

Holy Hour For Priests

The Hour of Adoration is divided in four parts. Each quarter of an hour is dedicated to Adoration, Thanksgiving, Reparation, and prayer or supplication.

Opening prayer:

My God, poor, weak and miserable as I am, I have come to spend this hour alone with Thee, in reparation for the priests who have forgotten that they are Thou chosen souls. Especially, dear God, do I offer this holy hour for the priests who at this moment need it most. In praying for consecrated souls, help me to remember my own utter weakness, misery and nothingness. Were it not for Thy grace, I would be far worse than those for whom I pray. O My God, help those priests who are faithful to remain faithful; to those who are falling, stretch forth Your Divine Hand that they may grasp it as their support. And for those poor unfortunate souls who have fallen, lift them up in the great ocean of Your Mercy, that being engulfed therein, they may receive the grace to return to Thy Great Loving Heart. Amen

First Quarter of an Hour: Adoration

Meditation: "The violence of the enemy is always directed against those priests who are most generous and most loyal. The more you are like your Divine Model, your Savior and your God, the more certainly will you be the target for the calumnies, the abuse and persecutions of the wicked.

The disciple is not above his Master. If they have persecuted Me, said Jesus Christ to His Disciples, they will also persecute you. You shall be dragged before tribunals, you shall be scourged, you shall be cast into prisons, you shall be condemned to death. Priest of God, you knew all this, you were aware of the dangers of your mission, and you cheerfully accepted the burden. You are a priest because you wished to be one; you saw before you conflicts, contradictions and trials of every sort; still you did not hesitate, you said generously with St.

Thomas: Let us also go that we may die with Him." -- Jacques Nicolas et Rev. P. Millet, S.J. (*Jesus Living in the Priest: Considerations on the Greatness and Holiness of the Priesthood, 1901*)

Act of Adoration for Priests: Lord Jesus Christ, Priest and Victim, behold, I kneel before Thy Eucharistic Face on behalf of all Thy priests, and especially those priests of Thine, who, at this moment, are most in need of Thy grace. (Here make mention of priests for whom you wish to pray).

For them and in their place, allow me to remain, adoring and full of confidence, close to Thy Open Heart, hidden in this, the Sacrament of Thy Love. Through the sorrowful and Immaculate Heart of Mary, our Advocate and the Mediatrix of All Graces, pour forth upon all the priests of Thy Church that torrent of mercy that ever flows from Thy pierced Side: to purify and heal them, to refresh and sanctify them, and at the hour of their death, to make them worthy of joining Thee before the Father in the heavenly sanctuary beyond the veil where Thou art always living to make intercession for us. Amen.

Eucharistic Face of Jesus, Sanctify Thy Priests!

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, uncharitable 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.

Second Quarter of an Hour: Thanksgiving

Meditation: When He had rested on the seventh day after the stupendous achievement of the natural creation, God made man to be its priest. When He rose on the third day after resting from the labors of His Passion, Incarnated God set the crown on his work of redemption by instituting the Christian priesthood. It was a fresh act of creation, no less amazing in its results than that other; for the powers which the Christian priesthood enjoys exceed the natural powers of man no less significantly than man's natural powers exceed those of the brute beasts. The world, fallen and redeemed, was to be reconciled to God by the ministry of the priest, a representative man, chosen out among his fellows to be their spokesman and God's ambassador. Sanctified by his office, he was to intercede for his sinful brethren, to come between them and God's anger, offering sacrifice in their name. True, there was nothing unheard of in that. For centuries before our Lord came, priests had been offering sacrifice to God; among the Jews, in obedience to the light of an imperfect revelation, among the Gentiles, from a sort of blind instinct which warned them that atonement for sin, could it only be achieved, was the first step towards communion with God. But all those old sacrifices were no better than a frantic appeal, a despairing gesture. The blood of bulls and goats could not take away sin; and the priests who offered them were themselves encompassed with infirmities; sinful men themselves, they could not bear the petitions of the people into God's presence as having the right to enter it. Our Lord came, to be at once a sinless Victim and a sinless Priest. Priest and Victim, he offered his own death to be the sufficient atonement for a world's transgressions. When the first Adam received the breath of life, this material universe was elevated into a fresh state of communion with God. When the second Adam gave back that same breath of life into his Father's hands, our guilty race was restored to the divine favor. Ruined long since by Adam's fault, the word could cry once more, HABEMUS PONTIFICEM. *The Divine Sacrifice, (Pastoral Sermons and Occasional Sermons, Fr. Ronald Knox. 1940)*

Prayer for Priests:

O Jesus, eternal High Priest, divine Sacrificer, Thou who in an unspeakable burst of love for men, Thy Brethren, didst cause the Christian Priesthood to spring forth from Thy Sacred Heart, vouchsafe to pour forth upon Thy priests continual living streams of infinite love.

