

# Prayers

The following are prayers found in the Seven Sisters Apostolate Booklet, as well as additional prayers that have been found helpful over the years:



## Seven Sisters Commitment Prayer

O Jesus,

You perfectly revealed the Merciful Love of Your Sacred Heart on the Cross.

At the Last Supper You gave us the sacraments of the Holy Eucharist

and of Holy Orders to perpetuate Your Loving Presence in our midst.

Help us to keep a sense of awe and gratitude at Your hidden presence in the Host

and respect for how You come to us

through the human instruments of priests and bishops.

On this the Feast of your Sacred Heart

and the World Day of Prayer for the Sanctification of Priests,

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (your name), commit myself

to making an hour in Your Eucharistic Presence each week for the coming year

to intercede for and raise up before Your throne

\_\_\_\_\_ (name of priest/bishop), begging for him:

Strength when he is tired or weak,

Perseverance when the spirit of prayer or apostolic zeal wanes,

Guidance when he is discerning or lost,

Consolation when he is suffering,

Hope when the sacrifices seem too heavy,

And manifold blessings upon him and his ministry.

Give me the grace to be like Our Lady and Saint Mary Magdalene,

faithful at the foot of the Cross.

May I be selfless and humble in this work of adoration

and in all the ways you lead me as Your disciple.

Most Sacred Heart of Jesus,

Have mercy on our Holy Father Pope Francis,

Have mercy on \_\_\_\_\_ (name of priest/bishop),

Have mercy on all bishops and priests,

Have mercy on me and all Seven Sisters,

Have mercy on the whole world!

## Finding the Rhythm of Prayer

The actual structure of a Holy Hour will be unique to each Seven Sister. Some may organize the prayer time in a similar fashion each week. Others may tend toward variation as the hour proceeds. Both are proper ways to commit to the hour. Below are some suggestions of how the prayer time might be spent:

- **Pray the Novena to the Sacred Heart of Jesus.** This was a favorite prayer of St. Padre Pio, which he used to offer prayers for all of the daily intentions he was given. The physical, emotional/social, and spiritual needs of the priest can be held up at various points in the prayer.
- **Pray with the Mass readings for the week.** As you meditate on these readings, pray that the priest will live and preach the truths contained in them.
- **Pray the Liturgy of the Hours.** The priest has made a commitment to pray faithfully the prayer of the Church known as the Liturgy of the Hours. If desired, morning prayer, midday prayer, evening prayer, or night prayer from the Liturgy of the Hours could be prayed as an offering for the priest's faithfulness to this commitment.
- **Pray the Rosary.** This time-honored devotion to Our Lady is upheld by the Church as one of our greatest treasures. It can be a powerful way to pray for the priest's deepening devotion to Our Lady and place him under her protection.
- Consider the Pastor's namesake and other particular intercessors. What is his baptismal/confirmation/religious name? Does he hold a special devotion to a particular saint? Who is the patron of your parish?
- Use other personal **devotions such as litanies (Litany of Loreto), chaplets (Chaplet of Divine Mercy), novenas,** or other written prayers, etc. as the Holy Spirit leads you.
- Follow **liturgical themes for the day, month, season or year.** Consider the day of the week and month of your Holy Hour; the Church designates special devotional themes for each weekday and month. The liturgical season (Advent, Lent, Easter, etc.) may also shape the themes and tenor of your prayers for the priest.
- **Pray for specific graces each week** or each month. Examples are: sanctity, fidelity, perseverance, mercy, or other virtues; the gifts of the Holy Spirit; living of the beatitudes; growth in the sacramental life.
- **Embrace periods of silence** if your prayer time leads you to this. Intercessory prayer does not mean we must constantly be speaking to God; we must also let him speak to us as he desires. As St. Teresa of Calcutta reminds us, "In the silence of the heart God speaks."
- Always remain open to the Holy Spirit's intervention in your prayer. If you are drawn to a particular way of prayer that differs from your normal routine, you should freely follow it. Never feel that you must "get through" certain prayers in order to be "successful" in your Holy Hour. Union with God is always the most powerful form of intercession, however He desires to give it.

