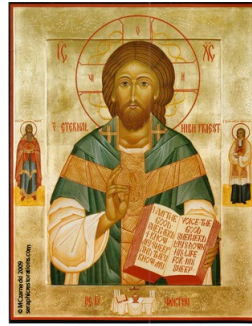


**St. Joseph's Church
Religious Education Program
Year for Priests
2009-2010**



***Faithfulness of Christ,
faithfulness of priests.***

*Pope Benedict XVI has declared a "Year for Priests" beginning with
the Solemnity of the Sacred Heart of Jesus on June 19, 2009.
The year will conclude in Rome with an international gathering of priests
with the Holy Father on June 19, 2010.*

*With the announcement of this Year for Priests, the Pope has declared
St. John Vianney, the Universal Patron of Priests, on the occasion
of the 150th anniversary of the death of the Cure d`Ars.*

St. Joseph's Religious Education's Mission Statement for 2009-2010

Uniting ourselves with the intentions of our Holy Father, Pope Benedict,
St. Joseph Church's Religious Education Program will endeavor to bring an understanding of
Christ and His Priesthood, to the children, their families and the Parish Community.
During the coming year, we will pray together for the **Clergy, Consecrated Life and
Vocations**. Through the Liturgy, the Eucharist, Indulgences, Catechesis, Service and the
coming together of our Catholic Community, we will ensure the future spiritual well being
of ourselves and our children.

Year for Priests

How will St. Joseph's Religious Education Program embrace the Holy Father's declaration? There are many ways in which our focus can be shifted to the Priesthood.

Service - Our Religious Education program already offers Grade-Wide Service projects.

This year, St. Joseph's Chapter of the Knights of Columbus is sponsoring a seminarian. The KOC's has asked that we incorporate this young man into our service this year. He will be at seminary in Brussels, Belgium. This should afford us opportunities for service in correspondence and perhaps care packages. More information will be made available to the catechists, as soon as it is received.

Last year, the 2nd semester grade-wide service project consisted of providing hats, gloves and scarves for the seminarians at St. Charles Borromeo Seminary to distribute among the poor in Philadelphia. Projects such as this, focus on cooperation and unity with our young seminarians who are embarking on a life of dedicated service to others.

Prayer - Several years ago, at another Parish, I was given permission to implement a "Visiting Chalice" program". The children preparing for First Holy Communion took turns taking a chalice into their homes for one week. The family gathered together each night and prayed a Vocation Prayer and spoke of the intimate relationship between Vocations, the Priesthood and the Consecration of the bread and wine. These children learned that without the Priest, there can be no Holy Eucharist. The Year for Priests affords us the opportunity to help our children make this connection in this very special way.

Permission (and a beautiful chalice) has been received from Father Steve to implement such a program here at St. Joseph's for the Year for Priests. Each week, the chalice may be picked up from the Office of Religious Education on Sunday morning and taken by a family for the week. Sign up will be on a first come first served basis and a calendar will be posted on the Religious Education website listing the family of the week.

Carved from olive wood from Israel, the chalice, a corporal to set the chalice upon, and the prayer for the Year for Priests will travel in a beautiful, velvet-lined box.

The chalice should be placed on the corporal in a place of honor for the week that it is in the home. A special time each day for the family to meet and pray should be set for the week. If there time can be made, a Rosary can be said for Vocations.

The chalice must be returned the following Sunday morning to the Religious Education Program. If classes are not being held, it may be returned to the Rectory.

Showing Appreciation - to Our Own Parish Priests and other Priests you may know requires basic acts of kindness. Ways of showing appreciation by you and your family...

