



The Church, Mother of Vocations



11 - 17 April and 2016

ORDINE OSPEDALIERO | di
SAN GIOVANNI DI DIO

The 1st Week of Prayer for Hospitaller Vocations





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Introducción

Together with our most sincere and affectionate **EASTER GREETINGS**, the General Commission on Vocations Promotion and Formation of the Hospitaller Order of Saint John of God is offering a suggested prayer and reflection guide for the first Week of Prayer for Hospitaller vocations.

We have inaugurated this initiative this year, 2016, in the Year of the Hospitaller Vocation to pray and place in God's hands all the work that is being done in the field of vocations care and promotion, and which we intend to follow-up and continue for ever after.

The Week of Prayer for Hospitaller Vocations will be held this year from 11th to 17th April. We have chosen to link the final day to the 53rd World Day of Prayer for Vocations, which the whole Church will be celebrating on the 4th Sunday of Easter (Good Shepherd Sunday).

The outline we are proposing for each day of the week is left flexible so that it can be used at the most appropriate time of day to suit your purposes. We have taken advantage of Pope Francis's message for the World Day, together with a number of Biblical texts and reflections on the texts which speak to us about God's mercy.

We felt that in the Year of Mercy, through which we are currently living, and with this year's motto for the Day: **"THE CHURCH, MOTHER OF VOCATIONS"**, we should examine our identity as Hospitallers within the Church in greater depth. *Vocations are born within the Church. From the moment a vocation begins to become evident, it is necessary to have an adequate "sense" of the Church. No one is called exclusively for a particular region, or for a group or for an ecclesial movement, but rather for the Church and for the world.*

I invite you all, as a community, to gather before our Lord in prayer and with the help and presence of His Spirit, to continue to let ourselves be accompanied, in order to become true and authentic Witnesses of Hospitality.

**General Commission on Vocations Promotion and Formation
of the Hospitaller Order of Saint John of God**



OPEN UP – Monday, 11 April

Introduction

Dear Brothers,

It is my great hope that, during the course of this Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy, all the baptized may experience the joy of belonging to the Church and rediscover that the Christian vocation, just like every particular vocation, is born from within the People of God, and is a gift of divine mercy. The Church is the house of mercy, and it is the “soil” where vocations take root, mature and bear fruit.

For this reason, on the occasion of the 53rd World Day of Prayer for Vocations, I invite all of you to reflect upon the apostolic community, and to give thanks for the role of the community in each person’s vocational journey. In the Bull of Indiction for the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy, I recalled the words of the venerable Saint Bede, describing the call of Saint Matthew: “*Miserando atque eligendo*” ([Misericordiae Vultus](#), 8). The Lord’s merciful action forgives our sins and opens us to the new life which takes shape in the call to discipleship and mission. Each vocation in the Church has its origin in the compassionate gaze of Jesus. Conversion and vocation are two sides of the same coin, and continually remain interconnected throughout the whole of the missionary disciple’s life.

Message of his Holiness Pope Francis on the occasion of the 53rd World Day of Prayer for vocations

Biblical text: Mark 7, 31-37

Again he left the district of Tyre and went by way of Sidon to the Sea of Galilee, into the district of the Decapolis. And people brought to him a deaf man who had a speech impediment and begged him to lay his hand on him. He took him off by himself away from the crowd. He put his finger into the man’s ears and, spitting, touched his tongue; then he looked up to heaven and groaned, and said to him, “Ephphatha!” (that is, “Be opened!”) And [immediately] the man’s ears were opened, his speech impediment was removed, and he spoke plainly. He ordered them not to tell anyone. But the more he ordered them not to, the more they proclaimed it. They were exceedingly astonished and they said, “He has done all things well. He makes the deaf hear and [the] mute speak.”



Reflection

Let us work for Jesus

Mark the Evangelist sets the episode on the eastern shore of the Lake of Galilee, in what was mostly a pagan region. His purpose was not only to collect the events that Jesus' followers remembered about the healing of the man born deaf and with a speech impediment. His account suggests something more than that.

The prophets of Israel frequently used the word "blindness" and "deafness" as metaphors referring to the hardness of heart and resistance of God's people towards Him.

This being so, the healing of the man born deaf and with a speech impediment as narrated by Mark suggests that Jesus is capable of "opening ears" to enable the "deaf" to hear and understand God's Good News. This is why his account is a call to us to open up to Jesus to allow Him to work in and through us. Isn't that exactly what we need?

