

World Day of Prayer for Vocations April 20, 1986



The following are excerpts of the message of Pope John Paul II on the World Day of Prayer for Vocations, which will be celebrated on April 20, 1986.

World Day of Prayer for Vocations is a unique occasion for us to become aware of our obligation to cooperate, with persevering prayer and suitable action, in promoting vocations to the priesthood, the religious life, consecrated service in secular institutes and the missions.



On this occasion I wish to draw the attention of the People of God especially to the specific role of the *parishes*, from which the Second Vatican Council expects, together with the contribution of the family, the "maximum contribution" towards the promotion of vocations.



The fostering of vocations cannot be considered a marginal activity, but must be incorporated fully into the life and activity of the community. The Church has urgent need of priests. This is one of the most crucial problems facing Christian communities. Christians cannot accept with passivity and indifference the decline in vocations. Vocations are the future of the Church. A community which is poor in vocations impoverishes the whole Church; but a community which is rich in vocations enriches the whole Church.

I put before you certain essential aims and fundamentals which will enable your community to become a valid instrument of God's call.

- *Be a vibrant community!* The Council has stressed this point: a community promotes vocations "in the first place by living in a fully Christian way." Vocations are an indisputable sign of a community's vitality of the Church.
- *Be a praying community!* We must convince ourselves that vocations are the inestimable gift given by God to the community which prays.
- *Be an inviting community!* Talking about vocations in a general way is not sufficient to lead young people to commit themselves to a consecrated life. Given their peculiar characteristics, these calls must be explicit and personal.

I exhort you, therefore, to make known our Saviour's call in the world today, changing from an attitude of patient expectation to one of open invitation. This applies not only to priests who are responsible for the care of souls, men and women in religious life, and those engaged in vocational activity on all levels; but involves also parents, catechists and other educators in the faith.



Every community may rest assured of this: the Lord does not cease to call! But at the same time we also know for certain that He wants our help in making His call known.



- *Be a missionary community!* Love for God does not stop at our own frontier; but causes it to reach out to our brothers and sisters in other distant communities. The Gospel of Christ must reach the whole of the world!

Copies of the complete text of the message of Pope John Paul II on World Day of Prayer for Vocations may be obtained from Serra International.

Rochester Diocesan Vocation Team

Rev. Thomas Valenti
Diocesan Vocation Director —



The World Day of Prayer for Vocations is an opportunity for each of us to reflect on and pray for an increase of vocations to religious vowed life and the priesthood. The vocation office is eager to help anyone who may be considering such a call. Information and vocational counseling is available, as well as a number of programs to assist those trying to discern their vocation.

— Father Thomas Valenti.

Sister Benita Nicholas, SSJ.



Sister Sheila Stevenson, R.S.M.



Sister Pat Fitzpatrick, S.S.N.D.



Brother Raymond Powers, C.S.C.



SERRA INTERNATIONAL

22 West Monroe Street Chicago, Illinois 60603, U.S.A.
(312) 782-2163 (800) 782-1300