



HARVEST OF PRAYER

HOLY HOUR FOR VOCATIONS

“Witnesses to the Kingdom”

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

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 *(John 5:19-36)*

Jesus answered and said to them, “Amen, amen, I say to you, a son cannot do anything on his own, but only what he sees his father doing; for what he does, his son will do also. For the Father loves his Son and shows him everything that he himself does, and he will show him greater works than these, so that you may be amazed.

For just as the Father raises the dead and gives life, so also does the Son give life to whomever he wishes. Nor does the Father judge anyone, but he has given all judgment to his Son, so that all may honor the Son just as they honor the Father. Whoever does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent him.

Amen, amen, I say to you, whoever hears my word and believes in the one who sent me has eternal life and will not come to condemnation, but has passed from death to life.

Amen, amen, I say to you, the hour is coming and is now here when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live.

For just as the Father has life in himself, so also he gave to his Son the possession of life in himself.

And he gave him power to exercise judgment, because he is the Son of Man. Do not be amazed at this, because the hour is coming in which all who are in the tombs will hear his voice and will come out, those who have done good deeds to the resurrection of life, but those who have done wicked deeds to the resurrection of condemnation.

“I cannot do anything on my own; I judge as I hear, and my judgment is just, because I do not seek my own will but the will of the one who sent me.

“If I testify on my own behalf, my testimony cannot be verified. But there is another who testifies on my behalf, and I know that the testimony he gives on my behalf is true. You sent emissaries to John, and he testified to the truth. I do not accept testimony from a human being, but I say this so that you may be saved. He was a burning and shining lamp, and for a while you were content to rejoice in his light. But I have testimony greater than John’s. The works that the Father gave me to accomplish, these works that I perform testify on my behalf that the Father has sent me.”

After a period of silent prayer:

Intercessions

For our Holy Father, Benedict XVI, and all our bishops, may they lead and guide the People of God in the ways of holiness, we pray to the Lord. *R. Lord, hear us!*

For all those called to serve the Lord and His Church as priests, deacons and in the consecrated life, that they will take delight in the glory which is given Him through their faithfulness and love, we pray to the Lord. *R. Lord, hear us!*

That men and women called to proclaim the Kingdom of God by their lives of service and witness, may receive the grace they need to testify to the truth of God’s love, we pray to the Lord. *R. Lord, hear us!*

That all those now discerning their vocation will be attentive in prayer and active in their response to Christ the Eternal Word who calls them, we pray to the Lord. *R. Lord, hear us!*

For a deepening conviction among Catholics that each is hidden with Christ in God and that more will be called to live that mystery as priests and those consecrated to the Lord by means of the evangelical counsels, we pray to the Lord. *R. Lord, hear us!*

For a deeper sense of gratitude for the profoundly beautiful mystery celebrated at every Mass and for all our priests, who humbly make Christ present by the power of the Holy Spirit through the grace of ordination, we pray to the Lord. *R. Lord, hear us!*

For all those who have died, especially all priests, deacons and those consecrated to the Lord through vows, may their light shine as they experience the fullness to God’s glory, we pray to the Lord. *R. Lord, hear us!*

After a period of silent prayer:

Reading from Pope Benedict XVI's Address to the Clergy and Religious Given During the Celebration of Vespers at the Shrine of Mariazelli in Austria on September 10, 2007.