Grupos de Jesús, Jose Antonio Pagola

Petition for the day

Our society is going through a period of upheavals and confusion and needs people who can offer it values and a different way of life. Let us pray for the Hospitaller Order of Saint John of God, that, led by the Holy Spirit and enriched by the testimony of life of each of its members, it may be a sign of the Gospel of mercy. Let us pray.

Prayer for Vocations.

Father of mercy,
who gave your Son for our salvation
and who strengthens us always with the gifts of your Spirit,
grant us Christian communities which are alive, fervent and joyous,
which are fountains of fraternal life, and which nurture in the young
the desire to consecrate themselves to you and to the work of evangelisation.

Sustain these communities in their commitment
to offer appropriate vocational catechesis
and ways of proceeding towards each one's particular consecration.
Grant the wisdom needed for vocational discernment,
so that in all things the greatness of your merciful love may shine forth.

May Mary, Mother and guide of Jesus,
intercede for each Christian community,
so that, made fruitful by the Holy Spirit,
it may be a source of true vocations for the service of the holy People of God.





FRIEND OF SINNERS – Tuesday, 12 April

Introduction

Blessed Paul VI, in his exhortation *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, described various steps in the process of evangelisation. One of these steps is belonging to the Christian community (cf. no. 23), that community from which we first received the witness of faith and the clear proclamation of the Lord's mercy. This incorporation into the Christian community brings with it all the richness of ecclesial life, particularly the sacraments. Indeed, the Church is not only a place in which we believe, but it is also an object of our faith; it is for this reason that we profess in the Credo: "I believe in the Church".

The call of God comes to us by means of a mediation which is communal. God calls us to become a part of the Church and, after we have reached a certain maturity within it, he bestows on us a specific vocation. The vocational journey is undertaken together with the brothers and sisters whom the Lord has given to us: it is a con-vocation. The ecclesial dynamism of the call is an antidote to indifference and to individualism. It establishes the communion in which indifference is vanquished by love, because it demands that we go beyond ourselves and place our lives at the service of God's plan, embracing the historical circumstances of his holy people.

Message of his Holiness Pope Francis on the occasion of the 53rd World Day of Prayer for vocations

Biblical text: Mark 2, 13-17

Once again he went out along the sea. All the crowd came to him and he taught them. As he passed by, he saw Levi, son of Alpheus, sitting at the customs post. He said to him, "Follow me." And he got up and followed him. While he was at table in his house, many tax collectors and sinners sat with Jesus and his disciples; for there were many who followed him. Some scribes who were Pharisees saw that he was eating with sinners and tax collectors and said to his disciples, "Why does he eat with tax collectors and sinners?" Jesus heard this and said to them [that], "Those who are well do not need a physician, but the sick do. I did not come to call the righteous but sinners."



Reflection

Eating with sinners

Jesus surprises everyone. His table is open to everyone. He can share his table with people of ill repute or doubtful morality, including sinners living on the margins of the Covenant. Jesus excludes no-one. The kingdom of God is a table around which to all people are welcome to sit, including sinners. But the distinguishing feature of Jesus and his followers is precisely the fact that no-one is excluded.

When Jesus heard the legalistic Pharisees criticising him into not allow his disciples to answer them, but intervened personally because he wanted it to be quite clear why he was acting in that way. For Jesus, the "sinners" are first of all "sick" and the "guilty" are first of all victims of evil. They need help more than condemnation, welcome more than exclusion. At the same time Jesus revealed his way of welcoming them in. Those meals, for Jesus, took on a therapeutic character.

As far as we are concerned what is the most common attitude in society to such groups as delinquents, prisoners, drug addicts, prostitute...? What concerns us? Their life, dignity, writes? Or keeping the city safe? Practising justice...?

Grupos de Jesús, Jose Antonio Pagola

Petition for the day

Lord we pray for those who govern us, to rule over the people in a spirit of Service and not use power for their own benefit, seeking to listen to the voice of the people and promoting the rights of the most disadvantaged. Let us pray.

