



Harvest of Prayer

Holy Hour for Vocations

Composed by Msgr. Charles M. Mangan
(For private use)

“Where People Pray Fervently, Vocations Flourish”

Opening Prayer

Lord, we come before You mindful of the many needs of Your Church, especially for vocations to the priesthood and the consecrated life. Hear the humble prayers of Your people gathered here before you. By this great Sacrament of Love, bring to maturity the seeds You have sown in the field of Your Church. May many more young people choose to serve You by devoting themselves to the service of Your Kingdom. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Reading from Sacred Scripture *(1 Samuel 3:1-10)*

During the time young Samuel was minister to the LORD under Eli, a revelation of the LORD was uncommon and vision infrequent.

One day Eli was asleep in his usual place.

His eyes had lately grown so weak that he could not see.

The lamp of God was not yet extinguished,
and Samuel was sleeping in the temple of the LORD
where the ark of God was.

The LORD called to Samuel, who answered, “Here I am.”

Samuel ran to Eli and said, “Here I am. You called me.”

“I did not call you,” Eli said. “Go back to sleep.”

So he went back to sleep.

Again the LORD called Samuel, who rose and went to Eli.

“Here I am,” he said. “You called me.”

But Eli answered, “I did not call you, my son. Go back to sleep.”

At that time Samuel was not familiar with the LORD,
because the LORD had not revealed anything to him as yet.

The LORD called to Samuel again, for the third time.

Getting up and going to Eli, he said, “Here I am. You called me.”

Then Eli understood that the LORD was calling the youth.
So he said to Samuel, "Go to sleep, and if you are called, reply,
'Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening.'"
When Samuel went to sleep in his place,
the LORD came and revealed his presence,
calling out as before, "Samuel, Samuel!"
Samuel answered, "Speak, for your servant is listening."

After a period of silent prayer:

Intercessions

God chooses those whom He wills, let us pray the Lord to send forth workers into His vineyard.
R. Lord, we trust in you.

As You called Abram to be the father of many nations, inspire young people to answer Your call.
R. Lord, we trust in You.

As You called Moses, tending the flocks of Jethro, provide worthy pastors to your flock in our day. *R. Lord, we trust in you.*

As You called Aaron to serve Your temple, call men to serve Your Church in the image of Christ. *R. Lord, we trust in you.*

As You spoke to awake Samuel with Your call, open the ears of Your chosen ones. *R. Lord, we trust in you.*

As every High Priest was taken from among men, so call men to offer the holy and living Sacrifice. *R. Lord, we trust in you.*

As Elisha was anointed by the prophet Elijah, give those You call strength to follow You without looking back. *R. Lord, we trust in you.*

As You called the Apostles to be ambassadors for Christ, so sends us fervent preachers to strengthen our spirits. *R. Lord, we trust in you.*

After a period of silent prayer:

Reading from Pope Benedict XVI's 2006 World Day of Prayer for Vocations Message

Remembering the counsel of Jesus: "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; pray therefore the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest" (Mt 9:37), we readily recognize the need to pray for vocations to the priesthood and to the consecrated life. It is not surprising that, where people pray fervently, vocations flourish. The holiness of the Church depends essentially on union with Christ and on being open to the mystery of grace that operates in the hearts of believers. Therefore, I invite all the faithful to nurture an intimate relationship with Christ, Teacher and Pastor of His people, by imitating Mary who kept the divine mysteries in her heart and pondered them constantly (cf. Lk 2:19).

After a period of silent prayer:

Meditation

Prayer is to vocations as water is to the crop in the field. Both need to be nourished and brought along.

Placing a heavy emphasis on praying for vocations, specific dioceses and institutes of consecrated life have noted an increase. We shouldn't raise an eyebrow. Jesus Himself commanded us to pray that there would be laborers to gather the harvest.

Much discussion centers on *the vocations crisis*. When a priest who has given thirty years of effort in promoting vocations was asked why his homeland of Malta still has candidates entering the seminary and the novitiate, his answer was disarmingly simple, even stark. In his opinion, the three ingredients for additional vocations are prayer, strong family life and pastors who encourage vocations.

