

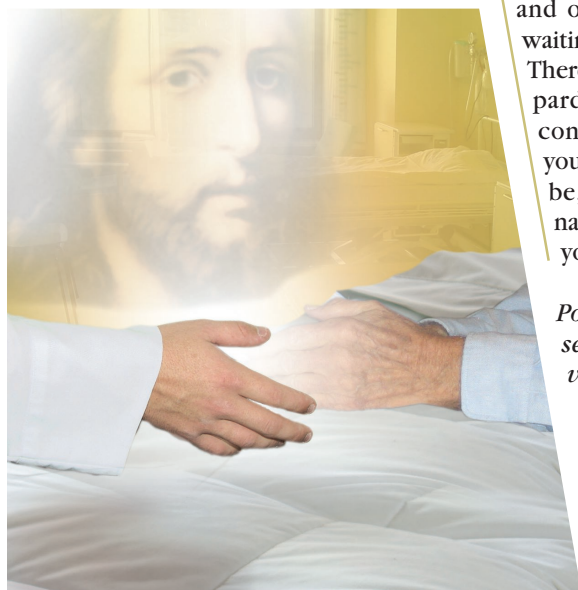
Shepherds of Christ

2007 ISSUE NO. 2 A SPIRITUALITY NEWSLETTER FOR PRIESTS BY REV. JOHN J. PASQUINI

CHIEF SHEPHERD OF THE FLOCK

Jn. 10: 1-15

“I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd lays down his life for his sheep. The hired man, since he is not the shepherd and the sheep do not belong to him, abandons the sheep as soon as he sees a wolf coming, and runs away, and then the wolf attacks and scatters the sheep; he runs away because he is only a hired man and has no concern for the sheep. I am the good shepherd; I know my own and my own know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for my sheep”
(*New Jerusalem Bible, Doubleday*).



CHRIST AWAITS YOU

By Pope John Paul II

There are always souls to enlighten, sinners to pardon, tears to dry, disappointments to console, sick to encourage, children and youngsters to guide. There is, there ever shall be, [people] to love and to save, in Christ's name! This is your vocation; it ought to make you happy and courageous.

“You are those whom the Church and society await, with anxiety, in view of the extreme need for ministers.... In this troubled and anguished epoch of ours, the Church goes on announcing and testifying to Jesus Christ, the light and

salvation of mankind. And the Lord calls you as well to this grand and unending mission.

To you as well may therefore be applied those words of the Lord's reported by the Prophet Isaiah: 'I, the Lord, have called you for the victory of justice, I have grasped you by the hand; I formed you and set you as a covenant of the people, a light for the nations, to open the eyes of the blind, to bring out prisoners from confinement, and from the dungeon, those who live in darkness' (Is. 42:6-7).

Let yourself be led by the hand of the Lord, because he wishes to accomplish Redemption today through your means. The Redemption is always of today, because the parable of the good seed and the weeds is always of today. The Beatitudes are always of today. Mankind always has need of Revelation and of the Redemption of Christ, so he is waiting for you!

There are always souls to enlighten, sinners to pardon, tears to dry, disappointments to console, sick to encourage, children and youngsters to guide. There is, there ever shall be, [people] to love and to save, in Christ's name! This is your vocation; it ought to make you happy and courageous.”

Pope John Paul addressed the above to seminarians, but what he taught is likewise very applicable to us as priests.

(*Prayers and Devotions*, trans. O'Sullivan [New York: Viking, 1994], 299).

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PRIESTHOOD

By Charles De Foucauld

To a Friend Preparing for Ordination

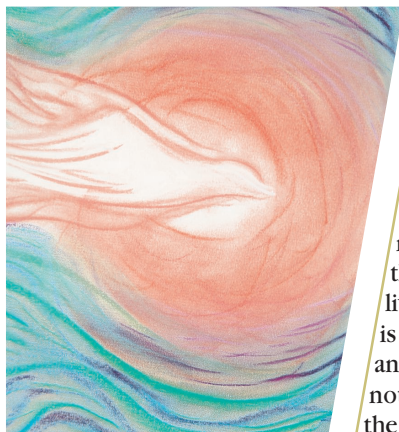
“The priest... is something transcendent; through baptism he brings souls to birth, through the sacrament of penance he purifies them, through communion he gives them our Lord's Body as He Himself did at the Last Supper, and at their death He helps them to appear before the Beloved by giving them their final forgiveness and the supreme strength... Every single day of his life, a priest does what Jesus did during his three years of ministry—He teaches men to know, love and serve their good Master. What a vocation!”



RIGHT SPIRIT

By Fr. Karl Rahner S.J.

