

Prayer is essential for building vocations

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The only concrete directive that our Blessed Lord gave to the church for recruiting vocations was this: “Then he said to his disciples, ‘The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field’ ” (Mt 9:37). Since Christ is God, and God knows best, then it seems to me that our primary work in the promotion of vocations should be prayer. In this article I will provide you with several ways in which you can assist in the mission of praying for vocations.

Holy hour for vocations

Many of you are already faithful to spending time in prayer before the Blessed Sacrament. Thank you! May I suggest that you regularly use this prayer time to “Pray to the Lord of the harvest to send workers into harvest field?” Use this sacred time to pray for your parish priest. Pray for our seminarians by name. Pray for those who are discerning. By the way, an excellent thing to pray for is courage. Many young people are considering the call but only those with great courage will step forward.

At the St. Augustine Student Center in Moscow, where I serve as the pastor, we have a weekly holy hour for vocation. This is how we do it: We gather each Thursday at 8:30 p.m. Thursday is a special day for priesthood because Holy Thursday was the night Christ instituted the priesthood and the Eucharist. I expose the Blessed Sacrament. We sing traditional hymns. After a few minutes of silence, we pray a Chaplet of Divine Mercy. Often, we sing the chaplet; the students prefer it sung. Then we observe some more silence. Next, a student reads an assigned passage from Scripture. Usually, it is a lengthy passage. We meditate on it afterward. Then we pray a prayer for vocations, the one found on all kinds of vocations prayer cards. We also add spontaneous prayers for specific seminarians or priests, religious, etc. Then we finish with Benediction.

Ask your priest or deacon to assist you with this. Even if only a handful of people come, do it anyway. Any prayer makes a difference.

Available on Web site

If a holy hour isn’t something you have access to, you have other options. There are some great prayers on our Web site www.catholicidaho.org. On the top of the page click on “Diocesan Offices” and scroll down to the Vocations tab, it’s the last tab. There you will find several great prayers. Scroll down a little farther and there is a link for “Daily Prayers for Vocations” as well as “Daily Prayers for Vocations for Families with Children.” These are easy-to-follow daily prayers and reflections. Use them please. They are helpful and a great way to involve your children.

Be creative but, more important, be prayerful. Thank you for all of your prayerful support for vocations.