Prayer for Hospitaller Vocations

Lord Jesus, you who passed through the world doing good and healing,
And sent your disciples to proclaim the Kingdom of God,
With words of peace on your lips,
Offering healing and life:
We ask that your call to Hospitality
Continue to meet with acceptance in our world
So that the sick may be healed in your name
And the Good News announced to the poor,
And all those who suffer
May experience your tenderness
And the mercy of God our Father.
Amen





STAY WITH US – Wednesday, 13 April

Introduction

On this day dedicated to prayer for vocations, I urge all the faithful to assume their responsibility for the care and discernment of vocations. When the Apostles sought someone to take the place of Judas Iscariot, Saint Peter brought together one hundred and twenty of the brethren (cf. Acts 1:15); and in order to choose seven deacons, a group of disciples was gathered (cf. 6:2). Saint Paul gave Titus specific criteria for the selection of presbyters (cf. Titus 1:5-9). Still today, the Christian community is always present in the discernment of vocations, in their formation and in their perseverance (cf. Apost. Ex. Evangelii Gaudium, 107).

Message of his Holiness Pope Francis on the occasion of the 53rd World Day of Prayer for vocations

Biblical text: Luke 24, 13-35

Now that very day two of them were going to a village seven miles from Jerusalem called Emmaus, and they were conversing about all the things that had occurred. And it happened that while they were conversing and debating, Jesus himself drew near and walked with them, but their eyes were prevented from recognizing him. He asked them, "What are you discussing as you walk along?" They stopped, looking downcast. One of them, named Cleopas, said to him in reply, "Are you the only visitor to Jerusalem who does not know of the things that have taken place there in these days?" And he replied to them, "What sort of things?" They said to him, "The things that happened to Jesus the Nazarene, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, how our chief priests and rulers both handed him over to a sentence of death and crucified him. But we were hoping that he would be the one to redeem Israel; and besides all this, it is now the third day since this took place. Some women from our group, however, have astounded us: they were at the tomb early in the morning and did not find his body; they came back and reported that they had indeed seen a vision of angels who announced that he was alive. Then some of those with us went to the tomb and found things just as the women had described, but him they did not see." And he said to them, "Oh, how foolish you are! How slow of heart to believe all that the prophets spoke! Was it not necessary that the Messiah should suffer* these things and enter into his glory?" Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them what referred to him in all the scriptures. As they approached the village to which they were going, he gave the impression that he was going on farther. But they urged him, "Stay with us, for it is nearly evening and the day is almost over." So he went in to stay with them. And it happened that, while he was with them at table, he took bread, said the blessing, broke it, and gave it to them. With that their eyes were opened and they recognized him, but he vanished from their sight. Then they said to each other, "Were not our hearts burning [within us] while he spoke to us on the way and opened the scriptures to us?" So they set out at once and returned to Jerusalem where they found gathered together the eleven and those with them who were saying, "The Lord has truly been raised and has appeared to Simon!" Then the two recounted what had taken place on the way and how he was made known to them in the breaking of the bread.*



Reflection

A great experience

The scene is simple, but endearing. Two travellers, worn out after a long walk, established to friendship to share a table together. And it was there that Jesus repeated exactly the four signs which, according to tradition, he had performed at the Last Supper: "he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them". The faith was awakened in the hearts of the disciples: "Then their eyes were opened, and they recognised him". They discovered Jesus as someone to nurture their lives, to sustain them in their weariness, and to strengthen them for the journey.

Recognition of Jesus is much more than merely seeing him. As they walked along with the road they saw Jesus but were not capable of recognising Him. Now they recognised him and Jesus once again vanished from sight but this disciples knew that Jesus was alive and was accompanying them. That experience transformed them. They recovered hope. Filled with joy they rose up and hastened to tell others "what had happened on the road". They could not possibly keep such great news to themselves. They needed to tell everyone that Jesus was alive. They did not speak about the resurrection theoretically, but they infected others with the very same experience that they had had.

And in my case, do I live my life with the conviction that the risen Jesus is accompanying me as I walk through life?

Grupos de Jesús, Jose Antonio Pagola

Petition for the day

We pray for all the young men undergoing formation in our formation houses, that they make the most of the time there, and persevere in responding to God's call. Let us also pray for our Brothers and Co-workers dedicated the in the Order to the ministry of Vocations Promotion and Initial Formation, so that God will give them the wisdom to accompany and guide these young men according to the criteria of the Gospel of mercy. Let us pray

Prayer for Vocations.

Father of mercy,
who gave your Son for our salvation
and who strengthens us always with the gifts of your Spirit,
grant us Christian communities which are alive, fervent and joyous,
which are fonts of fraternal life, and which nurture in the young
the desire to consecrate themselves to you and to the work of evangelisation.

Sustain these communities in their commitment
to offer appropriate vocational catechesis
and ways of proceeding towards each one's particular consecration.
Grant the wisdom needed for vocational discernment,
so that in all things the greatness of your merciful love may shine forth.