### Daily Devotional Themes

- Sunday: Resurrection, Trinity
- Monday: Holy Spirit, Souls in Purgatory
- Tuesday: Holy Angels
- Wednesday: St. Joseph
- Thursday: Eucharist
- Friday: Passion, Sacred Heart
- Saturday: Blessed Virgin Mary

# Novena to the Sacred Heart of Jesus

This prayer can be the framework of a beautiful rhythm of intercession that includes both recurring elements and those that reflect specific weekly changes in the priest's life. Since prayers are offered every week by any given Seven Sister, her prayers need only cover the priest's needs of that day and the days of the upcoming week!

**I. O my Jesus**, you have said: "Truly I say to you, ask and you will receive, seek and you will find, knock and it will be opened to you." Behold, I knock, I seek and I ask for the grace of... (name your request).

*Suggested intention: the physical needs of the priest*

*Examples: Proper nutrition and rest. Safety and regularity in exercising. If called to fast, fidelity to fasting. If summoned in wee hours for pastoral care, alertness, safety in travel, ability to rest later in day. Prayers for current/chronic health issue(s)/challenge(s) if shared by pastor (e.g. cancer/diabetes/heart condition/impending surgery/broken bone, etc.)*

Our Father... Hail Mary... Glory Be...

**Sacred Heart of Jesus, I place all my trust in You.**

**II. O my Jesus**, you have said: "Truly I say to you, if you ask anything of the Father in My name, He will give it to you." Behold, in Your name, I ask the Father for the grace of... (name your request).

*Suggested intention: the emotional/social needs of the priest*

*Examples: Healthy, godly friendships and recreational activities. If otherwise, may God intervene to heal, bring order to them or disband. Fraternal support from his brother priests. Prudence in time management, boundaries, delegation of tasks to others. Support from staff/congregation in shepherding the parish. Professional help if/when needed.*

Our Father... Hail Mary... Glory Be...

**Sacred Heart of Jesus, I place all my trust in You.**

**III. O my Jesus**, you have said: "Truly I say to you, heaven and earth will pass away but my words will not pass away." Encouraged by Your infallible words I now ask for the of... (name your request).

*Suggested intention: the spiritual needs of the priest*

*Examples: Deepening devotion to Our Lady (This intention is offered every Seven Sister Holy Hour). God's will and way. Fidelity to daily Divine Office and whatever specific devotions Our Lord has called this pastor to embrace (NOTE: no need for Seven Sister to know what these devotions are). Personal encounter with Jesus in each Mass celebrated this week. Growth in life of the Beatitudes, specific virtues (may name each week). Loyalty to Magisterium, Scripture, proper celebration of the sacraments. Counsel of the Holy Spirit during Confessions heard this week. Fidelity to prep time for homilies, inspiration and guidance in his preaching. Deepening of the graces of the Sacrament of Holy Orders.*

Our Father....Hail Mary....Glory Be...

**Sacred Heart of Jesus, I place all my trust in You.**

**O Sacred Heart of Jesus**, for whom it is impossible not to have compassion on the afflicted, have pity on us miserable sinners and grant us the grace which we ask of You, through the Sorrowful and Immaculate Heart of Mary, Your tender Mother and ours.

**Hail, Holy Queen...**

**St. Joseph, foster father of Jesus, pray for us.**

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O Jesus, our great High Priest,  
Hear my humble prayers on behalf of your priest, Father [N].  
Give him a deep faith

a bright and firm hope  
and a burning love  
which will ever increase  
in the course of his priestly life.

In his loneliness, comfort him  
In his sorrows, strengthen him  
In his frustrations, point out to him

that it is through suffering that the soul is purified,  
and show him that he is needed by the Church,  
he is needed by souls,  
he is needed for the work of redemption.

O loving Mother Mary, Mother of Priests, take to your heart your son who is close to you  
because of his priestly ordination,  
and because of the power which he has received  
to carry on the work of Christ  
in a world which needs him so much.

Be his comfort, be his joy, be his strength, and especially help him  
to live and to defend the ideals of consecrated celibacy. Amen.

