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## Apostolate of Prayer For Priests

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### O LORD GRANT US HOLY PRIESTS

*The laity must pray for their priests.*

Saint Thérèse of Lisieux wrote in her *Story of a Soul*, “In the solemn examination before my profession I declared - as was customary - the reason of my entry into Carmel: ‘I have come to save souls, and especially to pray for Priests.’” And, Saint Thérèse proved to be the inspiration for the establishment of The Apostolate of prayer for priests.

It was in 1989 that an Ignatian retreat was held in Tallangatta N.S.W. Australia. A large statue of St. Thérèse was placed in a central part of the retreat house, and the retreatants would pass it daily. On the return journey back to Sydney, the founder of The Apostolate of prayers for priests, Mrs. Alice Ashelford commented: “I think Saint Thérèse wants us to pray for priests!”

In a short time, Mrs. Ashelford drew up the rules that were submitted to the late Archbishop Marcel Lebrève, who on the 17th July, 1989 sent a letter of approval to her.

*Dear Mrs. Ashelford,*

*Thank you very much for your letter of July 1989 and enclosures, and for all your prayers and sacrifices for the priests. May God reward you eternally. May Our Lady always protect and guide you and let you be Her “humble Slave” who belongs entirely - with his body and his soul - to Our Lady. It is a great grace to live according to the spirituality of St. Louis Marie Grignon de Montfort and to do everything WITH MARY, FOR MARY, THROUGH MARY AND IN MARY.*

*For spiritual direction ask Fr. Hogan to*

*assist you and to help you, and pray specially for him so that Our Lady may direct your apostolate though Fr. Hogan.*

*Blessing you and all members of your apostolate and assuring you all of my prayers at the Holy Altar,*

*Yours sincerely,  
in Cordibus Jesu et Mariae  
Marcel Lefebvre  
Ecône, 17<sup>th</sup> July 1989*



*“I have come to save souls, and especially to pray for priests.” Saint Thérèse of Lisieux*

Father Hogan chose the name of the prayer group, and told us to meet secretly at first, as he wanted the group to consolidate and he was emphatic in his instructions to us that charity must reign.

All members of ‘the apostolate’ were encouraged to consecrate themselves to Our Lady through the True Devotion to Mary, and on that day to make a small consecration contained in the prayer booklet of the Apostolate. The renewal of the consecration for members took

place on the feast of Our Lady of Sorrows, 15th September annually. However, this practice is no longer part of admission to The Apostolate of Prayers for priests.

One of the practices/rules that Fr. Hogan promoted was to read the Collect of the Mass of the Eternal High Priest especially on the First Thursday of each month.

Within a very short time, the group met each Thursday, and there was time for adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and Mass, but on the First Thursday after Mass, one of the priests of the parish would give an instruction to ‘The Apostolate’, which has proved to be very important in encouraging a greater generosity by the members in their efforts for spiritual support of the priesthood.

In an early talk given by Fr. Laisney, he spoke of the troubles in the church over the last years being ‘an attack on the priesthood,’ and in August, 1995 Fr. Delsorte gave an inspirational talk on the necessity of prayers for the Bishops and priests, and how this pious practice will aid our own sanctification too. Quote:

If you have priests as your pastors who are saints, then you will become holy. Dom Chautard in his book, *The Soul of the Apostolate* gives a general rule that the people of the flock are one degree less in holiness than their priest, so, if you can, through your prayers, obtain the sanctification of your priest (and

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*A Group photo of the early members of The Apostolate of Prayers for Priests (Sydney Australia) which was taken in 1992 with Fr. Gerard Hogan.*

Bishop), it will at the same time push you up more and more as well. When Our Lady appeared at Fatima (and particularly during the locutions which Sr. Lucia had from Our Lord and Our Lady), the importance of the Bishops was made very clear. The crisis that we are undergoing in the world today will not be resolved by you alone, nor by the Society of St. Pius X alone, it must come from the Pope and the Bishops; in your prayers for priests, make sure you include the Bishops.

It is the practice of 'the Apostolate' that each June and October, the members are asked to pray for a special priest or priests over and above the normal daily prayers for priests. The prayers chosen for June, the litany of the Sacred Heart, and October, the litany of Loreto. The coordinator of the Apostolate Mrs. Teresa Smith, notifies the Bishops/priests that someone is praying especially for them during these months.

You can read some examples of the letters of grateful thanks from the Bishops and priests below:

*Dear Friends of the Apostolate of Prayers for Priests, Once again we have been informed that you will pray for us during the month of June in a special manner. Thank you so much for this act of Charity for us personally, and for the priests in general. It is only in Heaven that you will see the benefit of your truly apostolic work.*

*With our blessing,  
Sincerely yours in Jesus & Mary,  
Bishops Bernard Fellay  
& Bernard Tissier de Mallerais.*

*Dear Friends, Our thanks for your prayers that we need so much to keep always loyal in the service of God. Receive our blessing and affection in Jesus and Mary,*

*Mgr. A. De Galaretta, Fr. C. Mestre & Fr. P. Cardozo, Spain"*

*The Apostolate of Prayers for Priests is*

*warmly thanked for another month of special prayers on behalf of Bishop Richard Williamson who will in turn offer one Mass for the steadiness and continuance of the Apostolate. Winona USA*

From humble beginnings and now in its 21st year, The Apostolate of Prayers for Priests has grown to a membership of 950; with members in Australia, Canada, Denmark, England, France, India, Malaysia, Netherlands, New Zealand, Philippines, Singapore, South Africa and the United States of America.

For those interested in joining please contact:

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*Members of The Apostolate of Prayers for Priests in the procession for the feast of Christ the King at Rockdale, Sydney Australia*