“We thank You for being pleased to prepare us for Your priesthood. We confess that You have chosen us, not we You, that without Your grace we should be unworthy and feeble and unfit to follow such a vocation.... We are to be Your witnesses.... We are to renew Your sacrifice.... We are to dispense Your grace.... [We] give you heartfelt thanks for calling us into Your sanctuary, to Your altar, and to Your own priestly mission.... O Jesus, Priest and King forever, it is Your will that we be and remain Your priests.... Give us Your Holy Spirit...and the spirit of Your priesthood....., the spirit of reverence towards God, the spirit of contrition, the spirit of holiness and chaste fear of dishonoring the holy God by sin, the spirit of faith and love of prayer, the spirit of purity and manly discipline, the spirit of knowledge and wisdom, the spirit of brotherly love and concord beyond all envy and strife, the spirit of joy and confidence, the spirit of magnanimity and generosity, the spirit of obedience, patience, and love of Your holy cross. On this road let us have God Your Father before our eyes, let us walk in His holy presence, work honestly to teach our hearts, stick together among ourselves fraternally, share one another's burden and thus fulfill Your law. Let us grow daily more and more like You through true, constant, selfless spiritual effort and struggle.... Grant us the grace of prayer, of collection, of inwardness, stop us when we want to run away from You in our distraction and absent-mindedness; bring us...people back to You, if need be by the prick



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of pain, the bitterness of heart and of distress. Give us just one gift: the grace to pray truly and to become daily more. When we pray, we are and remain in fellowship with You, then we shall increasingly become what we are and ought to be according to Your will: Your disciples, Your apostles, Your priests, the witnesses of Your truth and the dispensers of Your mysteries.... You look at us, Your eyes pierce through our conscience, Your love touches our heart. And You say: You are my friends if you do what I command you.... But we dare to look up to You humbly and trustingly and to say: by Your grace we will be what You have commanded us to be. Amen.” (*Prayers For a Lifetime* [New York: Crossroads, 1986], 124-127).

ANOTHER CHRIST

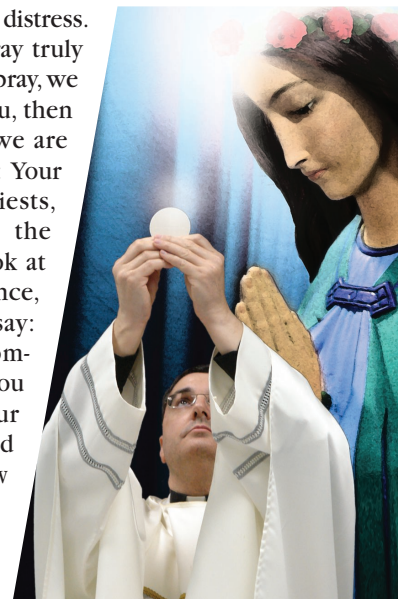
By St. Ambrose of Milan

“We saw the Prince of Priests coming to us[;] we saw and heard Him offering His blood for us. We follow, inasmuch as we are able, being priests; and we offer the sacrifice on behalf of the people. And even if we are of but little merit, still, in the sacrifice, we are honorable. For even if Christ is not now seen as the one who offers the sacrifice, nevertheless it is He Himself that is offered in sacrifice here on earth when the Body of Christ is offered. Indeed, to offer Himself He is made visible in us, He whose word makes holy the sacrifice that is offered.” (*On Twelve Psalms*, 38, 25, trans. William Jurgens, *The Faith of the Early Fathers*, vol 2).

GREAT DIGNITY

By Fr. Gabriel of St. Mary Magdalen, O.C.D.

“Jesus placed all the powers given to His Church in the hands of priests, who have been chosen by Him from among the people to become His ministers. ‘As the Father hath sent Me, I also send you....’ The priestly dignity depends upon this investiture by Christ, this appointment as His representative and minister. Priests must be thoroughly aware of their great dignity of their call if they wish to live at the height of their vocation.... A priest is a man, and therefore always remains fallible and capable of making mistakes, but this does not prevent him from being the Anointed of the Lord, marked forever with an indelible sign and having the power to consecrate the Body of Christ, to administer the sacraments, and to preach to the people in the name of God. Without the priesthood we would be deprived of the Holy Eucharist; we would never have the consolation of hearing, in the name of God, ‘Thy sins are forgiven thee.’ If there were no priests, the churches would be deserted,



schools would become secularized, there would be no nuptial blessings, the dying would be deprived of final consolation, children would be abandoned to evil; all men would become totally immersed in misery, with no one to raise them up and lead them to God, with no one to pray to Him in their name and for their welfare. But Jesus, the sole Mediator between God and man, willed to institute the priesthood to perpetuate among us, in a visible manner, His work of mediation, salvation, and sanctification. The priest accompanies us at every step of our life. Soon after our birth, he welcomes us at the baptismal font; he administers the sacraments to us, he helps us to understand divine truth, he shows us how to lead a good life, blesses our efforts, sustains our footsteps, and strengthens us in our last agony. He often works unseen and unknown, misunderstood, never sufficiently appreciated; yet his apostolic work is priceless, indispensable.” (*Divine Intimacy* [Rockford: Tan Books, 1996], 197-198).

PERSONA CHRISTI CAPITIS

By Fr. John J. Pasquini

Mary what do you see?
You see in us your Son.
We were consecrated to act in the person of your Son, in *persona Christi Capititis*.
We were called from all eternity to be “another Christ,” to act in the person of Christ the Head.
For indeed that is what we are.
And because of this precious gift of being another Christ, and of acting on his behalf, we are uniquely your Sons.
Mary what do you see?
Do you see your Son in me?
Help me, Holy Mary, to be Christ in a world hungering for Christ.