*+John Joseph, Cardinal Carberry (d.1998)*  
*Archbishop of St. Louis 1968-1979*

## Prayer of St. Teresa of Calcutta for Priests

Mary, Mother of Jesus throw your mantle of purity over our priests. Protect them, guide them and keep them in your heart. Be a mother to them especially in times of discouragement and loneliness. Love them and let them belong completely to Jesus. Like Jesus, they too are your sons, so keep their hearts pure and virginal. Keep their minds filled with Jesus, and put Jesus always on their lips, so that He is the one they offer to sinners and to all they meet. Mary, Mother of Jesus, be their Mother, loving them and bringing them joy. Take special care of sick and dying priests and the ones most tempted. Remember how they spent their youth and old age, their entire lives serving and giving all to Jesus. Mary, bless them and keep a special place for them in your heart. Give them a piece of your heart, so beautiful and pure and immaculate, so full of love and humility so that they, too, may grow in the likeness of Christ. Dear Mary, make them humble like you and holy like Jesus. Amen.

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# A Prayer for Priests

**from the Saint Teresa of Calcutta Vocation Society**

Lord Jesus, You have chosen Your priests from among us and sent them out to proclaim Your word and to act in Your Name. For so great a gift to Your Church, we give You praise and thanksgiving. We ask You to fill them with the fire of Your love that their ministry may reveal Your presence in the Church.

Since they are earthen vessels, we pray that Your power shine out through their weakness. In their afflictions let them never be crushed; in their doubts never despair; in temptation never be destroyed; in persecution never abandoned.

Inspire them through prayer to live each day the mystery of Your dying and rising. In times of weakness send them Your Spirit, and help them to praise Your heavenly Father and pray for poor sinners. By the same Holy Spirit put Your word on their lips and Your love in their hearts, to bring good news to the poor and healing to the broken-hearted.

And may the gift of Mary be Your gift to every priest. Grant that she, who formed You in her human image, may form them in Your divine image, by the power of Your Spirit, to the glory of God the Father. Amen.

## PRAYER FOR PRIESTS

Gracious and loving God, we thank you for the gift of our priests.  
Through them, we experience your presence in the sacraments.

Help our priests to be strong in their vocation.  
Set their souls on fire with love for your people.

Grant them the wisdom, understanding, and strength they need to follow in the footsteps of Jesus.  
Inspire them with the vision of your Kingdom.

Give them the words they need to spread the Gospel.  
Allow them to experience joy in their ministry.

Help them to become instruments of your divine grace.

We ask this through Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns as our Eternal Priest.

Amen.

## **PRAYER FOR PRIESTS**

*John Cardinal O'Connor*

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Lord Jesus, we your people pray to You for our priests. You have given them to us for OUR needs. We pray for them in THEIR needs.

We know that You have made them priests in the likeness of your own priesthood. You have consecrated them, set them aside, anointed them, filled them with the Holy Spirit, appointed them to teach, to preach, to minister, to console, to forgive, and to feed us with Your Body and Blood.

Yet we know, too, that they are one with us and share our human weaknesses. We know too that they are tempted to sin and discouragement as are we, needing to be ministered to, as do we, to be consoled and forgiven, as do we. Indeed, we thank You for choosing them from among us, so that they understand us as we understand them, suffer with us and rejoice with us, worry with us and trust with us, share our beings, our lives, our faith.

We ask that You give them this day the gift You gave Your chosen ones on the way to Emmaus: Your presence in their hearts, Your holiness in their souls, Your joy in their spirits. And let them see You face to face in the breaking of the Eucharistic bread.

We pray to You, O Lord, through Mary the mother of all priests, for Your priests and for ours. Amen.

March, 1995

### *A Prayer for Priests*

*By John Cardinal O'Connor*

O loving Mother Mary, Mother of Priests, take to your heart your sons who are close to you because of their priestly ordination and because of the power which they have received to carry on the work of Christ in a world which needs them so much. Be their comfort, be their joy, be their strength, and especially help them to live and to defend the ideals of consecrated celibacy.

