

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.