

Today is World Day of Prayer for Vocations. Jesus commands us, “BEG the Master of the Harvest to send out laborers into His harvest”! (Mt. 9:38), in other words, BEG God... pray fervently and often... for vocations to the ordained ministries, to consecrated life, and to missionary life. Marriage is also a beautiful vocation and a TRUE path to sainthood, and of course we should also pray for vocations to Marriage, by praying for all dating and engaged couples. But the World Day of Prayer for Vocations is about praying for vocations to the ordained ministries (which includes priesthood and diaconate), vocations to consecrated life, and vocations to missionary life. To sum it all up, today we pray for “laborers for God’s harvest...” Do you BEG GOD for “laborers for God’s harvest...”, every day?

What does the term “consecrated life” mean? Consecrated life includes the vocations to consecrated virginity, and to religious brotherhood and sisterhood. Some sisters are called to the ACTIVE life [*running], serving in healthcare or education, and others are called to the CONTEMPLATIVE [*praying] life, living in a monastery and spending much of their life praying for the salvation of souls, including you and me!

Besides praying, God asks each of us here today to PLANT VOCATION SEEDS [*prop: seeds packet with “vocation seeds” written on it] in our children, grandchildren, nieces, nephews, and young people from our parish. How do we plant VOCATION SEEDS? One way is by telling a young person, “I would be proud of you if God called you to be a priest or sister or brother and you said YES!” Or, we can ask a young man, “have you ever thought about becoming a priest, deacon, or brother?” Or ask a young woman, “Have you ever thought about becoming a sister?” Many people asked me if I had ever thought of being a priest when I was young. I’m so glad they did, because if they hadn’t, I might not have seriously asked Jesus if He was calling me to the priesthood!

This week, I invite all the ADULTS... to plant a vocation seed by talking to at least one young person about vocations.

This weekend, 10 of our young parishioners will receive their First Holy Communion. You recently received your First Sacrament of Reconciliation. In the future, whenever the bishop decides, you will receive the Sacrament of Confirmation. Then when you turn 16, you’ll receive the Sacrament of Holy Marriage... JUST KIDDING! Most of you will be called to Marriage, but God might call some of you to the vocations of ordained life, consecrated life, or missionary life. But God calls ALL of you to become a Saint. That’s what each vocation is, a path to Sainthood.

I asked them recently, when Jesus said “This is my body” and “This is the chalice of my Blood” did He mean this is a SYMBOL of my Body, or this ACTUALLY IS my body and blood, my entire person, hidden under the appearance of bread and wine?

Remember the story of the changing of water to wine at the wedding at Cana? It shows that Jesus has power to change one thing into a different thing. Jesus has power to change one thing into a different thing. That's what happens at Mass: Jesus changes the bread and wine into something else, His Body and Blood, His Person.

Remember the story of the multiplication of the loaves and fish? Jesus multiplied bread and fish for over 5000 people. This shows Jesus has power to multiply things. Jesus has power to multiply things. This is what happens at Mass: Jesus multiplies His Presence in every small host. Every small Host is His full, complete Presence.

Jesus words take effect. Jesus words take effect. Think of how Jesus said to the blind man, "have sight", He got his sight back! Think of how Jesus said to the crippled man, "Get up and walk", and He got up and walked! Jesus words take effect. At the Last Supper, Jesus said those words, "This IS my Body... This IS the chalice of my blood." Jesus gave the authority to the first priests to say these words. This authority is given to every priest. I am able to say "This IS my Body... This IS the chalice of my blood" and Jesus speaks THROUGH ME, and His words take effect. Through His Holy Spirit, Jesus changes the bread and wine into His hidden Presence!

Today, you will receive the Presence of Jesus in Holy Communion. What you do RIGHT AFTER you receive is very important. If you let yourself look around, and daydream, and watch other people receive, you will miss out on a chance to grow in your friendship with Jesus. So today, right after you receive, close your eyes. Close your eyes, and talk to Jesus. Thank Him for coming into your heart in Holy Communion. Ask Him to help you to love others more. Then you will grow in your friendship with Jesus. So Today I invite our First Communicants, AND EVERYONE HERE, to grow in friendship with Jesus by talking to Him after you receive Him into your heart!

ANNOUNCE:

- Good Shepherd Christian Mothers is offering their college textbook fund. Applications are available to all parish high school graduating seniors at all churches or by stopping by the parish office or by calling 658-8824 and getting it emailed or mailed to you. They offer three awards of \$400.00! Deadline to return application is April 29th 2021 at 3p.m. Recipients will be announced at Mass.
- Stop in the tent by the parish center to celebrate Fr. Nate Harburg's 10 Year Ordination Anniversary Open House! Food graciously provided by Knights of Columbus and Christian Mothers. Lawn games. Etc
- Take lilies home