GREAT GIFT

—By St. John Chrysostom

“Priests who inhabit the earth, they who make their dwelling among us, are entrusted with the dispensation of the things of heaven! Priests have received a power which God has given neither to angels or archangels. It is said to them: ‘Whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.’ Temporal rulers have the power of binding, but they can only bind the body. Priests, however, can bind with a bond which pertains to the soul and transcends the very heavens. Whatever priests do on earth, God will confirm in heaven, just as the master ratifies the decisions of his servants. He says, ‘Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven: whose sins you retain, they are retained.’ What greater power is there than this? The Father has given all the power of judgment to the Son. And now the Son places this power in the hands of men....

The priests of the Old Covenant had power to declare a person of having been cured or cleaned of leprosy... Our priests have the power of not simply treating physical leprosy or uncleanness, but they have the power of actually cleaning and cleansing spiritual uncleanness.... God has given priests powers greater than those of parents.... Parents beget us to temporal existence, whereas priests beget us to eternal life.” [Priests are truly “fathers” for they cooperate with Christ in bringing life to souls!] (cf. *Migne*, PG 47, 623f).

“Truth is love, and if love were to turn against truth, it would be mutilating itself.”

—His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI

WHO IS THE PRIEST?

—By Pope John Paul II

“According to Saint Paul, [to be a priest] means above all to be a steward of the mysteries of God.... [The] priest receives from Christ the treasures of salvation, in order to duly distribute them among the people to whom he is sent... It is the mystery of a ‘wonderous exchange’...between God and man. A man offers his humanity to Christ, so Christ may use him as an instrument of salvation, making him as it were into another Christ.... The priesthood, in its deepest reality, is the *priesthood of Christ*. It is Christ who offers himself, his Body and Blood, in sacrifice to God the Father, and by this sacrifice makes righteous in the Father’s eyes all mankind and, indirectly, all creation. The priest, in his daily celebration of the Eucharist, goes to the very heart of this mystery. For this reason the celebration of the Eucharist must be the most important moment of the priest’s day, the center of his life....

The priest truly acts in *persona Christi*. What Christ accomplished on the altar of the Cross and what earlier still he had instituted as a sacrament in the Upper Room, the priest now renews by the power of the Holy Spirit. At this moment the priest is as it were embraced by the power of the Holy Spirit, and the words which he utters have the same efficacy as those spoken by Christ at the Last Supper.... [The world is] thirsting for Christ.... From the priest they ask for Christ! And from him they have the right to receive Christ, above all through the proclamation of the word.... [The] priest is also called to be a *man of God’s word*, a generous and tireless evangelizer... But this proclamation [of the word] seeks to have man encounter Jesus, especially in the mystery of the Eucharist, the living heart of the Church and of priestly life. The priest has a mysterious, awesome power over the Eucharistic Body of Christ. By reason of this power he becomes the steward of the greatest treasure of the Redemption, for he gives people the Redeemer in person. Celebrating the Eucharist is the most sublime and most sacred function of every priest....

There can be no Eucharist without the priesthood, just as there can be no priesthood without the Eucharist. The priest, as steward of the ‘mysteries of God,’ is at the service of the common priesthood of the faithful. By proclaiming the word and celebrating the sacraments, especially the Eucharist, he makes the whole people of God ever more aware of its share in Christ’s priesthood, and at the same time encourages it to live that priesthood to the full....” (*Gift and Mystery* [New York: Doubleday, 1996], 71-73, 75, 77-78, 85).

PRAYER FOR PRIESTS

—By Fr. Edward Carter, S.J.

“Lord Jesus, Chief Shepherd of the Flock, we pray that in the great love and mercy of Your Heart that You attend to all the needs of Your priest-shepherds throughout the world. We ask that You draw back to Your Heart all those priests who have seriously strayed away from Your path, that You rekindle the desire for holiness in the hearts of those priests who have become lukewarm, and that You continue to give Your fervent priests the desire for the highest holiness. United with Your Heart and Mary’s Heart, we ask that You take this petition to Your heavenly Father in the unity of the Holy Spirit. Amen.” (*Shepherds of Christ, Spirituality Newsletters 2* [China: Shepherds of Christ, 2002], 208).

PRIEST AND THE FIGHT FOR LIFE

—By Rev. Thomas J. Euteneuer, Human Life International

Most priests do not realize how vitally important a single priest can be in the pro-life battle. Since I have been a busy parish priest and a pastor most of my priestly life, I understand intimately how difficult it is to manage innumerable parish responsibilities and be active in the pro-life movement at the same time. There always seem to be a million other things—and less controversial ones—to do. However, the presence and active involvement of priests in the fight for life is critically important. Here’s how. First, we are the teachers of the Catholic Faith. “My people perish for lack of knowledge,” says the prophet



Hosea (4:6), and that admonition is still relevant to us centuries later. Countless numbers of our own faithful people, not to mention the general population, are drawn into the evils of the culture of death simply because they have never been told that certain things are evil! We have the benefit of a seminary post-graduate education and years of studying the matters of morality and faith from a theological perspective. What does the average lay person have? Well, in the past forty years they've hardly even had catechesis or preaching on these issues!