Lord Jesus, we your people pray to You for our priests. You have given them to us for OUR needs. We pray for them in THEIR needs.

We know that You have made them priests in the likeness of your own priesthood. You have consecrated them, set them aside, anointed them, filled them with the Holy Spirit, appointed them to teach, to preach, to minister, to console, to forgive, and to feed us with Your Body and Blood.

Yet we know, too, that they are one with us and share our human weaknesses. We know too that they are tempted to sin and discouragement as are we, needing to be ministered to, as do we, to be consoled and forgiven, as do we. Indeed, we thank You for choosing them from among us, so that they understand us as we understand them, suffer with us and rejoice with us, worry with us and trust with us, share our beings, our lives, our faith.

We ask that You give them this day the gift You gave Your chosen ones on the way to Emmaus: Your presence in their hearts, Your holiness in their souls, Your joy in their spirits. And let them see You face to face in the breaking of the Eucharistic bread.

We pray to You, O Lord, through Mary the mother of all priests, for Your priests and for ours. Amen.

O Jesus, our great High Priest, hear my humble prayers on behalf of your priests. Give them a deep faith, a bright and firm hope and a burning love which will ever increase in the course of their priestly life. In their loneliness, comfort them. In their sorrows, strengthen them. In their frustrations, point out to them that it is through suffering that the soul is purified, and show them that they are needed by the Church; they are needed by souls; they are needed for the work of redemption.

## *2. A Prayer for Priests*

*By St. Therese of Lisieux*

O Jesus, eternal Priest,  
keep your priests within the shelter of Your Sacred Heart,  
where none may touch them.

Keep unstained their anointed hands,  
which daily touch Your Sacred Body.

Keep unsullied their lips,  
daily purpled with your Precious Blood.

Keep pure and unearthly their hearts,  
sealed with the sublime mark of the priesthood.

Let Your holy love surround them and  
shield them from the world's contagion.

Bless their labors with abundant fruit and  
may the souls to whom they minister be their joy and consolation here and in heaven their beautiful and  
everlasting crown. Amen.

Lord, give us holy priests;

You Yourself maintain them in holiness.

O Divine and Great High Priest,

may the power of Your mercy accompany them everywhere and protect them  
from the devil's snares which are continually being set for the souls of priests.

May the power of Your mercy, O Lord,

shatter and bring to naught all that might tarnish the sanctity of priests,

for You can do all things.

**- Prayer by St Faustina**

## **Mother of Jesus & Mother of priests - Prayer by Blessed John Paul II in Pastores Dabo Vobis**

Mother of Jesus Christ and Mother of priests,

Accept this title which we bestow on you to celebrate your motherhood  
and to contemplate with you the priesthood of your Son and of your sons,  
O holy Mother of God.

Mother of Christ,  
to the Messiah Priest you gave a body of flesh  
through the anointing of the Holy Spirit  
for the salvation of the poor and the contrite of heart;  
guard priests in your heart and in the Church,  
O Mother of the Savior.

Mother of Faith,  
you accompanied to the Temple the Son of Man,  
the fulfillment of the promises given to the fathers;  
give to the Father for his glory the priests of your Son,  
O Ark of the Covenant.

Mother of the Church,  
with the disciples in the Upper Room  
you prayed to the Spirit for the new People and their shepherds;  
obtain for the Order of Presbyters a fullness of gifts,  
O Queen of the Apostles.

Mother of Jesus Christ,  
you were with Him at the beginning of His life and of His mission,  
you sought the Master among the crowd,  
you stood beside Him when he was lifted up from the earth  
consumed as the one eternal sacrifice,  
and you had John close by you, your son;  
accept from the beginning those who have been called,  
protect their growth, accompany your sons in their life and in their ministry,  
O Mother of Priests. Amen