May Mary, Mother and guide of Jesus,
intercede for each Christian community,
so that, made fruitful by the Holy Spirit,
it may be a source of true vocations for the service of the holy People of God.





GOD HEARS THOSE WHO TRUST IN HIM – **Thursday, 14 April**

Introduction

Vocations are born within the Church. From the moment a vocation begins to become evident, it is necessary to have an adequate “sense” of the Church. No one is called exclusively for a particular region, or for a group or for an ecclesial movement, but rather for the Church and for the world. “A sure sign of the authenticity of a charism is its ecclesial character, its ability to be integrated harmoniously into the life of God’s holy and faithful people for the good of all” (ibid., 130).

In responding to God’s call, young people see their own ecclesial horizon expand; they are able to consider various charisms and to undertake a more objective discernment. In this way, the community becomes the home and the family where vocations are born. Candidates gratefully contemplate this mediation of the community as an essential element for their future. They learn to know and to love their brothers and sisters who pursue paths different from their own; and these bonds strengthen in everyone the communion which they share.

Message of his Holiness Pope Francis on the occasion of the 53rd World Day of Prayer for vocations

Biblical text: Luke 18, 9-14

He then addressed this parable to those who were convinced of their own righteousness and despised everyone else. “Two people went up to the temple area to pray; one was a Pharisee and the other was a tax collector. The Pharisee took up his position and spoke this prayer to himself, ‘O God, I thank you that I am not like the rest of humanity - greedy, dishonest, adulterous - or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week, and I pay tithes on my whole income.’ But the tax collector stood off at a distance and would not even raise his eyes to heaven but beat his breast and prayed, ‘O God, be merciful to me a sinner. I tell you, the latter went home justified, not the former; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and the one who humbles himself will be exalted.



Reflection

God listens that those who trust in his mercy

People who are content with themselves and with others and trust in their own life and need nothing more, they run the risk of living a "false innocence". But on the other hand when people feel guilty and too weak to change, does it not feel the need to reach out to receive God's mercy?

When we act like the Pharisee we face God with a religion in which there is no place for the tax collector. When we place our trust in the mercy of God, like the tax collector, we place ourselves in a religion in which everyone belongs. Is this not the true religion of the Kingdom of God?

There is something fascinating about Jesus: is faith in God's mercy is so disconcerting, but it is not easy for us to believe in it. Probably those who understand best of the ones who have the strength to rise up out and cast off an immoral life.

Grupos de Jesús, Jose Antonio Pagola

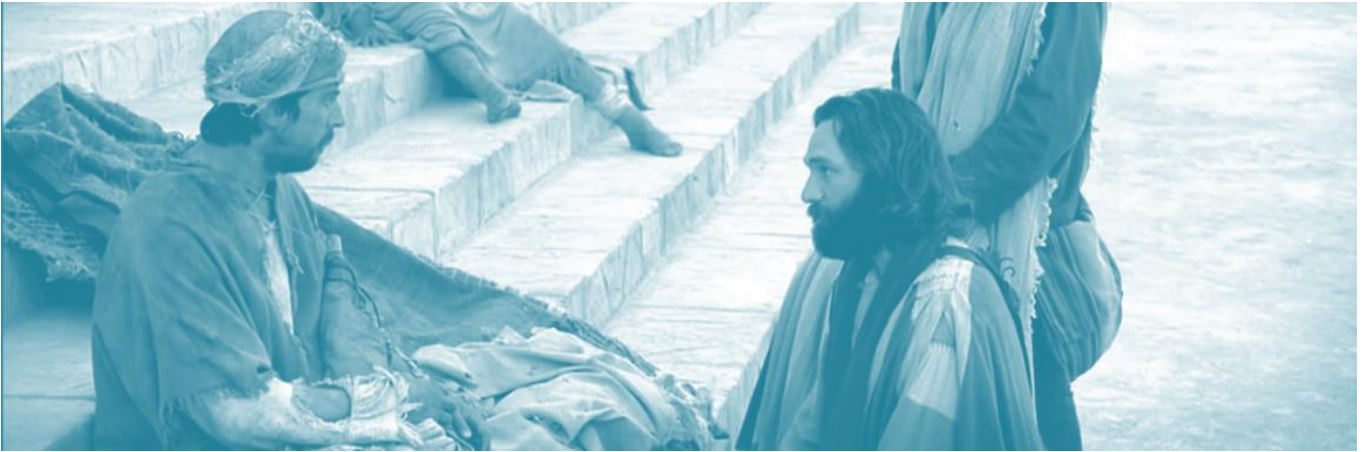
Petition for the day

There are many people in our world who still lacked the minimum wherewithal to exist on. We pray to you for all those who suffer and are being cared for in our centres: the sick, the elderly, travellers, prisons, addicts, alcoholics and those in any kind of need, so that they can feel the strength of God in their lives and we can find a response to their needs. Let us pray

Prayer for Hospitaller Vocations.