“The first law of history is not to dare to utter falsehood; the second, not to fear to speak the truth.”

—His Holiness Leo XIII

We are the ones that need to tell them about abortion, birth control, sexual morality, etc. and give them the guidance and resources to make the proper decisions when they are snared by the culture of death. Yes, they need to hear it from the pulpits of our churches, with conviction and compassion of course, but without fear. We proclaim to them the Good News that frees them from the nets of the evil one.

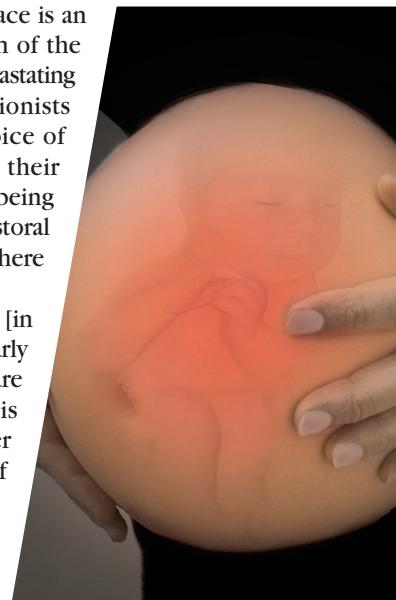
Secondly, we are shepherds. Did not Jesus leave the ninety-nine and go in search of the lost sheep? Isn't that the image that He left us to form our pastoral charity? Just so, there is one place in our culture where you will infallibly find the lost, the forsaken, the downtrodden, the imprisoned, the despairing, the needy, the hungry; in essence, all

the categories of Matthew 25. That place is an abortion clinic. The presence of a man of the cloth in front of an abortion mill is just devastating for business. We are told that by abortionists themselves. The Roman collar is the voice of conscience to those who have lost their consciences and a sign of hope in those being dragged off to death. It is a duty of our pastoral care to be at a place like that because it is there that we find the lost sheep.

Just for the record, the *Roe v. Wade* holocaust [in the United States] has claimed the lives of nearly 49 million innocent babies since 1972. There are nearly 1.25 million abortions per year in this country alone. That breaks down to 3,435 per day or 143 per hour. Many of these casualties of the abortion culture are being killed down the street from our parishes. If there were ever a war that priests should be fighting, it is this one.

“Can you not watch one hour with me?” Jesus asks us to accompany Him in the Garden and then go to Calvary and be with Him in His suffering little ones. We need not spend voluminous amounts of time there either; just the symbolic “one hour.” We need just go there regularly. He is there, and when we save innocent babies from death, console and help their moms and strengthen the drooping knees of the people who don't want to be in that trap of death—He is working through us.

The priest still works “*in persona Christi*”—and when Christ comes “in person” to any place where the culture of death operates, death is conquered.



go out to search for those who stray from the fold. The First Epistle of Peter exhorts presbyters to imitate the Good Shepherd. Three faults are particularly reprimanded: to labor under constraint rather than voluntarily; to be motivated by desire for profit rather than offering one's services freely; to domineer over the flock rather than being an example to them (1 Pet. 5:1-3)... Priestly ministry as we find it in the gospels is not just a job, a profession requiring a limited number of hours on duty.... [The] vocation is a total one, so that the priest is always in some sense on duty....

The apostolic calling involves two inseparable dimensions: being with Jesus and being sent forth.... They must be with Jesus for the sake of their own conversion, which involves learning what he has to teach, acquiring his mentality, his style of existence and thinking; but they must also go forth so as to meet the spiritual needs of others, wherever the demands of the church's mission require.

The priest must abide in Christ, so that Christ may abide in him and enable him to bear fruit, for apart from him the disciple can do nothing....” (*The Priestly Office: A Theological Reflection* [New York: Paulist Press, 1997], 62-64).



STEWARD OF MERCY

By Pope John Paul II

“As the steward of the Sacrament of Reconciliation...[the] priest is the witness and instrument of divine mercy! ...It is in the confessional that his spiritual fatherhood is realized in the fullest way. It is in the confessional that every priest becomes a witness of the great miracles which divine mercy works in souls which receive the grace of conversion.... As a steward of God's mysteries, the priest is a special witness to the Invisible in the world. For he is a steward of the invisible and priceless treasures belonging to the spiritual and supernatural order.” (*Gift and Mystery*, 86-87).

PRAYER FOR PRIESTS

(cf. Carlos A. Garcia)

“Sacred Heart of Jesus, hear my humble prayer on behalf of your priests. I pray for your faithful priests; for your unfaithful and tepid priests; for your priests who labor at home and abroad; for your tempted priests; for your lonely priests; for your dying priests; for the souls of our priests in purgatory.

Merciful Heart of Jesus, remembering they are but weak and frail human beings, give them a deep faith, a bright and firm hope, and a burning love.

GOOD SHEPHERDS

By Avery Cardinal Dulles, S.J.

“The Biblical image of the Good Shepherd has rich potential as a basis of priestly spirituality. The shepherd, as the gospels tell us, must have a deep love for the sheep, know them intimately, lead them toward good pastures, defend them against ravenous wolves or roaring lions, and





Fr. Edward J. Carter's First Mass

Immaculate Heart of Mary, Queen of the Clergy, I ask that, in their loneliness, you comfort them; in their sorrow, you strengthen them, in their frustration, you show them that it is through suffering that the souls are purified.