## **-Prayer by Pope Benedict XVI**

Lord Jesus, you have chosen Your priests among us  
and have sent them to proclaim Your Word and to act in Your Name.  
For such a great gift to Your Church, we praise You and we thank You.  
We ask that you fill them with the fire of Your love,  
that their ministry may reveal Your presence in the Church.  
Since they are earthen vessels, we pray  
that your power may work in their weakness.  
In their afflictions do not let them be crushed;  
in their doubts, do not let them despair;  
in temptation, do not let them be destroyed.  
Inspire them through prayer to live each day  
the mystery of your death and Resurrection.  
In times of weakness, send them Your Spirit  
and help them to praise your heavenly Father and to pray for poor sinners.  
With the same Holy Spirit place your word on their lips and your love in their hearts,  
that they may bring the Good News to the poor and revive the broken-hearted.  
Lastly, may the gift of Mary, your mother,  
to the disciple whom you loved, be your gift to every priest.  
Grant that she, who formed You in your human image,  
may form each priest in Your divine image,  
through the power of Your Spirit, to the glory of God the Father. Amen.  
O Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to thee.

3. Lord Jesus Christ, eternal High Priest,  
You offered yourself to the Father on the altar of the Cross  
and through the outpouring of the Holy Spirit  
gave Your priestly people a share in Your redeeming sacrifice.  
Hear our prayer for the sanctification of our priests.  
Grant that all who are ordained to the ministerial priesthood  
may be ever more conformed to You, the Divine Master.  
May they preach the Gospel with pure heart and clear conscience.  
Let them be shepherds according to Your own Heart,  
single-minded in service to You and to the Church  
and shining examples of a holy, simple and joyful life.  
Through the prayers of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Your Mother and ours,  
draw all priests and the flocks entrusted to their care  
to the fullness of eternal life where you live and reign  
with the Father and the Holy Spirit,  
one God, forever and ever. Amen.

Heavenly Father, grant that our priests be strengthened and healed  
by the power of the Eucharist they celebrate.  
May the Word they proclaim give them courage and wisdom.  
We pray that all those whom they seek to serve  
May see in them the love and care of Jesus,  
Our Eternal High Priest, who is Lord for ever and ever. Amen.  
Mary, Mother of the Church, look tenderly upon your sons, our priests.  
St Joseph, Patron of the Universal Church, pray for us all.

## 10. Litany for Priests

Let us pray for the Holy Father: fill him with courage and grace, O Lord.

Cardinals, archbishops, and bishops: give them a shepherd's heart, O Lord.

Diocesan priests: fill them with your Spirit, Lord.

Priests in religious orders: perfect them in their calling, Lord.

Priests who are ill: heal them, Lord.

Priests who are in danger: deliver them, Lord.

Priests who are weak: strengthen them, Lord.

Priests who are poor: relieve them, Lord.

Priests who have lost their zeal: renew them, Lord.

Priests who are sad: console them, Lord.

Priests who are worried: give them peace, Lord.

Priests who are old: sustain them, Lord.

Priests who are alone: accompany them, Lord.

Missionary priests: protect them, Lord.

Priests who are preachers: enlighten them, Lord.

Priests who direct souls: instruct them, Lord.

Priests and religious who have died: bring them to glory, Lord.

For all priests: give them Your wisdom and knowledge.

For all priests: give them Your understanding and counsel.

For all priests: give them reverence and awe of You.

For all priests: give them patience and love.

For all priests: give them obedience and kindness.

For all priests: give them a burning zeal for souls.

For all priests: give them virtues of faith, hope and love.

For all priests: give them an intense love for the Eucharist.

For all priests: give them loyalty to the Holy Father and their Bishops.

For all priests: give them respect for life and human dignity.

For all priests: give them integrity and justice.

For all priests: give them humility and generosity.

For all priests: give them strength in their labors.

For all priests: give them peace in their sufferings.

For all priests: give them great love for the Trinity.

For all priests: give them great love for Mary.

For all priests: let them be the light of Christ.

For all priests: let them be the salt of the earth.

For all priests: let them practice sacrifice and self-denial.

For all priests: let them be holy in body, mind and spirit.

For all priests: let them be men of prayer.

For all priests: may faith shine forth in them.

For all priests: may they be concerned for our salvation.

For all priests: may they be faithful to their priestly vocation.

For all priests: may their hands bless and heal.

