**The Necessity of Prayer for Priests**

Catholics should be God daily to shield their priests from danger. They should pray to God to drive far from them the onslaughts of the infernal enemy of God. They should ask that each priest may daily increase in virtue, that his imperfections may melt away in the heat of His Divine Love. They should pray the way of the Lor may be smooth for the blessed feet of those who preach the Gospel and bring peace. They should pray that their priests may be truly “men of God.”

They should pry especially for the guidance and wisdom of the Holy Spirit for their priests, since priests handle more problems that most people realize. They should be patient with priests, especially with those who disagree with them, or those who appear too slow in putting necessary reforms into practice. All priests are human. They have their share of faults and imperfections. Like Francis and Padre Pio, however, let Catholics forgive and overlook the faults of our priests and defend them before the world. Let us offer constructive and helpful criticism to them, but never let us speak evil or tear down the reputation and accomplishments of any priest.

**Prayer for Deceased Priests**

In addition, let us also pray for deceased priests. How often do we remember such priests at the altar where for years they stood before us, offering the Holy Sacrifice for a blessing and ministering to us? After death, a priest seems to belong to on one. “our of sight, out of mind” is often true of a departed priest. Catholics usually remember the day of the wake or funeral and gather together if possible in the church and at the cemetery. But afterwards? The complaint of such priests might be voiced in these worlds of Scripture: “our name in time shall be forgotten and no man shall have any remembrance of our works” (Wis 2:4). If such priests could speak, the only thing they would wish would be the keeping of their memory alive in the prayers of those they have helped.

We should cultivate this excellent practice of praying daily for departed priests, remembering how deep is our debt and our personal gratitude to so many of them. We should pray for them especially at the Masses we assist and offer up our works, sufferings Holy Communions, and rosaries for them. Above all, we should have the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass regularly offered for the souls of such priests.

Will not prayers for priests, living or deceased, be most pleasing to the Sacred Heart of the Eternal High Priest? Will not the Sacred Heart of Jesus reward any of us for our interest in helping those so close to Him? Isn’t such help also what St. Francis had in mind when he encouraged his followers to love, honor, and revere all priests? Isn’t this what Padre Pio expects of his followers, his spiritual children?

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