Why are sufficient numbers of vocations vital? The answer has something in part to do with the Holy Father's assertion that the "holiness of the Church depends essentially on union with Christ and on being open to the mystery of grace that operates in the hearts of believers." We need saintly priests and consecrated persons who will demonstrate their own personal dependence on the Master and His grace while instructing us to strive for a profound relationship with Him.

We can't go wrong when we entrust the petition for more vocations and our own holiness to Our Lady. The human person who most resembles her Divine Son, Our Blessed Mother *wants* to be invoked. She delights in presenting our concerns to the Most Blessed Trinity. And what is the best way to show our gratitude for her role in an increase of vocations as well as in our own deepening love for Our Savior? To imitate Mary's reverence for the Lord and attention to all God is doing around her.

After a period of silent prayer:

Litany of the Holy Eucharist

Lord, have mercy. *R. Lord, have mercy.*

Christ, have mercy. *R. Christ, have mercy.*

Lord, have mercy. *R. Lord, have mercy.*

"The Bread that I will give is my flesh for the life world" (Jn 6:51) *R. My Lord and my God!*

"My flesh is food indeed and my Blood is drink indeed" (Jn 6:55) *R. My Lord and my God!*

"Take this, all of you and eat it: This is my Body which will be given up for you..." (Eucharistic Prayer) *R. My Lord and my God!*

"This is the cup of my Blood, the Blood of the new and everlasting covenant" (Eucharistic Prayer) *R. My Lord and my God!*

"The cup of blessing that we bless – is it not the sharing of the Blood of Christ?
And the bread that we break – is it not the partaking of the Body of the Lord?"
(1 Cor 10:16) *R. My Lord and my God!*

"[Heretics] abstain from the Eucharist... because they do not believe that the Eucharist is the

flesh of our Savior, Jesus Christ, who suffered for our sins and who the Father in His bounty raised up again.” (St. Ignatius of Antioch) *R. My Lord and my God!*

“[This Eucharist] has been blessed by the word of prayer instituted by Him, and from it our flesh and blood by assimilation are nourished. This, we are taught, is both the flesh and blood of Jesus incarnate.” (St. Justin Martyr) *R. My Lord and my God!*

“The seeming bread is not bread, though sensible to taste, but the Body of Christ; and the seeming wine is not wine, though the taste would have it so, but the Blood of Christ.”
(St. Cyril of Jerusalem) *R. My Lord and my God!*

“You ought so to partake at the Holy Table as to have no doubt at all concerning the reality of the body and blood of Christ. For what is taken in the mouth is that which is believed by faith, and it is vain for them to respond ‘Amen’ who dispute against that which is taken.” (St. Leo the Great) *R. My Lord and my God!*

“Sight, touch, taste are each deceived; hearing alone safely is believed.” (St. Thomas Aquinas)
R. My Lord and my God!

The Lord’s Prayer

Now offer together the prayer our Lord Jesus Christ taught us:
Our Father...

After a brief period of silence, the Holy Hour for Vocations concludes:

Closing Prayer

O Father, rise up among Christians, abundant and holy vocations to the priesthood, who keep the faith alive and guard the blessed memory of Your Son Jesus through the preaching of His word and the administration of the Sacraments, with which You continually renew Your faithful.

Grant us holy ministers of Your altar, who are careful and fervent guardians of the Eucharist, the Sacrament of the supreme gift of Christ for the redemption of the world.

Call ministers of Your mercy, who, through the Sacrament of Reconciliation, spread the joy of Your forgiveness.

Grant, O Father, that the Church may welcome with joy the numerous inspirations of the Spirit of Your Son and, docile to His teachings, may she care for vocations to the ministerial priesthood and to the consecrated life.

Sustain the bishops, priests and deacons, consecrated men and women, and all the baptized in Christ, so that they may faithfully fulfill their mission at the service of the Gospel.

This we pray through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Mary, Queen of Apostles, pray for us!

(Prayer from Pope Benedict XVI’s 2006 World Day of Prayer for Vocations Message)