



ROMAN CATHOLIC
DIOCESE
OF CHARLESTON

NOVENA

FOR THE
PRIESTLY ORDINATION
OF DEACONS

Lee Bultman,
Justin Damask,
Daniel Perry,
and Michael Ghattas



Praying the Novena Daily

THURSDAY, MAY 29-FRIDAY, JUNE 6

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Opening Prayer

God our Father, you appointed Jesus Christ High Priest of the new and eternal covenant. By grace you allow men to share in this priesthood and in his saving work. We ask you to pour out your Holy Spirit on our brothers whom you have chosen for priesthood. May they all preach the Gospel worthily and wisely, celebrate the sacraments faithfully and reverently, and pray without ceasing. May they be united more closely every day to Christ the High Priest, who offered himself for us to the Father as a pure sacrifice. Bless, sanctify, and consecrate the men whom you have chosen and called to the sacred order of Priesthood. Through the Holy Spirit make their lives worthy of the mysteries they celebrate. We ask this through Jesus Christ, our Priest and Lord. Amen.

Read and reflect on the daily intention

Pray the Rosary, *reflecting on the daily intention and for an increase of vocations to the priesthood*

Prayer for the Increase of Vocations

God our Father, from eternity You appointed Your only begotten Son to be the High Priest of the human race. Pour forth, we beseech You, Your Holy Spirit upon our families and communities, that vocations to the priesthood may be multiplied. Give us holy priests, Lord: to offer up the sacrifice of the Mass; to lead the little ones to You; to strengthen the faith of believers, to preach the Gospel to all peoples, to bring forgiveness to sinners, to feed souls the Bread of Life, to comfort the suffering & dying, and to spread Your Kingdom in our midst. Mary, Mother of our High Priest, pray for us and obtain for us an increase of holy priests. Amen.

Closing Prayer

Here us, we beseech you, Lord our God, and pour out on these your servants the blessing of the Holy Spirit, so that these men, who are to be consecrated to your service, may be surrounded by your rich and unfailing grace. Through Christ our Lord. Amen!

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

DAY 1: *In gratitude for their generous response to God's call*

He said to them, "The harvest is abundant but the laborers are few; so ask the master of the harvest to send out laborers for his harvest. -Luke 10:2

O Lord, You have made us for Yourself and our hearts are restless until they rest in You. Pour forth Your spirit upon these deacons preparing to be ordained, who, throughout many years, have discerned their calling to the priesthood. As they approach their ordination, free them from temptations so that their minds and hearts may be fixed on the One who called them.

DAY 2: *The need for the priesthood*

"The priesthood is the love of the Heart of Jesus. When you see the priest, think of Our Lord Jesus Christ." -St. John Vianney

Lord, may Christ's Paschal Mystery always be at the center of these deacons minds, hearts, and souls; inspiring every aspect of their ministry. Instill within them a heart of gratitude for the great gift to which they have been called. Help them always to reflect upon the pearl of great price that is the priesthood, which is more precious than any worldly temptation. Keep them faithful to those promises that they have made, and give them the grace to grow in love and understanding of those promises. Throughout their lifetimes they will help Your people encounter you through the sacraments. May they always consider themselves a bridge between God and man, a sign of the Father's unconditional love that goes in search of the lost sheep.

DAY 3: *The Sacrament of Reconciliation, an encounter with Christ's merciful heart*

Only those who have known the Father's tender embrace, as the Gospel describes it in the parable of the Prodigal Son—"he embraced him and kissed him" (Lk 15:20)—only they can pass on to others the same warmth, when after receiving pardon themselves they administer it to others. -John Paul II

Lord, you have called these deacons to be your ministers of mercy through the Sacrament of Reconciliation. May they themselves constantly discover your forgiveness through their own confession, and turn to share that forgiveness with every person they encounter within this Sacrament. May they always see themselves as a bridge between God and man, as an open door for anyone who seeks reconciliation with you. Give them the gift of counsel and discernment, to find the right words of comfort and guidance for all who seek light in the confessional. May they reflect your mercy and help to bring many souls back to you, who live and reign forever and ever.

DAY 4: *The Eucharist, source & summit of the priest's life*

Truly, Truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink his blood, you have no life in you; he who eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is food indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He who eats my flesh and drinks my blood abides in me, and I in him. -John 6:52-56

Grant we pray, to each of the deacons, an increased love for the Holy Eucharist, the "source and summit" of God's covenant of love. May this great miracle, made present by the hands of your holy priests upon the altar, fill their hearts with the unending desire to continue to lay down their own lives for the service of your Holy Church. Increase their faith, Lord. Pour upon them your infinite grace, so that from consecration to adoration, they may never grow weary of serving you. May they always be rooted in an unwavering and indispensable love for the Eucharist, a love that compels them to bring this Sacrament to all God's people, so that all may experience the Risen Christ and know his unending love and mercy.

