



Remembering Vocations in your Lenten Devotions—2017

“Dear brothers and sisters, Lent is a time of renewal for the whole Church, for each of our communities and every believer. Above all it is a “time of grace” (2 Cor 6:2). God does not ask of us anything that he himself has not first given us. “We love because He first has loved us” (1 Jn 4:19).”¹

Pope Francis

First Prayer

We reflect upon St. John Vianney, the humble priest in Ars, France, a village of less than 250 residents. As a teacher, confessor and intercessor for many miracles, he is the patron of priests. Our first prayer² asks for his intercession for vocations . . .

“Almighty and merciful God, who didst make the St. John Marie admirable in his pastoral zeal and in his constant love of penance, grant us the grace, we implore Thee, to win for Christ, by his example and intercession, the souls of our brethren, and to attain with them everlasting glory—O, St. John Marie, incomparable laborer in the field confided to thee, obtain for the Church the realization of Jesus’ desire. The harvest is abundant, but the laborers are few. Pray to the Master of the harvest to send faithful laborers into His vineyard. O, Blessed John Marie! Intercede for the clergy. May thy patronage, and thy prayer multiply the real vocations to the priesthood. May the Holy Ghost grant thee emulators; may He give us Saints, through Christ, our Lord. Amen”



St. John Vianney

Meditations

March 1—Ash Wednesday: “I would like to reflect on *the missionary dimension of our Christian calling*. Those, who drawn by God’s voice and determined to follow Jesus, soon discover within themselves an irrepressible desire to bring the Good News to their brothers and sisters through proclamation and the service of charity.”³

March 5—First Sunday of Lent: “All Christians are called to be missionaries of the Gospel! As disciples, we do not receive the gift of God’s love for our personal consolation, nor are we called to promote ourselves, or a business concern.”³

March 12—Second Sunday of Lent: “... *the missionary dimension of our Christian calling*. ... We are simply men and women touched and transformed by the joy of God’s love, who cannot keep this experience just to ourselves.”³

March 19—Third Sunday of Lent: “To be a missionary disciple means to share actively in the mission of Christ. Jesus himself described that mission ... these words: ‘The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed to bring good news to the poor.’ ”³ We all have a vocation; it must be discerned through prayer and a willingness to sacrifice ourselves to the Lord’s will for the success of our vocation.

March 26—Fourth Sunday of Lent: “There can be no promotion of vocations or Christian mission apart from constant contemplative prayer.”³ We pray for discernment in the identification of our true vocation.

April 22—Fifth Sunday of Lent: “...we can regain fervor in preaching the Gospel, and we can encourage young people ... to take up the path of Christian discipleship.” “... our young people desire to discover the perennial attraction of Jesus.” Through our prayers and our sacrifices for vocations and the common good, God will seek holy men and women to minister to His flock.

April 29—Palm Sunday: “Mary Most Holy, the Mother of our Savior, had the courage to embrace this ideal, placing her youth and her enthusiasm in God’s hands.”³ Pray to her for vocations and support ministries to those who are in need.

April 3—Good Friday: “God surpasses all our expectations and constantly surprises us by his generosity. He makes our efforts bear fruit beyond all human calculation”³ We must reflect upon the need for priests to minister to the needs of the faithful through the sacraments.”

Concluding Prayer for Vocations⁴

Recite the Vocations Prayer following each week’s meditation:

- Heavenly Father, Lord of the harvest, call forth vocations to the priesthood and consecrated life from our diocese and our families.
- Inspire men to imitate Christ, the Eternal High Priest, in sacrificial service to your Church,
- Move the hearts of men and women to offer themselves wholly to You in poverty, chastity and obedience.
- Send them as laborers for Your harvest. Inspire the faithful to support them with prayers and sacrifice.
- Raise up holy families who foster openness to your call. We ask this through Christ Our Lord. Amen.

¹ Pope Francis, Lenten Message 2015, www.vatican.va

² Litany and Novena Prayer to St. John Vianney, e-Catholic2000.com

³ Pope Francis, Message for the 54th World day of Prayer for Vocations, 27 November 2016

⁴ Arlington Diocese Prayer for Vocations

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