For all priests: may they burn with love for you.

For all priests: may all their steps be for the glory of God.

For all priests: may the Holy Spirit fill them, and give them His gifts in abundance. Let us pray.

Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, hear the prayers we offer for our priests. Let them know clearly the work that You are calling them to do. Grant them every grace to answer Your call with courage, love, and lasting dedication to Your will.

We ask Mary's intercession as their loving mother. Amen.

### **Prayer for Priests**

Eternal God,  
please bless our priests,  
who represent You on this earth.  
Make them more greatly aware of the grace  
that You pour out through them  
when they minister the sacraments,  
and help them to fall more deeply in love with You  
after each and every Mass that they celebrate.  
Please strengthen our priests,  
who shepherd Your flock,  
when they are in doubt of their faith,  
that they may be examples of Your Truth  
and guide us always on the path to You.  
We ask these things of You our Eternal Priest.  
Amen.

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### **A Prayer Before the Blessed Sacrament for the Increase of Priestly and Religious Vocations**

Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the Eternal Father,  
Son of the Virgin Mary,  
we thank you for offering your life in sacrifice on  
the Cross, and for renewing this sacrifice  
in every Mass celebrated throughout the world.

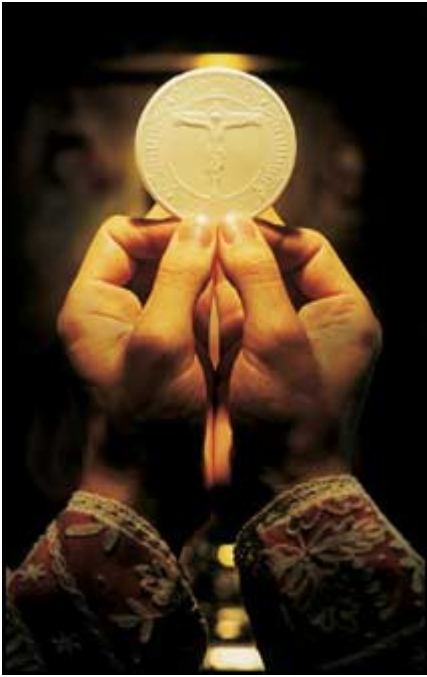
In the Power of the Holy Spirit  
we adore you and proclaim  
your living presence in the Eucharist.  
We desire to imitate the love you show us  
in your death and resurrection,  
by loving and serving one another.

We ask you to call many young people to religious  
life, and to provide the holy and generous priests  
that are so needed in your Church today.  
Lord Jesus, hear our prayer. Amen.

*– Archbishop Justin Rigali – St. Louis*

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## Prayer of Parishioners



## Prayer for Priests

*Gracious and loving God, we thank you for the gift of our priest.*

*Through them, we experience your presence in the sacraments.*

*Help our priests to be strong in their vocation. Set their souls on fire with love for your people.*

*Grant them the wisdom, understanding, and strength they need to follow in the footsteps of Jesus.*

*Inspire them with the vision of your Kingdom. Give them the words they need to spread the Gospel.*

*Allow them to experience joy in their ministry. Help them to become instruments of your divine grace.*

*We ask this through Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns as our Eternal Priest.*

*Amen.*

## Daily Mass Prayer

Dear Lord,

We pray that the Blessed Mother wrap her mantle around your priests and through her intercession strengthen them for their ministry.

We pray that Mary will guide your priests to follow her own words,

“Do whatever He tells you” (*Jn 2:5*).

May your priests have the heart of St. Joseph, Mary’s most chaste spouse.

May the Blessed Mother’s own pierced heart inspire them to embrace

all who suffer at the foot of the cross.

May your priests be holy, filled with the fire of your love seeking nothing but your greater glory and the salvation of souls.

Amen.

Saint John Vianney, pray for us.

Father, we praise and bless Your Holy Name,  
for, by Your Holy Spirit, You have anointed Your only Son,  
born of the Virgin Mary,  
our great High Priest of the new and eternal covenant.

In Your love, You graciously give to all the baptized a share in  
His one priesthood.