Lord Jesus, you who passed through the world doing good and healing,
And sent your disciples to proclaim the Kingdom of God,
With words of peace on your lips,
Offering healing and life:
We ask that your call to Hospitality
Continue to meet with acceptance in our world
So that the sick may be healed in your name
And the Good News announced to the poor,
And all those who suffer
May experience your tenderness
And the mercy of God our Father.
Amen





THE LEPER CURD FROM EXCLUSION – **Friday, 15 April**

Introduction

Vocations grow within the Church. In the course of formation, candidates for various vocations need to grow in their knowledge of the ecclesial community, overcoming the limited perspectives that we all have at the beginning. To that end, it is helpful to undertake some apostolic experience together with other members of the community, for example: in the company of a good catechist, to communicate the Christian message; together with a religious community, to experience the evangelisation of the peripheries sharing in the life of the cloister, to discover the treasure of contemplation; in contact with missionaries, to know more closely the mission *ad gentes*; and in the company of diocesan priests, to deepen one's experience of pastoral life in the parish and in the diocese. For those who are already in formation, the ecclesial community always remains the fundamental formational environment, towards which one should feel a sense of gratitude.

Message of his Holiness Pope Francis on the occasion of the 53rd World Day of Prayer for vocations

Biblical text: Mark 1, 40-45

A leper came to him [and kneeling down] begged him and said, "If you wish, you can make me clean." Moved with pity, he stretched out his hand, touched him, and said to him, "I do will it. Be made clean." The leprosy left him immediately, and he was made clean. Then, warning him sternly, he dismissed him at once. Then he said to him, "See that you tell no one anything, but go, show yourself to the priest and offer for your cleansing what Moses prescribed; that will be proof for them." The man went away and began to publicize the whole matter. He spread the report abroad so that it was impossible for Jesus to enter a town openly. He remained outside in deserted places, and people kept coming to him from everywhere.



Reflection

Healing the life of the excluded

Jesus went throughout Galilee preaching his message. In defiance of all the religious and social rules banning him from any human contact, a "leper" unexpectedly "came to Jesus". But he is urge you break out of poverty and marginalisation was even greater than his fear of breaking the law. He needed Jesus!

Without realising it, we also live as captives in an invisible network of barriers and prejudices, which had been so deeply internalised by society and religion that they dictate to us the people we must take in and those we have to reject, those with whom we can deal and those who are to be avoided. It seems normal to assume that our race is superior to others, our country is more noble, our religion more responsible, and our rights more deserving to be upheld. Without realising that we build barriers and walls to exclude those who might upset our well-being or "contaminate" our peace of mind; people from other races, immigrants, the poor, the mentally ill, criminals who have been served time in prison, prostitutes ...

Following Jesus means committing ourselves to "movement of understanding" which he set in motion to introduce into human history a "non-exclusive love" breaking down racial, religious, social, cultural, economic and other barriers

Grupos de Jesús, Jose Antonio Pagola

Petition for the day

Our Hospitaller Family is a very pluralistic community, capable of establishing cooperation and union around the face of people who are suffering. May our Lord give us the grace of memory to take upon ourselves our foundational charism and to renew it in the present day circumstances to meet the new challenges which are being posed to the Order. Let us pray

Prayer for Vocations.

Father of mercy,
who gave your Son for our salvation
and who strengthens us always with the gifts of your Spirit,
grant us Christian communities which are alive, fervent and joyous,
which are fonts of fraternal life, and which nurture in the young
the desire to consecrate themselves to you and to the work of evangelisation.

Sustain these communities in their commitment
to offer appropriate vocational catechesis
and ways of proceeding towards each one's particular consecration.
Grant the wisdom needed for vocational discernment,
so that in all things the greatness of your merciful love may shine forth.

May Mary, Mother and guide of Jesus,
intercede for each Christian community,
so that, made fruitful by the Holy Spirit,
it may be a source of true vocations for the service of the holy People of God.