Finally, O Jesus, I pray: [K]eep them close to your loving Heart; bless them abundantly, in time and in eternity. Amen."

PRIEST OF THE MASS

By Rita Ring, *Shepherds of Christ Ministries*

"To be at a Mass where the priest is one with Christ is to be at a Mass where I really feel Christ's presence in the priest. At every Mass, I am so aware of Christ celebrating the Mass through the priest.... I feel the flow of [grace] and I am moved deeply within my heart and I cry from this immense presence of God. I am in awe. I unite to Jesus in every move of the priest, every word, when he is so united to Christ. I feel Christ so alive in him....

I see the hands, the hands of a man, a priest, and I see Christ celebrating the Mass in the priest. I am in awe of the Almighty God truly present through the hands of the priest.... [May priests pray for holiness as Jesus wants them to]:

Come to me, Lord, and possess my soul. Come into my heart and permeate my soul. Help me to sit in silence with You and let Your work in my heart.

I am yours to possess. I am Yours to use. I want to be selfless and only exist in You. Help me to spoon out all that is me and be an empty vessel ready to be filled by You. Help me to die to myself and live only for You. Use me as You will. Let me never draw my attention back to myself. I only want to operate as You do, dwelling within me.

I am Yours, Lord. I want to have my life in You. I want to do the will of the Father. Give me the strength to put aside the world and let You operate my very being.

Help me to act as You desire. Strengthen me against the distractions of the devil...[that takes] me from Your work.

When I worry, I have taken my focus off of You and placed it upon myself. Help me not give in to the promptings of others to change what in my heart You are making very clear to me. I worship You, I adore You and I love You. Come and dwell in me now." (Mass Book [China: Shepherds of Christ, 1997], 16-17, 15).

PRAYER OF ORDINATION

"Lord, fill with the gift of the Holy Spirit him whom you have deigned to raise to the rank of the priesthood, that he may be worthy to stand without reproach before your altar, to proclaim the Gospel to your kingdom, to fulfill the ministry of your word of truth, to offer you spiritual gifts and sacrifices, to renew your people by the bath of rebirth; so that he may go out to meet our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, your only Son, on the day of his second coming...." (Byzantine Liturgy, *Euchologion*).

GOD'S WAY, NOT THE WORLD'S

By Pope Benedict XVI

"Being able to preach is a gift, a special grace, and Saint Augustine always had great respect for the simple pastors who need a book in order to work out what to say in a sermon. He said: It is not originality that is important, but humble service. If another person's book helps someone to preach the Word to men, that's very good. We will be thankful when God raises up a great preacher, but we should also learn to be humble enough to listen to a lesser preacher. Recently a parish priest in a large German city told me that he had come to his vocation by the particular agency of a priest who was actually bereft of all exterior gifts. He was a hopeless preacher, a dreadful singer, and so on, and yet under his care the parish really blossomed. In the end, four or five priestly vocations were awakened in the city parish, something that happened neither under his predecessor nor under his successor, both of whom were far more capable. We can see here how the humble witness of someone who does not have the gift of persuasive speech can itself become a sermon, and how we should thank God for the variety of gifts." (Joseph Ratzinger, *God and the World*, trans. Taylor [San Francisco: Ignatius, 202], 432-433).

"If you want a religion that is really comfortable, I don't recommend Christianity."

—C.S. Lewis

PURE FOR CHRIST

By St. Gregory of Nazianzus

"We must begin by purifying ourselves before purifying others; we must be instructed to be able to instruct, become light to illuminate, draw close to God to bring him close to others, be sanctified to sanctify, lead by the hand and counsel prudently. I know whose ministers we are, where we find ourselves and to where we strive. I know God's greatness and man's weakness, but also his potential. [Who then is the Priest? He is] the defender of truth, who stand with angels, gives glory with archangels, causes sacrifices to rise to the altar on high, shares Christ's priesthood, refashions creation, restores it in God's image, recreates it for the world on high and, even greater, is divinized and divinizes." (*Oratio*, 2, 71, 74, 73: PG 35, 480-481).

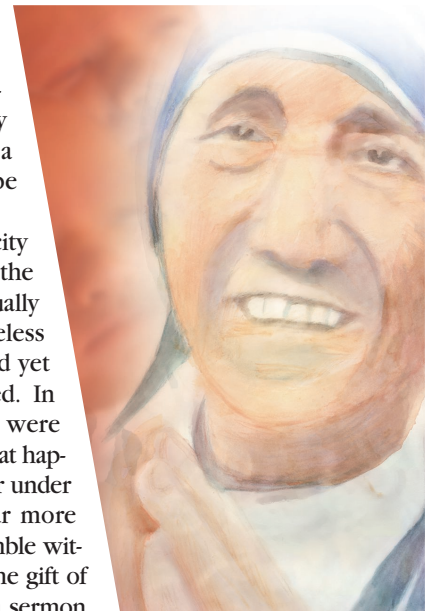
ON BLESSED TERESA'S WALL

"People are often unreasonable, illogical, and self-centered; Forgive them anyway.

