

# Celebrate!

# **PRIESTHOOD SUNDAY**

## **September 29, 2019**

### **What is "Priesthood Sunday"?**

**Priesthood Sunday, the last Sunday of September, is a special day set aside to honor priesthood in the United States.** It is a day to reflect upon and affirm the role of the priest as central to the life of the Church. *Note: Parishes may choose to celebrate Priesthood Sunday on another Sunday when it is convenient for them.*

This nationwide event is coordinated and sponsored by the US Council of Serra International.

### **What happens on Priesthood Sunday?**

**The lay faithful of all parishes in the USA develop their own special way of marking the day and honoring their parish priests** at Mass and other parish events, such as social celebrations and school activities.

Priesthood Sunday is designed to be an event led by the laity, but be sure to ask each parish priest to participate by talking about how they experienced and answered their own calling and about priests who have inspired them.

Priesthood Sunday offers an opportunity for priests and parishioners to build a stronger working relationship. Together, they can take an honest look at the challenges of the future and how they can collaborate to meet those challenges as a united force.

### **What is the US Council of Serra International?**

**The US Council of Serra International is an organization of lay men and women whose mission is to foster and affirm vocations to the ministerial priesthood and vowed religious life in the USA.** More than 7,000 Serrans in over 200 clubs nationwide collaborate with their bishops, parishes and vocation directors to fulfill this mission. Through this ministry, Serrans work to further their common Catholic faith. Visit the US Council at [www.serraus.org](http://www.serraus.org).

**Celebrate Priesthood Sunday on September 29, 2019!**

# PARISH PLANNING GUIDE

## PRIESTHOOD SUNDAY September 29, 2019

### STEP ONE: Suggested Intercessions for the Liturgy

#### **Suggested Intercessions**

Having heard proclaimed the saving works of God among us, let us now bring before the God of joy and promise our needs.

#### **For God's holy Church:**

May our pope, bishops and priests continue to minister in humble justice and faithful service.

*Let us pray to the Lord.*

#### **For nations and their governments:**

May they hear the call to work toward peace, justice and equity between one another and for the people they serve.

*Let us pray to the Lord.*

#### **For all who have suffered abuse:**

May those who have suffered abuse find strength, hope and peace.

*Let us pray to the Lord.*

#### **For an increase in religious vocations:**

May men and women respond to the Christ's call to serve the Church in the priesthood, diaconate or religious life.

*Let us pray to the Lord.*

#### **For all who suffer from sickness, hunger or loneliness:**

May they find in our communities faithful support and generous kindness.

*Let us pray to the Lord.*

#### **For those struggling with doubt, anxiety or fear:**

May the peace of Christ embrace them and lead them to his comforting light.

*Let us pray to the Lord.*

*If the blessing prayer is used, the above prayer\* is omitted and the following blessing is used. A deacon, member of the parish council or other parish leadership organization may lead the blessing. The leader may invite members of the assembly to join in a blessing over the parish priest(s). This blessing may take place after the prayer after Communion. The assembly may be invited to extend both hands over the priest(s). This blessing is an alternate to the blessing following the General Intercession or at the close of the Mass.*

#### **Blessing Prayer**

In your loving kindness, O good and gracious God, you sent your Son to be our shepherd and guide. Father \_\_\_\_\_ continues Christ's ministry of working in the vineyard by sus-taining and guiding your holy people. Bless Father \_\_\_\_\_. Let your Spirit uphold him always in his service to the people of this parish. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

**One afternoon, I was waiting for Mass to start at St. John's and there was no priest. Some nuns were visiting from New York and they said they didn't have a priest in all their parishes anymore, and that Eucharistic services were common.**

**I thought, "What would it be like if there were no priests?" And I asked myself, "What are you doing about it?"**

*Elizabeth Shrier, Serra Club of Omaha, NE*

## **STEP TWO: Start a conversation**

**How well do your parishioners and priests know each other? start a conversation to share concerns and ideas.**

The Parish Vocation Ministry should use Priesthood Sunday as a starting point for opening parish communications. Set up an informal parish meeting with the priests. The purpose of this meeting is to give parishioners a chance to listen to priests talk about their everyday lives and need for support, and for the priests to hear the laity's concerns, needs and ideas for mutual support with priests. This meeting requires a little planning:

- Consult with your priest(s) to set a date for the meeting.
- Draw up a meeting agenda.
- Select a volunteer parishioner to record the highlights of the meeting's discussion.
- Decide on a start and end time for the meeting.
- If you need a second meeting, repeat the steps above.

## **STEP THREE: Celebrate!**

**There are many ways to celebrate Priesthood Sunday with the whole parish. This is an ideal project for the Parish Vocation Ministry to undertake. Here are some ideas:**

- Parish pot luck dinner to celebrate "Father's Day"
- Coffee cake reception following Masses
- School essay, poster or poetry contest
- Banner in front of church
- Send press releases and photos to local press
- Photo on cover of parish bulletin along with biography

### **Celebration planning:**

- Form a celebration committee
- Select dates for the committee to meet
- What parish groups would like to participate?
- Select a date for the celebration

**Find more materials at  
[www.serraus.org](http://www.serraus.org)  
[www.serraspark.org](http://www.serraspark.org)**