

The Divine Praises

Blessed be God.

Blessed be His Holy Name.

Blessed by Jesus Christ, true God and true man.

Blessed be the Name of Jesus.

Blessed by His most Sacred Heart.

Blessed by His most Precious Blood.

Blessed Be Jesus in the most Holy Sacrament of the Altar.

Blessed by the Holy Spirit, the Paraclete.

Blessed be the great mother of God, Mary most Holy.

Blessed be her holy and Immaculate Conception.

Blessed be her glorious assumption.

Blessed by the name of Mary, virgin and mother.

Blessed be St. Joseph, her most chaste spouse.

Blessed be God in his angels and in his saints.



Holy Hour For Vocations



HOLY HOUR FOR VOCATIONS

Forward

Through devotions, we have a wonderful opportunity to meld tradition and a sense of adventure. In prayer, we're never quite sure what will happen. We do know that if we choose to let Jesus accompany us, we will keep our sense of direction.

There are times through the year that the Church especially draws attention to Christian vocations: National Vocation Awareness Week, Consecrated Life Day, World Day of Prayer for Vocations.

Conversion, Discernment, Mission: Fostering a Vocation Culture in North America is a pastoral plan for vocations. When we visit people of different cultures, we embark on an adventure as we experience a different way of life. We identify with our cultural roots. The emergence of a vocation culture will invite us to embrace our Catholic identity, which is rooted foremost in prayer, both individual and communal.

In this new culture, we do not abandon the traditions of the Church. Instead, we resurrect them. Remember that after Jesus rose from the dead, people did not recognize him at first. In today's Church, young people may never have participated in a Holy Hour regularly. This booklet can serve as an introduction to this tradition.

Every person has a vocation. In everyday terms, a vocation is the way God wants us to live in holiness. Jesus grew up in a human family that modeled holiness. As an adult, He sought to change the world, accompanied and sometimes abandoned by friends. He became our high priest.

People are called to the vocations of marriage and family life, single life as a lay person, or ordained and religious life as priests, deacons, religious brothers and sisters. In a vocation culture, we find new relevance in Jesus' example and the prayer traditions of our faith as we seek to discover our purpose in God's Plan.

Archdiocese of Chicago Vocation Office

Invocations

Leader: For priests who are ordained to share in the role of shepherding Your people through Word, Sacrament, and leadership.

All: Lord, we give you thanks and praise.

For priests, sisters and brothers living the vows of religious life.

Lord, we give you thanks and praise.

For deacons, whose call is to be men of service at the altar and among the poor and marginalized of society.

Lord, we give you thanks and praise.

For seminarians pursuing academic, spiritual, pastoral, and human formation as they continue to discern a call to diocesan priesthood.

Lord, we give you thanks and praise.

For men and women in the formation programs in religious communities that they may discover how to reflect God's face to the world through the charisms and spiritualities of their various congregations.

Lord, we give you thanks and praise.

For members of secular institutes and institutes of consecrated life as they strive to be a transforming presence in the secular world.

Lord, we give you thanks and praise.

For young people, that their school, extracurricular, work and social experiences may guide them along the right paths,

Lord, we give you thanks and praise.

For parents, that they may be open to God's desire for their children and support God's desires in them.

Lord, we give you thanks and praise.

For children, whose spontaneity, curiosity, trust, and love remind us of Jesus' desire that adults become as children.

Lord, we give you thanks and praise.

For teachers, that they may help their students grow in knowledge, faith and discernment.

Lord, we give you thanks and praise.

For coaches, that their leadership will inspire students to do their best, to value teamwork, and to respect others.

Lord, we give you thanks and praise.

For guidance counselors and others who work with young people thinking about career and vocation choices.

Lord, we give you thanks and praise.

All: Amen.



Prayer to Mary for Vocations

Most Holy Virgin, certain of your intercessions,
we pray that the mysteries
of the Risen Christ and of the Holy Spirit
may enlighten many to become willing
and generous servants of the Church.
We pray for our youth
to whom the Lord addresses a special invitation
of closer fellowship with himself.
May they refuse to be carried away
by the things of this world,
but open their hearts instead,
to the friendly voice that calls them.
May they feel capable of making
a life-long commitment
to Christ and to his Church,
for the salvation of humankind.
May they trust that Divine Grace
will endow them with the power
to make a total offering of themselves
as they feel the attraction
of priestly, religious and missionary life.

We pray for the Christian families,
that they may provide
a favorable atmosphere for their youngsters
and help them make the right choices.
We beseech you that all priests and religious
be an example to our youth by their availability and
humble readiness to accept the gifts of the Holy Spirit,
May they be able to extend to all the fruits of love and peace.
Amen.

Pope John Paul II

Quiet/Optional: soft, meditative music.

Prayer

L: Loving God,
You speak to us and nourish us
Through the life of this faith community
And through Eucharist.

