious vocations, is granted an indulgence of seven years each time and a plenary indulgence under the usual conditions if the prayer has been said daily for a whole month. See No. 562 of *Preces et Pia Opera Indulgentiis Ditata*, issued by the S. Paenitentiarum Apostolica, Dec. 31, 1937.)

Prayer for Priests

O Jesus, eternal Pontiff, divine sacrificial Priest, Who by an incomparable impulse of love for men, Thy brethren, didst allow the Christian priesthood to issue from Thy Sacred Heart, continue to pour out upon Thy priests the life-giving streams of infinite love.

Live in them, transform them into Thyself; render them by Thy grace the instruments of Thy mercy; act in them and through them, and after they have been entirely clothed in Thy person by faithfully imitating Thy adorable virtues let them work, in Thy name and by the power of Thy spirit, the works which Thou hast accomplished for the salvation of mankind.

Divine Redeemer of souls, see how great is the number of those who still sleep in the darkness of error; count the number of

those unbelieving sheep who wander along by the precipices; think of the crowd of poor, starving, ignorant and feeble souls who are lamenting in their state of neglect.

Do Thou come again amongst us through Thy priests. Live again in very truth in them, make them Thy agents, and walk again through the world, teaching, pardoning, consoling, sacrificing, renewing the bonds of love between the Heart of God and the heart of man. Amen.

(300 days, once a day. Plenary, once a month under the usual conditions, if the prayer has been recited every day for a month. Pius X, March 3, 1905; Pius XI, May 17, 1927.)

To the Sacred Heart of Jesus

O Sacred Heart of Jesus, in Thine excessive love for men, in order to redeem souls and save them for heaven, Thou didst shed Thy Precious Blood. With all the fervor of our hearts we beg of Thee to accompany with Thy blessing and Thy grace the labors of priests for the salvation of souls. Grant that with all zeal they may preach Thy sacred doctrine, that they may move to repentance the hearts of sinners, that they may strengthen the good in virtue. Keep far from our congregation the assaults of the evil one; ward off all scandal and seduction, enmities and envy, uncharitableness and bad example. Let Thy love and Thy grace abide in all hearts, that we may strive with great fervor to reach our eternal goal, to avoid sin, to practice virtue, and

to encourage each other by a devout life, so that in the everlasting happiness of heaven above we may rejoice in union with Thee. Amen.

“O Divine Heart of Jesus, convert sinners, save the dying, deliver the holy souls in purgatory.” (Indulgence of 300 days, each time. Pius X, July 13, 1906.)

To the Divine Savior

Divine Savior, Thou Friend of priests, send daily to all priests the seven gifts of Thy Holy Spirit, that they may become all things to all men both in life and in death. Give them patience with the little ones, compassion on the sick, humility with the poor, courage to withstand the enemies of Thy holy Church. Make them tireless in teaching, patient and kind in the confessional, generous in the administration of Holy Communion. Let them appear terrible to hell and the powers of evil and to all who side therewith, and let them be as messengers of peace to all men of good will.

Whithersoever they go, may Thy blessing accompany them. Wheresoever they abide, may Thy peace enter in. Whomsoever they bless, may he also be blessed by Thee, O God. Make them apostles, make them saints. Amen.

“Eucharistic Heart of Jesus, model of the priestly heart, have mercy on us.” (Indulgence of 300 days, each time. Pius X, Sept. 10, 1907.)

VARIOUS PRAYERS

Offering to be Made on Priest's Saturday

Divine Savior Jesus Christ, Who hast entrusted the whole work of Thy redemption, the welfare and salvation of the world, to priests as Thy representatives, through the hands of Thy most holy Mother and for the sanctification of Thy priests and candidates for the priesthood I offer Thee this present day wholly and entirely, with all its prayers, works, sacrifices, joys, and sorrows.

Give us truly holy priests who, inflamed with the fire of Thy divine love, seek nothing but Thy greater glory and the salvation of our souls.

And thou, Mary, good Mother of priests, protect all priests in the dangers of their holy vocation and, with the loving hand of a Mother, also lead back to the Good Shepherd those poor priests who have become unfaithful to their exalted vocation and have gone astray. Amen.

Prayer for My Pastor and for All Priests

Divine Savior Jesus Christ, Who hast entrusted the weal and woe of Thy Holy Church to priests, with all the fervor of my heart I recommend to Thee the wants of my pastor and of all priests. Enrich them more and more with true priestly sanctity! Give them generous, all-embracing, apostolic hearts full of love for Thee and for all Thy souls, so that they, being themselves sanctified in Thee, may sanctify us who are confided to

their care and may lead us safely to heaven. Bestow upon them in rich abundance all Thy priestly graces! Let them ever give us a glowing example of love and fidelity towards Holy Mother Church, towards the Pope and bishops, and grant that by word and example they may shine as models of every virtue.