- † Participate in St. Joseph's Chalice Program, pray for your Priest and for vocations
- † Send him a thank you card telling him what his priesthood, dedication and friendship means to you.
- † Introduce yourself and your family to your pastor and/or parish priest if you have never done so.
- † Invite a priest you know to breakfast, lunch, or dinner either at your home or out.
- † Bake them cookies or drop off a casserole at the Rectory.
- † Have your children draw them a picture, create some other unique work of art or write them a letter.
- † Invite them to your home for coffee or tea and a chat.
- † Go on an outing together, such as a dinner and a play, concert, bowling, movie, hunting, fishing, golf, tennis, etc.

Spiritual Adoption of Priests -. as taken from United States Conference of Bishops website...

www.usccb.org/yearforpriests/spiritualadoption

Year for Priests Special: A Worldwide Campaign - Priests are the greatest benefactors of humanity because it is through them that Christ continues to re-enact his unique sacrifice for the salvation of humankind. It is through them that he extends his forgiving hands and opens his heart full of Divine Mercy. Called to be the living monuments of Christ's love in the world today, the priests spend their whole life, for God and His people. They need prayer support to live heroically their priestly commitment and mission in today's challenging world.

Spiritual adoption consists in offering up of prayers and sacrifices, during this year of priests, for a specific priest who will be assigned to you. **Sign up by sending an email to adoptapriest@gmail.com**, if you or your family would like to adopt a priest spiritually (your name, address, country, email ID required). The priest whom you adopt will pray for you in return. More details will be provided on request when you sign up.

Priests who would like to be adopted spiritually, please write to adoptapriest@gmail.com submitting the details: Priest's name, address, country, year of priestly ordination, present ministry, email. You will be informed about who would be adopting you spiritually.

The aim of this ministry is to strengthen the sanctity of priests through spiritual adoption by religious and lay people. We want to let every Catholic priest of the world know that someone has adopted him spiritually during this Year For Priests (June 19, 2009 to June 19, 2010) declared by Pope Benedict XVI.

Spiritual Adoption of Priests - *continued...*

How can I spiritually adopt a priest? Adopting a priest spiritually is very simple. You can adopt a priest spiritually by offering up to God various spiritual deeds for the sanctification of a particular priest. Given below are a few examples. Praying and interceding for the priest (see below some model prayers which could be used daily).

This is the core of spiritual adoption.:

1. Praying the rosary.
 2. Praying the Chaplet of Divine Mercy.
 3. Participation in the Eucharist.
 4. Offering Masses for the intention of the priest.
 5. Making Visits to the Blessed Sacrament.
 6. Making Eucharistic adoration.
 7. Offering up to Almighty God your little sacrifices, sufferings, privations of life, etc for the sanctification of the priest whom you adopt.
1. Fast, abstinence, penances, mortifications, etc.
 2. Making a sincere examination of conscience and a good confession.
 3. Doing acts of reparation for the sins of the priest.
 4. Doing acts of kindness to the priest including gestures of appreciation.
 5. Visiting holy places like Marian shrines, grottos, places of pilgrimage.
 6. Doing acts of charity for the needy.
 7. Speaking well of priests in spite of their imperfections. Avoid listening to and spreading gossip about priests.

Whatever you do, do it out of love for Christ and his priest.

Creating a Focal Point in Home and Classroom -

Classroom Bulletin Boards - Every classroom in St. Joseph's School will have one bulletin board dedicated to the Year For Priests. As is done with the Grade-wide Service Projects, check with the other catechists sharing your classroom and either work on the board together or choose one person to create a board that speaks to the children's hearts and conveys the essence of the Priesthood and its many facets. You may also decide to have a board that is changed several times during the year, casting a light on a different aspect of this incredible vocation with each change. The Boards should be up before the first class of the year.

Use the bulletin board as a focal point and talk about the Priesthood at least briefly EVERY class.

Home - In addition to hosting the Visiting Chalice for a week, families can create a special place in the home that can be a reminder of the Year For Priests. Create a focal point and quiet space for prayer. Place a statue of St. John Vianney or a picture or Holy Card of Christ, the Eternal High Priest, a container of Holy Water and a rosary in a place of honor in the family living space. Gather there to pray and talk about vocations, or perhaps the Gospel after Mass.