ALL: Here, in the presence of the Eucharist,
We ask for Your generous blessings

Upon those who serve You
As lay ministers,
Religious priests, brothers and sisters,
Deacons,
Diocesan priests;

Upon those discerning a call to Church ministry;

Upon parents whose love and acceptance teach their children
About the love of God;

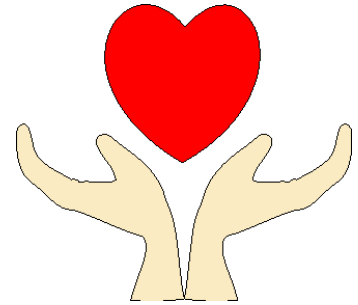
Upon single people who give themselves in friendship,
Following the model of Jesus, who calls us “friends;”

Upon children growing in faith and understanding of their identity
As children of God.

ALL: May those who are opening their hearts and minds to Your call
be encouraged and strengthened through our prayers and invitations to
listen to Your voice.

L: We ask for these blessings,
Knowing that, apart from You, we can do nothing,
And that with You, all things are possible.

Amen.





Meditation

Can be read by 5 different people with a pause between sections/can be read quietly/can be read by one person with a pause between sections.

In scripture, we find some recurring themes. “Do not be afraid,” the angel said to Mary (Lk 1:30). Imagine yourself doing chores around the house and turning around and seeing an angel!! Who wouldn’t be afraid? Picture the disciples tossed about at sea while Jesus sleeps on a cushion at the stern. “Why are you terrified?” Jesus asks when they wake him up (Mk. 4:37-40). He even had to ask? In the Old Testament, God tells the youthful, tongue-tied Jeremiah, “Have no fear,” and sends him off as a prophet to the nations (Jer.1:4-8). No fear?

God has a plan for each of us. Even if we think we have things figured out, we may be surprised. Mary was about to get married and probably had all of the thought of a bride-to-be, looking forward to life with her husband, having children, and making a “home.” The angel left Mary with a message that threw everything into turmoil!!

With Jeremiah, we have no indication of whether he had concrete plans for his future. God wanted him to be a prophet. The call to priesthood, the diaconate, or consecrated life can come at any time. Like Jeremiah, we might try to talk God into sending us to meet some other need in some other way. We might try to talk ourselves out of believing that God really wants us to serve in Church ministry. God will continue to invite, no matter how many times we decline!!

Then, we have the disciples, who suddenly found themselves in a life-or-death situation out on the water. Even in our lives today, things may be going along smoothly when illness, an accident or other life-altering event occurs.

We all have a vocation, but how do we discover it? Jesus isn’t walking around these days. Angels don’t usually make personal appearances. Still, God comes to us through the Eucharist, prayer, and the people and circumstances of our lives. He is with us through joy, confusion, fear and faithfulness.

Take some time for personal reflection on elements of the above meditation that may touch you.



Prayer to Jesus, the Good Shepherd

Leader: O Jesus, Good Shepherd, bless our parishes with numerous priests, deacons, men and women religious, consecrated laity and missionaries, according to the needs of the entire world which you love and wish to save.

Left side: We especially entrust our community to you; grant us the spirit of the first Christians, so that we may be a cenacle of prayer, in loving acceptance of the Holy Spirit and his gifts.

Right Side: Assist our pastors and all who live a consecrated life. Guide the steps of those who have responded generously to your call and are preparing to receive Holy Orders or to profess the evangelical counsels.

Left Side: Look with love on so many well-disposed young people and call them to follow you.

Right Side: Help them to understand that in you alone can they attain complete fulfillment.

Left Side: To this end we call on the powerful intercession of Mary, mother and model of all vocations.

Right Side: We beseech you to sustain our faith with the certainty that the Father will grant what you have commanded us to ask.

All: Amen.

Pope John Paul II



Reflection with instrumental music/quiete Song:

Third Reading: Philippians 1:3-11

(Paul and Timothy's ministry was about partnership. God could do everything alone, but has a different plan. Scripture records that Paul prayed that Jesus' followers would grow in love, perception, and the ability to discern. God has things to accomplish through each one of us. All of us are called to holiness, love, and service.)

I give thanks to my God each time I remember you, and when I pray for you, I pray with joy. I cannot forget all you shared with me in the service of the Gospel, from the first day until now. Since God began such a good work in you, I am certain that he will complete it in the day of Christ Jesus.

This is my hope for you, for I carry you all in my heart: whether I am in prison or defending and confirming the Gospel, you are with me and share the same grace.

God knows that I love you dearly with the love of Christ Jesus, and in my prayers I ask that your love may lead you each day to a deeper knowledge and clearer discernment, that you may have good criteria for everything. So you may be pure of heart and come blameless to the day of Christ, filled with the fruit of holiness that comes through Christ Jesus, for the glory and praise of God.

