

A Prayer Service in Intercession for Ordained Ministers

Part I

(All lines in Part I should be spoken with urgency and emphasis.)

Reader 1: "Then God said: Let there be light, and there was light" (Genesis 1:3).

[Pause.]

"Jesus spoke to [the crowds] again, saying, 'I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness'" (John 8:12).

Speaker 1: Who says I am walking in darkness?

Speaker 2: I'm taking care of Number One! Why do I need *you*?

Reader 1: "Then the LORD asked Cain, Where is your brother Abel? He answered, 'I do not know. Am I my brother's keeper?' God then said: What have you done? Your brother's blood cries out to me from the ground!" (Genesis 4:9–10).

Speaker 1: I am not my brother's keeper! Tell him to take care of his own problems!

Speaker 2: I'm taking care of Number One! Why do I need *you*?

Reader 2: Thus says the LORD:

For three crimes of Israel, and for four—

I will not take it back—

Because they hand over the just for silver,

and the poor for a pair of sandals;

They trample the heads of the destitute

into the dust of the earth,

and force the lowly out of the way.

(Amos 2:6–7)

Speaker 1: I am a law-abiding citizen. What do I care about that poor guy with no health insurance for his family? Why should I worry about the illegal immigrant's rights? Why should *her* son's education be *my* concern? Tell him to get a job!

Speaker 2: I'm taking care of Number One! Why do I need *you*?

Reader 1: [Jesus said,] "I give you a new commandment: love one another. As I have loved you, so you also should love one another. This is how all will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another" (John 13:34–35).



Reader 2: [Jesus said,] “Amen, amen, I say to you, one of you will betray me.’ The disciples looked at one another, at a loss as to whom he meant” (John 13:21–22).

[Pause.]

Part II

Prayer Leader: Without you, Lord Jesus Christ, we live in darkness. Without you we betray one another. Without you we have no love in our hearts. Lord Jesus, we need you to be with us today in our struggle to live holy lives. We thank you for the many ways you are present to us. We thank you for becoming present for us in the celebration of the Eucharist. We thank you today for your presence in the deacons, priests, and bishops who minister in your name. Strengthen your ordained servants who help us to see your face. Help us to hear your prophetic call in our midst. Help us to be a reconciling people. Amen.

Reader 3:

A reading from the Gospel of John (John 17:14–21)

(This reading is often used as prayer for priests.)

[Jesus prayed to his heavenly Father:] I gave them your word, and the world hated them, because they do not belong to the world any more than I belong to the world. I do not ask that you take them out of the world but that you keep them from the evil one. They do not belong to the world any more than I belong to the world. Consecrate them in the truth. Your word is truth. As you sent me into the world, so I sent them into the world. And I consecrate myself for them, so that they also may be consecrated in truth.

I pray not only for them, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, so that they may all be one, as you, Father, are in me and I in you, that they also may be in us, that the world may believe that you sent me.

The Word of the Lord.

ALL: Thanks be to God.

Psalm 110

Side A:

The LORD says to my lord:

“Sit at my right hand,
while I make your enemies your
footstool.”

The scepter of your might:

The LORD extends your strong
scepter from Zion.
Have dominion over your enemies!

Side B:

Yours is princely power from the day of
your birth.

In holy splendor before the daystar,
like dew I begot you.

Side A:

The LORD has sworn and will not waver:

“You are a priest forever in the
manner of Melchizedek.”

Side B:

At your right hand is the Lord,
who crushes kings on the day of his
wrath,
Who judges nations . . . ,
crushes heads across the wide earth,
Who drinks from the brook by the wayside
and thus holds high his head.



Part III

Prayer Leader:

Lord Jesus, you make us a priestly people, and from among us you call forth special servants. We pray in thanksgiving for deacons, priests, and bishops who lead us in your way of love and justice. Let us now offer our special prayers for them, and for those you will call into your service. Please respond to each petition. "Lord, send out your Spirit and renew the face of the earth."

For all bishops, priests, and deacons—your humble servants—that they may continue to guide us, to bless us, and to challenge us to live according to our baptismal promises, we pray to the Lord.

ALL: Lord, send out your Spirit and renew the face of the earth.

For all pastors of parishes, that they may be given the grace to guide their flocks with compassion and in the way of justice, we pray to the Lord.

ALL: Lord, send out your Spirit and renew the face of the earth.

For all priests and deacons who serve in missions, that they may daily be a sign of Jesus' love and selfless service, we pray to the Lord.

ALL: Lord, send out your Spirit and renew the face of the earth.

For all whom God is calling to ordained ministry, that they may listen attentively to God's call and respond with generosity.

ALL: Lord, send out your Spirit and renew the face of the earth.

For all of us whose vocation is to serve Christ in our daily lives, that we may have the courage to pray, study, and serve the Lord without counting the cost, we pray to the Lord.

ALL: Lord, send out your Spirit and renew the face of the earth.

Now, please offer your own prayers , . . . *[pause]*

ALL: Lord, send out your Spirit and renew the face of the earth.



Part IV

Reader 1: “Then God said, Let there be light, and there was light” (Genesis 1:3).

Reader 2: [Jesus said,] “I give you a new commandment: love one another. As I have loved you, so you also should love one another. This is how all will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another” (John 13:34–35).

Prayer Leader:

Lord, you have blessed us with your presence and guidance through your bishops, priests, and deacons. Help us to become blessings to one another by living as you lived, placing the needs of those who are poor or in need of help before our own needs, as Jesus and the Church call us to do. May we live in such a way that many more disciples will be called from within our midst. We ask this in the powerful name of Jesus. Amen.

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