Essay and Poster Contests - will be held during the Year For Priests. These contests will be open to all children in St. Joseph's Parish attending Catholic School or the Religious Education Program, grades one through eight.

Prizes for each contest will be awarded. Contest winners will be listed on the Religious Education website and the prizes awarded at a parish gathering held in honor of the Parish Priests at a date to be announced. All posters and essays will be on display at that time.

First Prize: \$25 Savings Bond
Second Prize: \$15 Savings Bond
Third Prize: \$10 Savings Bond

Once submitted, essays and posters become the property of St. Joseph's Religious Education program and may be reproduced for the purposes of promoting the Year For Priests.

****Failure to follow any of these rules may lead to disqualification from either contest. ****

Poster Contest - Deadline for Poster submissions is Wednesday, January 14th. Posters will be accepted only at the St. Joseph's Parish Center (school building) during Religious Education Sessions. (see Religious Education website for session times).

Guidelines for Students:

1. All posters must be drawn horizontally (landscape) on 22 x 28 white poster paper.
2. Subject of the artwork must be the Priesthood and the artwork must convey the importance of the Priesthood, (i.e. what a Priest does, what the Priesthood means to the Catholic Faith)
3. Posters should consist of large lettering and few words.
4. Students may use crayon, watercolor, poster paint, markers, ink, cut paper, tissue paper, and fabric. *Please do not use materials that may smear, crack, or chip.*
5. Students must work on posters individually; a poster created by two or more students will be disqualified.
6. Only original art work will be accepted, (no trade-marked, copyrighted materials, or reproduction of popular cartoon characters, e.g., Snoopy, Bart Simpson, etc.)
7. The back of every poster must list: Name of Student
St. Joseph Religious Ed or name of school,
contact information
and parent signature.

Essay Contest - Deadline for Essay submissions is Wednesday, January 14th. Essays will be accepted only at the St. Joseph's Parish Center (school building) during Religious Education Sessions. (see Religious Education website for session times) or by e-mail to:

- Essays submitted for consideration must be original work and must be prepared by one author only.
- Only ONE submission per person.

Essay Contests - *continued next page*

Essay Contests - *continued...*

Guidelines for Students:

1. Essays must not exceed 1,000 words in length. Do NOT bold, underline, or use charts, tables, or graphs.
2. If essays are typed, they must be double-spaced and no smaller than 11pt font.
3. If not typed, essays must be printed neatly.
4. Each page must be numbered.
5. The following must be at the top of each essay:
 - Name of Student
 - St. Joseph Religious Ed or name of school,
 - Contact information
 - Name of parent/guardian
6. If e-mailing your submission, the essay should be written in **Microsoft Word 2003, Text or PDF**.
7. If essays are e-mailed, confirmation of receipt of the essay will be sent.

Guest Speakers - Although the priests of our Diocese are stretched very thin, every attempt will be made to have priests come and speak to our older children about vocations during the school year.

Parish Community Gathering - A gathering will be planned in order that St. Joseph's Parish Community can demonstrate its love for Christ's Priesthood and its appreciation for the Priests that serve the Parish. A date will be announced.

Internet Resources for Year For Priests -

United States Conference of Bishops

www.usccb.org/yearforpriests

Information about the Year for Priests, Clergy, Consecrated Life and Vocations, Papal Announcements, Events, Prayers, Indulgences, Articles, Resources

Sunday Visitor

www.osv.com/YearofthePriest/tabid/7752/Default.aspx

Influential Priests Multimedia, Priest Year News Blog, Newsweekly articles, Prayers for Priests, My Favorite Priest, Magazine Articles, Year for Priests Links, Plenary Indulgence, St. John Vianney, Crossword Puzzle, Events, Vocation Opportunities, Prayers for Vocations, The Priest Magazine, Book Excerpts, Kids Stuff, OSV Priest Products