From the *Christian Community Bible*
Catholic Pastoral Edition

Silent reflection

Our Father



First Reading: Jeremiah 1:4-10

(Even before we are born, God has a purpose for our lives in the historic time and place in which we come into the world. When we doubt our place in God's plan, our God assures us that He knows what He's doing and strengthens us for whatever lies ahead.)

A word of Yahweh came to me. "Even before I formed you in the womb I have known you; even before you were born I had set you apart, and appointed you a prophet to the nations!"

I said, "Ah, Lord Yahweh! I do not know how to speak; I am still young!"

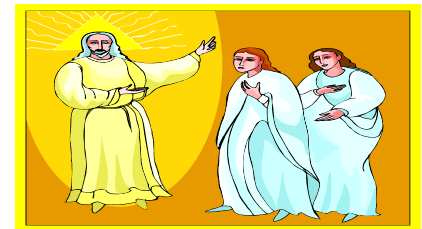
But Yahweh replied, "Do not say, 'I am too young,' for now you will go whatever be the mission I am entrusting to you, and you will speak of whatever I command you to say. Do not be afraid of them, for I will be with you to protect you – it is Yahweh who speaks!"

Then Yahweh stretched out his hand and touched my mouth and said to me,

"Now I have put my words in your mouth. See! Today I give you authority over nations and over kingdoms to uproot and to pull down, to destroy and to overthrow, to build and to plant."

From *Christian Community Bible*
Catholic Pastoral Edition

Quiet reflection



What excuses do I give? What does God say to me about it? What am I going to do about it?

Song/Quiet Reflection

PRAYER

(God calls us everyday in many different ways. We never need to be afraid to answer, for God is faithful and will do all that has been promised. God promised to be with us until the end of time. That promise is fulfilled by being with us in his word, in the bread of life, in the Eucharist, in one another.)

L: Gracious God, thank You for Your Presence among us and in the human heart.
All: **Lord, you form each of us throughout our lives, giving us all we need to do Your will.**

Jesus, You came to dwell not only among us but within us. Truly you are the food for the spiritual hunger that we feel in a world filled with beauty and goodness but also entrapped in sin.

Lord, you form each of us throughout our lives, giving us all we need to do Your will.

It is only with your guidance that we can discover our vocations. Help us to listen, reflect prayerfully, and make choices in accordance with Your will.

Lord, you form each of us throughout our lives, giving us all we need to do Your will.

Help us to live in such a way that invites others to want to share in the faith that You have given to us. As we seek to continually grow in faith please grant us the wisdom to see how the teachings of Scripture and Church tradition apply today in our lives.

Lord, you form each of us throughout our lives, giving us all we need to do Your will.

Like the first disciples, who had no idea of what they were getting into, help us to trust in You. Lord, help us to be persons of prayer – to be in dialog with You who sustains us, who inspires us to do more while accepting us as we are, and who is a God of loving relationships.

Lord, you form each of us throughout our lives, giving us all we need to do Your will.

Loving God, vocations to ordained, consecrated, married, or single life are all gifts that You have given and continue to give as part of Your mysterious and glorious plan. Each vocation has a place in the world and is given for your glory and the good of all creation. Please give us the grace to give ourselves in service to others.

Lord, you form each of us throughout our lives, giving us all we need to do Your will.

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Second Reading: Lk. 1:26-38

(In Mary, we have a model for what it means to respond in faith. Mary could have said, “Give me a few days to think about it,” or “I’m going to get married soon, ask someone else.” Like Mary, God invites us to do our part in bringing salvation to the world. We might not always understand the things that happen to us, or the things that God asks of us, but Mary teaches us to ponder these things in our hearts).

In the 6th month, the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a town of Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man named Joseph, of the house of David, and the virgin’s name was Mary. And coming to her, he said, “Hail, favored one! The Lord is with you.” But she was greatly troubled at what was said and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. Then the angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. Behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give him the throne of David his father, and he will rule over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.” But Mary said to the angel, “How can this be, since I have no relations with a man?” And the angel said to her in reply, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. Therefore the child to be born will be called holy, the Son of God. And behold, Elizabeth, your relative has also conceived a son in her old age, and this the sixth month for her who was called barren; for nothing will be impossible for God.” Mary said, “Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word.” Then the angel departed from her.

From the new *American Bible*

Quiet reflection and Personal prayer

Prayer Response

Prayer

Leader: Thank you, Lord, for the knowledge you impart and the mystery that requires faith in lieu of understanding as we gather in Your presence.

You call each of us by name, to serve actively, listen prayerfully, and respond fully to your call.

In your earthly ministry, Lord, you lived a counter-cultural life that got people thinking and living differently.

All: Please bless each step we take, whether running joyfully or walking hesitantly, as we try to follow you. Amen.

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