If you are kind, people may accuse you of being selfish and of having ulterior motives; Be kind anyway.

If you are successful, you will win some false friends and some true enemies; Succeed anyway.

If you are honest and frank, people may cheat you; Be honest and frank anyway.



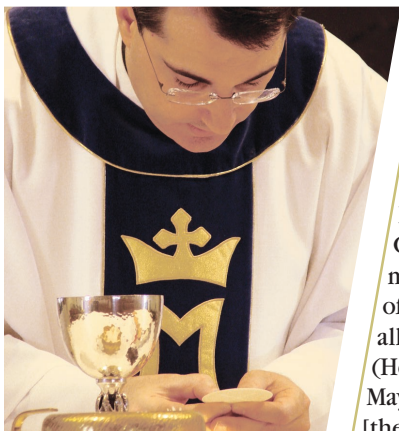
What you spend years building, someone may destroy overnight; Build anyway.
 If you find serenity and happiness, they may be jealous; Be happy anyway.
 The good you do today, people will often forget tomorrow; Do good anyway.
 Give the world the best you have, and it may never be enough; Give the world the best you've got anyway.
 You see, in the final analysis, it is between you and God; It was never between you and them anyway."

The following sayings were a favorite of Mother Teresa of Calcutta. She posted them on her wall so that all her sisters could read them. (Harvard Student Agencies, 1968).

PRIESTLY DIGNITY

By Bishop Anthony T. Lobo

"The ministerial priesthood was... instituted by Jesus to be at the service of the common priesthood of the believers. Like Christ the High Priest, the ministerial priest stands between God and the people of God as, 'minister of the sanctuary' (Hebrews 8:2) and 'mediator of the New Covenant' (Hebrew 9:15). The ministerial priesthood has a two-fold task towards God and towards man: 'To stand in my presence to minister' (God-ward) and then 'to go out and bless in my name' (man-ward). In the heavenly sanctuary, Jesus is intercessor ('He liveth to pray unceasingly,' Hebrews 7:25). He is there to give us access to God's presence, to bring us close to God. As Mediator of the New Covenant, Jesus offers his blood to cleanse our conscience from all dead works, to serve the living God (Hebrews 9:14).



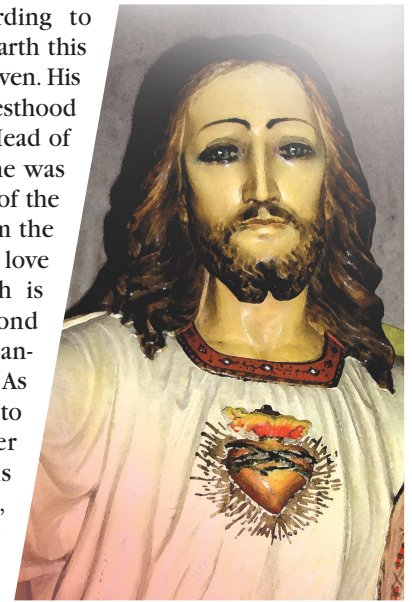
The ministerial priesthood, according to *Pastores Dabo Vobis*, continues on earth this twofold task of our High Priest in Heaven. His role is described as sharing in the priesthood of Christ the Head and Shepherd. As Head of the Church, His Body, we recall that she was born from his pierced heart at the foot of the cross, just as the first Eve was born from the side of the first Adam. There is a spousal love between Christ and his church which is expressed in priestly celibacy. The bond between head and body is not a legal, man-made one but one forged with divine love. As Head, he communicates all God's blessings to his spouse, and carries into heaven all her prayers and gifts. As Shepherd, he feeds his flock on the Bread of Life, the Bread of Heaven, and even lays down his life in sacrifice. The soul of his sacrifice is perichoresis, the absolute surrender, the total self-gift, which is the very life of God and the core and center of the inner being of all human persons, male and female, created in his image and likeness.

The purpose of the ministerial priesthood is to help the faithful to live according to the restored image and likeness, to offer themselves according to their common priesthood so that they can live once again, according to their true nature, the Trinitarian life of mutual self-giving. The ministerial priest feeds his flock with the Eucharistic bread and, following the command of Christ, makes present the memorial of the sacrifice of Calvary. One with the Good Shepherd, who lays down his life for his sheep, the ministerial priest also makes his own self-offering, his daily surrender, his absolute self-gift, by living a life of complete dedication, utterly unselfish. In union with Christ in his total self-offering, the priest becomes one with the Head, becoming the channel of mediation between God and man, carrying up our prayers and gifts to God and bringing down God's graces and blessings to us. Like Jesus the High Priest, who 'lives to make unceasing intercession for us' (Hebrews 7:25), the priest is a man of prayer, faithful to his Divine Office and leader of the praying Christian Community. The ministerial priest is minister of reconciliation, applying the blood of Christ which cleanses our conscience from all dead works to serve the living God', (Hebrews 9:14).

May all...grow more and more in appreciating [the priest's] dignity...of this priceless gift of God to the world."