Most loving Jesus, bless all their priestly labors and sacrifices! Bless all their prayers and words at the altar and in the confessional, in the pulpit, and in school, in confraternities and at the bedside of the sick! Protect and preserve them in all dangers from within and from without!

Divine Savior, give to Thy Church priests who abound in true holiness! Call many good boys and young men to the priestly state! Aid and sanctify all those who are to become Thy priests!—And to the souls of departed priests grant everlasting rest!

But to me give a true spirit of faith and humble obedience, in order that in my pastor I may ever behold the representative of God and willingly follow all his teachings! Amen.

For My Sick Pastor

Divine Savior Jesus Christ, during Thine earthly sojourn Thou didst bring comfort and healing to so many who were sick. Behold, Thy friend whom Thou lovest is sick. I beg of Thee to comfort and bring relief to my sick pastor. Send him an angel to strengthen him. Restore him to health, if it be Thy holy will.

For him I offer to Thee all the prayers and

good works of this day, and I beseech Thee to bear and answer my prayer. Amen.

Prayer for All the Candidates for the Priesthood Throughout the World

Divine Savior and eternal High Priest Jesus Christ, it is Thou Who choosest with especial love those who are to be Thy priests. With all the fervor of my heart I recommend to Thee all the candidates for the priesthood throughout the world. Do Thou already now in their years of study fill their hearts with true priestly sentiments. Give them a lively and joyous faith, a great spirit of prayer, burning love for Thee and for Thy holy Church, ardent zeal for the salvation of souls, a tender devotion to the Blessed Sacrament and to Thine immaculate Mother. Also enlighten and bless all their educators and teachers in their difficult and responsible obligations.

O Mary, thou good Mother of priests, protect all candidates for the priesthood. Shield them in all those interior and exterior dangers that threaten their holy vocation during their years of study.

Grant them good health always, progress in their studies, and also the necessary financial means, so that not one of them may be excluded from the priesthood because of poverty. But, above all, be always at their side in all the temptations that assail youth, so that they may preserve untarnished their purity of heart and one day ascend the altar as holy priests of spotless purity. But especially keep away from the

priesthood those who, uncalled and unworthy, would force themselves into the sanctuary of the Most High.

All ye holy Apostles, all ye holy bishops and priests, all ye holy patrons of youth, pray for all aspirants to the priesthood, shield them and be ever their strong support, in order that they may be true apostles, holy mediators between God and men, and safe guides to many immortal souls along the road to heaven. Amen.

For Good Priests

O Jesus, Thou desirest that we pray the Lord of the harvest that He send zealous laborers into His harvest. Deign to raise up in Thy Church, and especially in this diocese, numerous and holy priests who, taking Thy Divine Heart as their Model, will in the exercise of their holy priesthood promote the glory of Thy heavenly Father and the salvation of those souls whom Thou hast redeemed with Thy Precious Blood. Amen.

O Mary, thou Mother of God and Mother of the first and eternal Priest of the Most High, increase the number of those who participate in His divine priesthood and in His power and thus continue the holy mission of thy divine Son in the whole world and especially in our own country. O thou dearest Mother of all men, give us priests, give us holy priests. Amen.

Prayer of St. Theresa of the Child Jesus, the "Little Flower"

O Jesus, eternal High Priest, keep this

Thy priest under the protection of Thy Sacred Heart, where no one can harm him. Keep unstained his anointed hands, which daily touch Thy Sacred Body. Keep pure his lips, reddened by Thy Precious Blood. Keep spotless and unearthly his heart, sealed with the sublime mark of Thy glorious priesthood. Let him grow in love and fidelity to Thee and preserve him from the contamination of the world. Together with the power of changing bread and wine, give him also the power of changing hearts. Bless his work with abundant fruit and finally grant him the crown of everlasting life. Amen.

Prayer for Priests Who Have Become Unfaithful to Their Vocation

Divine Savior Jesus Christ, Thou art the Good Shepherd Who gives His life for His sheep. Oh, be in a very special way the Good Shepherd of those poor lost priests who were also appointed by Thee to be leaders of Thy people but who have broken the oath of their holy ordination and have become unfaithful to their exalted calling. Bestow upon these poorest of the poor the very fullness of that pastoral solicitude with which Thou dost so faithfully seek the sheep that are lost! Touch their hearts with that irresistible ray of grace which emanates from Thine all-merciful love! Enlighten their minds and strengthen their wills, that they may turn away from all sin and error and come back to Thy holy altar and to Thy people.

O most compassionate Savior! Remember that Thou didst once redeem the souls of Thine erring priests with Thy Precious Blood and in infinite preferential love didst impress upon them the indelible character of the priesthood. Put wholly to shame those miserable helpers of Satan who lay snares for the virtue of priests and endanger the holy ideal of the priesthood. Most graciously accept our prayers and sacrifices for poor priests who have gone astray and hear our earnest petition. Amen.