At the heart of the mission of Jesus Christ and of every Christian is the proclamation of the Kingdom of God. Proclaiming the Kingdom in the name of Christ means for the Church, for priests, men and women religious, and for all the baptized, a commitment to be present in the world as His witnesses. The Kingdom of God is really God Himself, who makes Himself present in our midst and reigns through us. The Kingdom of God is built up when God lives in us and we bring God into the world. You do so when you testify to a “meaning” rooted in God’s creative love and opposed to every kind of meaninglessness and despair. You stand alongside all those who are earnestly striving to discover this meaning, alongside all those who want to make something positive of their lives. By your prayer and intercession, you are the advocates of all who seek God, who are journeying towards God. You bear witness to a hope which, against every form of hopelessness, silent or spoken, points to the fidelity and the loving concern of God. Hence you are on the side of those who are crushed by misfortune and cannot break free of their burdens. You bear witness to that Love which gives itself for humanity and thus conquered death. You are on the side of all who have never known love, and who are no longer able to believe in life. And so you stand against all forms of injustice, hidden or apparent, and against a growing contempt for man. In this way, dear brothers and sisters, your whole life needs to be, like that of John the Baptist, a great, living witness to Jesus Christ, the Son of God incarnate. Jesus called John “a burning and shining lamp” (Jn 5:35). You too must be such lamps! Let your light shine in our society, in political and economic life, in culture and research. Even if it is only a flicker amid so many deceptive lights, it nonetheless draws its power and splendor from the great Morning Star, the Risen Christ, whose light shines brilliantly—wants to shine brilliantly through us—and will never fade.

After a period of silent prayer:

Meditation

Each baptized person is to proclaim the Kingdom of God. To do so, he must honor that special commitment “to be present in the world” as a witness of Jesus Christ.

This *commitment* to be present in the world may strike us as contradictory to the longstanding advice we may have received that it is better to flee the world. Shouldn’t we avoid engaging the world and instead embrace every opportunity to shun it?

The Holy Father would have us be clear about this important matter. “The Kingdom of God is built up when God lives in us and we bring God into the world.” Since we are rooted in Christ, we enjoy the supernatural strength—not of our own accord but due to the goodness and mercy of God—to be witnesses to the world without being compromised or seduced by it.

Our Lord relies on us to be the voice for those who lack one—to defend those who are incapable of defending themselves. In a word, God counts on us to build up His Kingdom and to remember the forgotten. We do our part by sharing Him with the world.

Therefore, we confidently “go” to the world, without imbibing its false security and empty promises, to testify to the Risen Lord Jesus. We accept the challenge uttered by Pope Benedict XVI: “You too must be such lamps!”

Providentially, we don't need to be witnesses by virtue of our own abilities. Rather, the lamp of each Christian "draws its power and splendor from the great Morning Star, the Risen Christ, whose light shines brilliantly—wants to shine brilliantly through us—and will never fade." What a consolation that Jesus lives in each of us!

How can we ever thank God sufficiently for His kindness in allowing us to be His witnesses?

After a period of silent prayer:

Thy Kingdom Come Litany

Eucharistic Lord, I believe and profess that You are truly Christ, the Son of the Living God, who came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the first. *Thy Kingdom Come!*

Eucharistic Lord, I believe that Your Sacramental Presence is truly Your Most Precious Body and Blood. Make me worthy to receive for the remission of all my sins and for life ever-lasting. *Thy Kingdom Come!*

Eucharistic Lord, accept me as a partaker of Your Mystical Supper, for I will not betray You as did Judas, but like the Good Thief confess to You as Lord and Savior. *Thy Kingdom Come!*

Eucharistic Lord, may the partaking of these Holy Mysteries, be not for my judgment or condemnation, but for the healing of soul and body. *Thy Kingdom Come!*

Eucharistic Lord, be merciful to me a sinner. Forgive my transgressions for I have sinned without number. *Thy Kingdom Come!*

Eucharistic Lord, may this Bread of Life help me anticipate the Heavenly Banquet yet to come in the New Jerusalem. *Thy Kingdom Come!*

Eucharistic Lord, may this Font of Blessing be the wellspring of graces needed to preserve in faith until my last dying breath. *Thy Kingdom Come!*

Lamb of God, Who Takes Away the Sins of the World, *Thy Kingdom Come!*

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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 God, Who in this wonderful Sacrament has left us a memorial of Thy Passion. Grant us the grace, we beseech Thee, so to venerate the Sacred Mysteries of Thy Body and Blood, that we may ever continue to feel within ourselves the blessed fruit of Thy Redemption, This we ask through Christ Our Lord. Amen.