And, from these, Christ Your Son calls some men to share in  
His priesthood in a special way, making them stewards of the  
Mysteries of God.

We joyfully thank You for our priests who answer His call each day  
with their lives of generous service to all of Your children.  
They are a most precious gift of Your Divine Mercy.

Strengthen them in their ministry of Word and Sacrament.  
Lift them up when they are cast down.  
Forgive them when they fail.

Enlighten their minds with the Truth of the Gospel.  
Inflame their hearts with love for Your Holy Church,  
and fill them with the overflowing joy of Your Grace.

Through the intercession of St. John Vianney, patron of all priests,  
we humbly ask You to make our priests true shepherds,  
each one willing to lay down his life for his flock  
after the example of Your own divine Son  
who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit,  
one God, forever and ever. Amen.

+Most Rev. Arthur J. Serratelli, S.T.D., S.S.L.,D.D.  
Bishop of Paterson

### **For a Son in the Priesthood or Studying for the Priesthood**

Lord Jesus, eternal priest, bestow on (insert name) the fullness of your perfection and strength. Remember that he has forsaken all things to give himself entirely to you. In his hours of loneliness and discouragement be close to him, that he may not fail in his sacred duties. Bless his labors with abundant fruit for souls. May all his contacts with others bring them and him closer to your divine heart.

Give him a sympathetic and understanding heart that he may restore peace and bring consolation to those who have fallen into sin. Give him a generous heart that he may share the sorrows and sufferings of others and be forgetful of his own. Give him a strong heart that he may be ever pure in the midst of a sinful world. Keep always holy his anointed hands, which are privileged to touch your sacred Body, that they may never work to your dishonor. May his lips, which touch your precious Blood, never be the instrument of sin.

And if ever, Lord, through weakness he should fall, then lift him gently to your Sacred Heart. Remember that the world's possessions are no longer his and that he has nothing left but you. Grant that each precious host to be consecrated at his hands may bring him closer to you.

--- Jesus meek and humble of heart, make his heart like unto your very own!

# Praying the Holy Hour

Some Seven Sisters have been offering a Holy Hour for many years, while for others, this may be the first time they have spent a full hour in prayer. Regardless of your spiritual background, the following characteristics set this hour apart as a gift offered in the spirit of the Seven Sisters Apostolate:

## **1) Offer this hour solely for the intentions of the priest.**

If other personal intercessions weigh heavily, it is suggested that the Seven Sister prays through these other intentions either before or after the hour. In God's marvelous economy, this challenge can in itself be offered as additional sacrifice for the benefit of the priest. Be assured that eventually you will form the discipline required for this special work of prayer to joyfully offer this entire hour for the priest.

## **2) Pray for the priest's deepening devotion to Mary.**

Pray for the priest's deepening devotion to Mary each time you offer this Holy Hour for him. With Our Lady's support, the Church and her priests will be strengthened.

## **3) Resolve to honor the commitment to a Holy Hour.**

Resolve to honor the commitment to a Holy Hour on your designated day of the week or secure a sub if you are unable to offer the Hour yourself, keeping true to your group's prayer commitment of at least one Holy Hour every day for the pastor. As is true of most prayer effort, each week may present challenges. Let us make our 'yes' mean 'yes'. God's graces are sufficient.

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## Suggestions to Aid Prayer

### Entering into Prayer

- Turn off your cell phone as you enter the chapel.
- Ask the Holy Spirit to guide your prayer for that particular hour. When we ask, seek, knock, the door is opened. Enter unhurried—there is a whole hour ahead!
- Invoke the help of our patrons, the Madonna of the Grapes, St. John Vianney and St. Margaret Clitherow.
- Be patient with yourself. Offering an entire hour for one person every week for one year will necessitate practice and steadfastness. Think of yourself as a student in the school of intercession; let the Holy Spirit be your teacher. If conflicting thoughts and concerns distract, thank God for the awareness of them and move right back into prayer for the priest. As St. Teresa of Avila advised in reference to distractions, "The ships will pass and one may watch the ships passing by, but do not invite them into the harbor to rest."