(www.rc.net/malaysia/collegeneral/lobo.htm)

"You are deceived if you think that Christians can live without persecutions." — Saint Jerome



NOBLE OFFICE

(cf. Opus Bono Sacerdotii)

"O Lord Jesus Christ, Eternal High Priest and exemplar of priestly holiness and dignity, we are grateful to You for having chosen certain men for the ministerial priesthood by which You continue to instruct, admonish, forgive, nourish, and strengthen Your Church. We are sorely aware of the great need of priests in our time to be confirmed in their sacred calling so that they may continue confidently in their ministry of mediating Your graces to men and of representing them before Your august majesty.

Relying on the intercession of Holy Mary, Mother of priests, and of Saint Joseph, Her beloved spouse, we beg Your help for the priests who are the most troubled, tempted, discouraged, and suffering.

May the noble and sacred office of the priesthood, which has too often been reviled and scorned, regain its admirable stature in the sight of all men for Your greater honor and glory and for the sanctification and salvation of Your people. Amen."

CONSECRATED TO JESUS AND MARY

By Fr. Edward Carter, S.J.

"Lord, Jesus, Chief Shepherd of the Flock, I consecrate my priestly life to your Heart, pierced on Calvary for love of us. From Your pierced Heart the Church was born, the Church You have called me, as a priest, to serve in a most special way. You reveal Your Heart as a symbol of Your love in all its aspects, including Your most special love for me, whom You have chosen as Your priest-companion. Help me always to pour out my life in love of God and neighbor. Heart of Jesus, I place my trust in You!



A EUCHARISTIC HEART

The Shepherds of Christ have people dedicated to spending two hours weekly before the Blessed Sacrament in the Tabernacle. They pray for the following intentions:

- 1) For the spread of the devotion to the Hearts of Jesus and Mary culminating in the reign of the Sacred Heart and the triumph of the Immaculate Heart.
- 2) For the Pope.
- 3) For all bishops of the world.
- 4) For all priests.
- 5) For all sisters and brothers in religious life.
- 6) For all members of the Shepherds of Christ Movement, and for the spread of this movement to the world.
- 7) For all members of the Catholic Church.
- 8) For all members of the human family.
- 9) For all souls in purgatory.

Dear Blessed Virgin Mary, I consecrate myself to your maternal and Immaculate Heart, this Heart which is [a] symbol of your life of Love. You are the Mother of my Savior. You are also my Mother. You love me with a most special love as this unique priest-son. In a return of love I give myself entirely to your motherly love and protection. You followed Jesus perfectly. You are His first and perfect disciple. Teach me to imitate you in the putting on of Christ. Be my motherly intercessor so that, through your Immaculate Heart, I may be guided to an ever closer union with the pierced Heart of Jesus, Chief Shepherd of the Flock, Who leads me to the Father in the Holy Spirit.”

(Shepherds of Christ, Spirituality Newsletters 2 [Madison: Shepherds of Christ, 2002], 209).

This movement, *Apostles of the Eucharistic Heart of Jesus*, was begun with Fr. Carter. Please inquire. Shepherds of Christ Ministries P.O. Box 627, China, Indiana 47250 USA or info@sofc.org

A PRIESTLY FAREWELL

By Pope John Paul II

“Brethren, be the more zealous to confirm your call and election, for if you do this you will never fall.” (2 Pet. 1:10). Love your priesthood! Be faithful to the end! Learn to see in your priesthood the Gospel treasure for which it is worth giving up everything (cf. Mt. 13:44).

In a special way I turn to those of you who are experiencing difficulty or even a crisis in your vocation.... I embrace each one of you in my prayers.” *(Gift and Mystery, 96).*

HOW TO BECOME A SHEPHERD OF CHRIST ASSOCIATE

The Shepherds of Christ has prayer chapters all over the world praying for the priests, the Church and the world. These prayers that Father Carter compiled in the summer of 1994 began this worldwide network of prayer. Currently the prayers are in six languages with the Church’s *Imprimatur*. Fr. Carter had the approval of his Jesuit provincial for this movement, writing the Newsletter every 2 months for 6 1/2 years. After his death, and with his direction, we in the Shepherds of Christ circulated the *Priestly Newsletter Book II* to 95,000 priests with other writings. We have prayed daily for the priests, the Church, and the world since 1994. Associates are called to join prayer Chapters and help us circulate this newsletter centered on spreading devotion to the Sacred Heart and Immaculate Heart and helping to renew the Church through greater holiness. Fr. John J. Pasquini is a tremendous gift on this 13th anniversary year of the newsletter. Form a Prayer Chapter & order a Prayer Manual.

IN JESUS’ HEART

By St. John Vianney

“The priest continues the work of redemption on earth.... If we really understood the priest on earth, we would die not of fright but of love.... The Priesthood is the love of the heart of Jesus.” (In B. Nodet, *Jean-Marie Vianney, Cure d’Ars*, 100).

DAILY BREAD

By Fr. John J. Pasquini

O Lord, may Your precious Blood purify, enlighten and sanctify me so that I may purify, enlighten and sanctify others in Your name and power. Help me to be Your hands, feet, eyes, voice, heart and mercy in a world hungering and thirsting for You.