Live in them, transform them in to Thee; make them, by Thy Grace, fit instruments of Thy mercy; do Thou act in them and through them, and grant, that they may become wholly one with Thee by their faithful imitation of Thy Virtues; and, in Thy name and by the strength of Thy spirit, may they do the works which Thou didst accomplish for the salvation of the world.

Divine Redeemer of souls, behold how great is the multitude of those who still sleep in the darkness of error; reckon up the number of those unfaithful sheep who stray to the edge of the precipice; consider the throngs of the poor, the hungry, the ignorant and the feeble who groan in their abandoned condition.

Return to us in the person of Thy priests; truly live again in them; act through them and pass once more through the world, teaching, forgiving, comforting, sacrificing and renewing the sacred bonds of love between the Heart of God and the heart of man. Amen. *St. Pius X (Raccolta 1907, Prayer 614. Rescript in his own hand. March 3, 1905)*

Prayer for Spiritual Fathers:

Most gracious Heavenly Father, we thank Thee for thou faithful priests and bishops, whose spiritual fatherhood and example of fidelity, self-sacrifice, and devotion is so vital to the faith of your people. May our spiritual fathers be guided by the example of St. John Vianney. Give them valiant faith in the face of confusion and conflict, hope in time of trouble and sorrow and steadfast love for Thee, for their families and for all Thou people throughout the world.

May the light of Thy Truth shine through their lives and their good works. Assist all spiritual fathers, that through Thy Grace they may steadily grow in holiness and in knowledge and understanding of Thy Truth. May they generously impart this knowledge to those who rely on them, Through Christ our Lord, Amen.

Faithfulness of Christ, Faithfulness of Priests: Curé of Ars St. John Marie Vianney, a true example of a pastor at the service of Christ's flock.

Third Quarter of an Hour: Reparation

Meditation: "Unworthy priests are more than a source of scandal to the faithful. They renew the mockery of the Mystical Christ today, even as the Roman soldiers mocked the physical Christ during His Passion on Holy Thursday night. The more deeply a person believes that all sin demands expiation, and the sins of priests are especially odious to God, the more readily will he want to repair the damage done to the Church and to souls by voluntary reparation. All the while the believer knows that, not only is the divine honor vindicated but the sinner himself, here the priest, is showered with graces of divine mercy to become reconciled with God." -- *Father John A. Hardon.*

Prayer to God to save the Church by Sanctifying His priests who have fallen away:

O God, our Lord, we obey without delay to Thy gracious invitation to pray. Encouraged by Thy desire, we worship at Thy sacred feet, crying out to Thee for our guilty priests. Deign to be reminded, Lord, that Thy priestly Body is Thy crown of predilection, the splendor of Thy glory, the chosen part of Thy heritage. We implore Thee to arm Thyself with holy indignation against Satan, who dared to plant the banner of sin in Thy own sanctuary, and to chase him away in shame from Thy solemnly dedicated domain.

What would it cost Thee, O Lord, to turn the most hardened hearts into penitents? Only one simple glance at Peter was enough to retrieve him from the abyss of a three times apostasy; would it cost Thee more to touch and convert those who have had the misfortune to imitate his weakness? O Jesus, our King and Pontiff, we beseech Thee on behalf of Mary, Thy Mother and ours, save the Church, save Thy faithful, save Thy blessed honor, by saving priests! Amen.

Prayer for Priests Who Have Become Unfaithful to Their Vocation:

Divine Savior Jesus Christ, Thou are 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 are 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 the 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

Fourth Quarter of an Hour: Prayer

Meditation: "When people wish to destroy religion, they begin by attacking the priest, because when there is no longer any priest there is no sacrifice, and where there is no longer any sacrifice, there is no religion" -- Saint John Vianney

Prayer for a Pastor and His Parish to St. John Vianney:

Saint John Vianney, we pray you to bless and help our pastor so that he may love dearly in this life and be richly rewarded in the next. Obtain for him the grace always to be kind and generous, self-sacrificing and zealous. Watch over the people of our parish, and keep them free from all evils. Help them to be loyal and generous in the support of our pastor.

Help us particularly always to give him the respect and honor due him as a priest. Except for him we should not have the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, or Your presence among us, or the other sacraments that we so dearly love and need. From his anointed hands we receive the food of our souls, the most precious Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, from his lips we hear the word of God. By the power given to him our sins are forgiven, we are given all blessings, it is he who will anoint us when we are dying and will offer the Holy Sacrifice for us when we are dead. Help us, dear Saint, to see Christ in him, and to cooperate with him in all his work for the good of our souls. Amen

Prayer for Sanctification of Priests:

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, and thou thyself a priest at the altar, who hadst for thy first son of adoption St John, the beloved priest of Jesus, who didst preside in the cenaculum, 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. *Raccolta: St. Pius X, November 9, 1907*