DAY 5: *For a zealous missionary heart*

Day after day, it's necessary to learn that I do not possess my life for myself. Day by day, I must learn to abandon myself; to keep myself available for whatever He, the Lord, needs of me at a given moment, even if other things seem more appealing and more important to me: this means giving life, not taking it. -Pope Benedict XVI

Holy Spirit, fill the heart of these deacons with a love for Christ that drives them to proclaim the message of salvation in all that they do. May their ministry reveal your presence in the world. Put your word on their lips and your love in their hearts, to bring good news to the poor and healing to the brokenhearted. When they will preach, give them the courage to proclaim the truth of the Gospel, even if it is demanding. Keep strong in them the desire to be a shepherd with the "smell of the sheep", a shepherd who dwells among his flock, who makes himself the servant who washes the feet of his beloved friends, willing to lay down his very life for them. As the apostles went to the ends of the earth to proclaim the message of salvation, give these deacons the same burning zeal that all would come to know you.

DAY 6: *The priest, a son of Mary*

The Blessed Virgin is for each priest the Mother who leads him to Christ. Like Our Lord Himself the priest has to enter the school of Mary. Like her, who "pondered all these things in her heart" (Lk 5:19), he learns from her to ponder ever more profoundly in the depths of his heart the mystery of Christ, the mystery into which—through his priestly ordination—he has been incorporated.

Mary, we entrust these deacons to you in a special way as they approach their priestly ordination, in which they will become one with Christ, your Son. Take them under your mantle; adopt them as your sons as you did St. John at the foot of the Cross. Guide and encourage them in their priestly ministry; fill them with confidence in God; teach them to love Jesus as you do. Be their model of surrender, trust, and love. You said yes to the will of God, embracing his plan without knowing where he would lead you. It was a yes that you renewed each day, in every trial, joy, and sorrow. May these Deacons learn to seek your companionship and entrust to you their hopes and worries. You, who were the first disciple of Christ, help them to proclaim, bear witness, and give Christ to the world.

DAY 7: *The priest as a spiritual father*

When each of you was called to the priesthood, God remade you in persona Christi. The more fully you live that truth, the more truly you radiate it to the people you encounter who are searching for God, the more profoundly you'll draw others to share in the same joy. That's how the renewal of the Church and the remaking of the world can begin. -Cardinal Raymond Burke

Lord, in calling these deacons to the priesthood, you have given them the gift of being spiritual fathers to the many people they will meet throughout their lives. Help them to live out this calling with love and generosity: giving example of a virtuous life, guiding and correcting their spiritual sons and daughters in a firm but gentle way, and providing for their spiritual needs with untiring generosity. We thank You for choosing them from among us, so that they may understand us as we understand them, suffer with us and rejoice with us, worry with us and trust with us, accompanying us in the joys and sorrows of this life. Allow both them and the people they serve to mutually benefit from this unique relationship and grow ever closer to the most Sacred Heart of Jesus. Help them to mend the brokenhearted with fatherly love and tender compassion. May their lives be a constant reminder that we are made to rest with you for all eternity in our heavenly homeland.

DAY 8: *For strength in the struggles they will endure*

Sanctify your priest, we ask you, Good Shepherd. Anchor him in the Eucharist, deepen his prayer life, dispel discouragement, heal his wounds, remove his obstacles, illumine for him his priestly identity, make fruitful his celibacy, strengthen his spiritual fatherhood, Surround him with life-giving friendships, give power to his preaching, fill him with courage, enflame him with charity, bind him to the heart of Mary Immaculate, secure him in your love, unite him to yourself.

Lord, we entrust these deacons to you as they prepare to commit themselves to follow you closely throughout the rest of their lives. You have chosen them, weak and sinful men, to be your priests. Help them to remember that without you, they cannot do anything. May they encounter you each day in prayer, seeking your grace and strength as they face the challenges of daily life. In their loneliness, comfort them; in their frustrations, help them to purify their love for you. Show them that they are needed by the Church and by souls in the work of redemption. May they find in our communities encouragement and support. We ask you to please bless all priests, especially those who are suffering or struggling. May their suffering be a path to a deeper relationship with Christ. May these deacons learn to place their struggles before you, trusting in the powerful intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary and all the angels and saints.

DAY 9: *For the souls they will serve through the sacraments*

We unite our prayer of thanksgiving to that of the new priests and their families, for the wonderful gift of their priestly vocations. May they always remain faithful to Christ, to the Church, and to the salvation of souls. Today, on the day of their ordination, we lift up in prayer Deacons Lee Bultman, Justin Damask, Michael Ghattas, and Daniel Perry.

Lord, you have called these deacons to become a channel of grace and an instrument of your love. We, your faithful people, thank you for the gift of these men, especially for the Sacraments that they will soon celebrate. May they baptize many people, bringing them into the life of the Trinity. In the confessional, may they look upon the repentant sinner with the compassionate and merciful eyes of a loving father. In the Masses they will celebrate, they will stand in the place of Christ and provide spiritual food and nourishment for those in attendance. As they witness the budding love of a couple who unites themselves in Holy Matrimony, may their own witness of their love for his Spouse the Church provide an enduring example of covenantal relationship. When they anoint the sick and minister to the dying, they will fortify them in their weakness and prepare them for the journey ahead. As they accompany souls in their walk with you, may they discover more and more the great love that you have for them.