May I be a good shepherd, a spiritual, prayerful father with a holy zeal, a zeal that was present

on the day of my ordination, a zeal that made and makes me desire to be meek and humble of heart. Grant me the grace of a deep, humble faith, a firm hope, and the kind of burning love that enables me to lay down my life, freely, voluntarily, for my flock, for my spiritual children.

O Lord Jesus Christ, enable me to be a worthy minister of Your sacred mysteries. Help me to consecrate my heart to Your Sacred Heart and Your Mother’s Immaculate Heart.

O Blessed Mother of Priests, may you see in me what you see in your Son. May you see another son, another Christ in me. Help me to be another Christ in a world hungering and thirsting for Christ. And at the hour of my death, embrace me and take me home to Your Son. Amen.

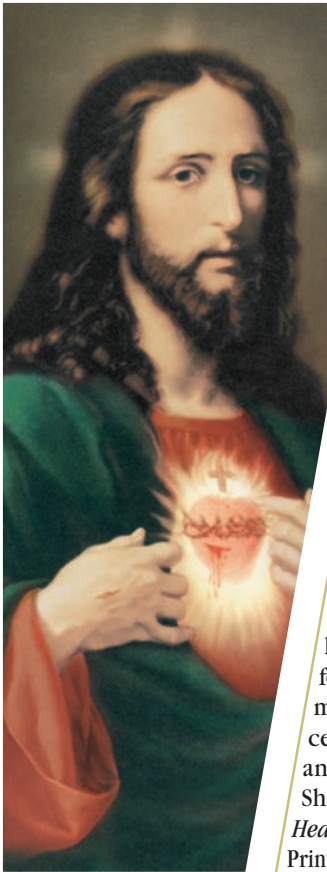
Titles to the sections of the newsletter have been given by Fr. John Pasquini.

EDITOR’S CORNER

Fr. John J. Pasquini is a columnist, author of more than a dozen books, guest speaker, lecturer on topics of systematic, moral and spiritual theology, a retreat leader, and a parish priest in the Diocese of Palm Beach, Florida. He feels blessed to serve the Shepherds of Christ as the editor of their newsletter. The newsletter is dedicated to renewal, fraternity, and the building of the Kingdom of God. It is a spirituality newsletter particularly dedicated to priests, religious, and all interested in the spiritual life. Comments and insights are always welcome.

“I give my heart to Jesus and Mary with you in love.”
— Shepherds of Christ

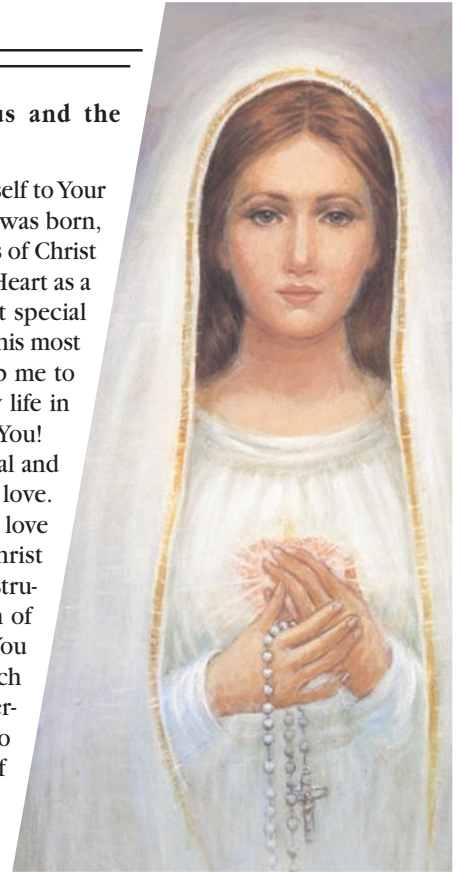




ACT OF CONSECRATION

Act of Consecration to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Immaculate Heart of Mary

“Lord Jesus, Chief Shepherd of the flock, I consecrate myself to Your most Sacred Heart. From Your pierced Heart the Church was born, the Church You have called me, as a member of Shepherds of Christ Associates, to serve in a most special way. You reveal Your Heart as a symbol of Your love in all its aspects, including Your most special love for me, whom You have chosen as Your companion in this most important work. Help me to always love You in return. Help me to give myself entirely to You. Help me always to pour out my life in love of God and neighbor! Heart of Jesus, I place my trust in You! Dear Blessed Virgin Mary, I consecrate myself to your maternal and Immaculate Heart, this heart which is symbol of your life of love. You are the Mother of my Savior. You are also my Mother. You love me with a most special love as a member of Shepherds of Christ Associates, a movement created by your Son as a powerful instrument for the renewal of the Church and the world. In a return of love, I give myself entirely to your motherly love and protection. You followed Jesus perfectly. You are His first and perfect disciple. Teach me to imitate you in the putting on of Christ. Be my motherly intercessor so that, through your Immaculate Heart, I may be guided to an ever closer union with the pierced Heart of Jesus, Chief Shepherd of the flock” (Rita Ring, *Mass Book: A Journey Into the Heart of Jesus*, El Paso, Texas: [Shepherds of Christ Publications, Second Printing, May 2000], pp. 204f).



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