



HARVEST OF PRAYER

HOLY HOUR FOR VOCATIONS

“Prophetic Witnesses of God’s Love”

Composed by Msgr. Charles M. Mangan
(For private use)

Opening Prayer

Lord, we come before You mindful of the many needs of Your Church, especially for vocations to the priesthood and the consecrated life. Hear the humble prayers of Your people gathered here before you. By this great Sacrament of Love, bring to maturity the seeds You have sown in the field of Your Church. May many more young people choose to serve You by devoting themselves to the service of Your Kingdom. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Reading from Sacred Scripture *(Luke 4:16-22)*

Jesus came to Nazareth, where He had grown up, and went according to His custom into the synagogue on the Sabbath day. He stood up to read and was handed a scroll of the prophet Isaiah. He unrolled the scroll and found the passage where it was written:

“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He has anointed me to bring glad tidings to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, and to proclaim a year acceptable to the Lord.”

Rolling up the scroll, He handed it back to the attendant and sat down, and the eyes of all in the synagogue looked intently at Him. He said to them, “Today this Scripture passage is fulfilled in your hearing.”

And all spoke highly of Him and were amazed at the gracious words that came from His mouth. They also asked, ‘Isn’t this the son of Joseph?’”

After a period of silent prayer:

Intercessions

For an increase in vocations to the priesthood and consecrated life, that more men and women will respond with generosity to the call to serve God, we pray to the Lord. *R. Lord, hear us!*

That men and women may find joy in sacrificing personal gain for the service of others in a Church vocation, we pray to the Lord. *R. Lord, hear us!*

That the Lord of the Harvest may open the hearts of our young people to the possibility of a life of prophetic witness to God's love, we pray to the Lord. *R. Lord, hear us!*

That parents, by their lives and example, may encourage Church vocations among their children, we pray to the Lord. *R. Lord, hear us!*

For all men and women, that they may respond generously to God's graces, trusting His leading them to faithfully serve Christ and His Church, we pray to the Lord. *R. Lord, hear us!*

That today's youth may show generosity to Jesus' call and make wise decisions in choosing their vocation in life, we pray to the Lord. *R. Lord, hear us!*

After a period of silent prayer:

Reading from Pope Benedict XVI's 2007 Address to the International Union of Superiors General

As the Scriptures teach, the "prophet" first listens and contemplates, then speaks, allowing himself to be totally permeated by that love for God which fears nothing and is even stronger than death.

The authentic prophet, therefore, is not concerned so much to accomplish works, which undoubtedly are important but never essential. Above all, he tries to be a witness of God's love, seeking to live it among the realities of the world, even if his presence can sometimes be "uncomfortable" because he offers and incarnates alternative values.

May it be your prime concern, therefore, to help your own to seek Christ above all else and to place themselves generously at the service of the Gospel. Never tire of taking every possible care in the human, cultural and spiritual formation of the persons entrusted to you, so that they are able to respond to today's cultural and social challenges.

Be the first to set an example by fleeing commodities, comforts and convenience in order to bring your mission to fulfillment. Share the richness of your charisms with those who are committed to the one mission of the Church, which is to build the Kingdom.

After a period of silent prayer:

Meditation

While we may "ooh" and "aah" when a prophet is in our midst, we may be loath to envy him. Yes, we admire one who can focus our attention on the *really* important things at the risk of his own reputation. Yet we would be unlikely to desire to change places with him.

Prophets are somewhat slippery for us. They are attractive but often we don't understand them and we surely don't think that we are up to imitating them. We hardly imagine that we could be something so absolutely outrageous as a prophet.

Our approach to prophets needs retooling.

Each of us can listen to and contemplate God's Holy Word before speaking, thereby, in the words of Pope Benedict XVI, "allowing himself to be totally permeated by that love for God which fears nothing and is even stronger than death."

The authentic prophet, again according to the Holy Father, "tries to be a witness of God's love, seeking to live it among the realities of the world, even if his presence can sometimes be 'uncomfortable' because he offers and incarnates alternative values."

Based on that definition, I *can*, *should* and *must* be a prophet! Whatever my personal vocation, my relationship with Christ that derives from my Baptism compels me to be a prophet—to testify to God's love by living His commands regardless of the cost.

What a difference in our world if I were to join my brothers and sisters in Jesus in living our baptismal commitment to the fullest!

Our era desperately cries out for our witness to the Living God and for additional men and women who will be true prophets in the priesthood and the consecrated life.

We need prophets and we need them now. We are to be prophets and we must exercise that call now.

After a period of silent prayer:

Litany of Forgiveness

Lord Jesus Christ, You said: "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven." Yet we are preoccupied with money and worldly goods and put our trust in what we possess rather than in your care for us.

R. Have mercy on us, O Lord, have mercy on us.

Lord Jesus Christ, You said: "Blessed are the gentle, for they shall inherit the earth." Yet we are so concerned about our own rights and self-interest and so little concerned about serving others.

R. Have mercy on us, O Lord, have mercy on us.

Lord Jesus Christ, You said: "Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted." Yet we are impatient under our burdens and unconcerned about the burdens of others.

R. Have mercy on us, O Lord, have mercy on us.

Lord Jesus Christ, You said: "Blessed are they who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall have their fill." Yet we do not thirst for You, the fountain of all holiness, and we are satisfied with half-measures and mediocrity.

R. Have mercy on us, O Lord, have mercy on us.

Lord Jesus Christ, You said: "Blessed are the merciful for they shall receive mercy." Yet we are so quick to condemn, so slow to forgive.

R. Have mercy on us, O Lord, have mercy on us.

Lord Jesus Christ, You said: "Blessed are the pure of heart, for they shall see God." Yet we have often regarded persons created in Your image as objects of our own lusts and cannot raise our eyes to You.

R. Have mercy on us, O Lord, have mercy on us.

Lord Jesus Christ, You said: “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God.” Yet we are so often ruthless with each other, and our homes and our world are full of discord and resentments.

R. Have mercy on us, O Lord, have mercy on us.

Lord, Jesus Christ. You said: “Blessed are those who suffer persecution for holiness’ sake, for the Kingdom of God is theirs.” Yet we suffer no opposition because we have been ashamed of You, our Crucified Savior, and have lived worldly compromises of Your Gospel.

R. Have mercy on us, O Lord, have mercy on us.

The Lord’s Prayer

Now offer together the prayer our Lord Jesus Christ taught us:

Our Father...

After a brief period of silence, the Holy Hour for Vocations continues:

Closing Prayer

Lord Jesus, we acknowledge and adore Your Presence among us, in the Most Blessed Sacrament, Your supreme gift for the redemption of the world.

We ask that You continue to raise up and sustain bishops, priests and deacons, consecrated men and women, and all the baptized in Christ, so that they may faithfully fulfill their prophetic mission at the service of the Gospel.

This we ask through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Mary, Queen of Prophets, pray for us!

© INSTITUTE ON RELIGIOUS LIFE, P.O. Box 7500, Libertyville, IL 60048 - (847) 573-8975
ReligiousLife.com ♦ ReligiousBrotherhood.com ♦ CloisteredLife.com ♦ VocationBlog.com