SENT TO THE POOR – Saturday, 16 April

Introduction

Vocations are sustained by the Church. After definitive commitment, our vocational journey within the Church does not come to an end, but it continues in our willingness to serve, our perseverance and our ongoing formation. The one who has consecrated his life to the Lord is willing to serve the Church wherever it has need. The mission of Paul and Barnabas is a good example of this readiness to serve the Church. Sent on mission by the Holy Spirit and by the community of Antioch (cf. Acts 13, 1-4), they returned to that same community and described what the Lord had worked through them (cf. 14: 27). Missionaries are accompanied and sustained by the Christian community, which always remains a vital point of reference, just as a visible homeland offers security to all who are on pilgrimage towards eternal life.

Among those involved in pastoral activity, priests are especially important. In their ministry, they fulfil the words of Jesus, who said: "I am the gate of the sheepfold [...] I am the good shepherd" (Jn 10: 7, 11). The pastoral care of vocations is a fundamental part of their ministry. Priests accompany those who are discerning a vocation, as well as those who have already dedicated their lives to the service of God and of the community.

Message of his Holiness Pope Francis on the occasion of the 53rd World Day of Prayer for vocations

Biblical text: Luke 4, 14-21

The sower sows the word. These are the ones on the path where the word is sown. As soon as they hear, Satan comes at once and takes away the word sown in them. And these are the ones sown on rocky ground who, when they hear the word, receive it at once with joy. But they have no root; they last only for a time. Then when tribulation or persecution comes because of the word, they quickly fall away. Those sown among thorns are another sort. They are the people who hear the word, but worldly anxiety, the lure of riches, and the craving for other things intrude and choke the word, and it bears no fruit. But those sown on rich soil are the ones who hear the word and accept it and bear fruit thirty and sixty and a hundredfold." He said to them, "Is a lamp brought in to be placed under a bushel basket or under a bed, and not to be placed on a lampstand?



Reflection

Jesus' programme

Jesus feels full of the Spirit of God. "Anointed" means being imbued with his power and his love. For this is Jesus's followers call him "the Christ", meaning "the Anointed one". Although we may frequently forget it, it is a contradiction in terms to call ourselves "Christians" if we live without the Spirit who animated Jesus.

The Holy Spirit is not leave Jesus enclosed in his own personal interests but drove him out towards four groups of suffering people: the "poor", "captives", "blind" and the "oppressed". We must not forget this. The Spirit of God is in Jesus, but not in just any way - but by directing him towards those in greatest need.

The Spirit has sent me to "proclaim the Good News to the poor". This was Jesus' first task: to announce to the poor the Good News that God wishes to introduce his justice and compassion into the world. The poor, the most defenceless and the abandoned are God's dearly beloved children and they are also the dearly beloved children of Jesus. He dedicated himself to them as he travelled around Galilee. And what about me? Do I feel that the Spirit of Jesus is driving me out towards those who are suffering?

Grupos de Jesús, Jose Antonio Pagola

Petition for the day

Lord we pray for the young people who were questioning their future in terms of choosing a life that will do good to those who suffer, so that they can find our Hospitaller Family as an ideal place in which to live their vocation to hospitality continuing the work begun so long ago, I Saint John of God. Let us pray.

Prayer for Hospitaller Vocations.

Lord Jesus, you who passed through the world doing good and healing,
And sent your disciples to proclaim the Kingdom of God,
With words of peace on your lips,
Offering healing and life:
We ask that your call to Hospitality
Continue to meet with acceptance in our world
So that the sick may be healed in your name
And the Good News announced to the poor,
And all those who suffer
May experience your tenderness
And the mercy of God our Father.
Amen





THE LORD IS GOOD TO ALL – **Sunday, 17 April**

Introduction

All the faithful are called to appreciate the ecclesial dynamism of vocations, so that communities of faith can become, after the example of the Blessed Virgin Mary, like a mother's womb which welcomes the gift of the Holy Spirit (cf. Lk 1: 35-38). The motherhood of the Church finds expression in constant prayer for vocations and in the work of educating and accompanying all those who perceive God's call. This motherhood is also expressed through a careful selection of candidates for the ordained ministry and for the consecrated life. Finally, the Church is the mother of vocations in her continual support of those who have dedicated their lives to the service of others.

We ask the Lord to grant to all those who are on a vocational journey a deep sense of belonging to the Church; and that the Holy Spirit may strengthen among Pastors, and all of the faithful, a deeper sense of communion, discernment and spiritual fatherhood and motherhood.

Message of his Holiness Pope Francis on the occasion of the 53rd World Day of Prayer for vocations

Biblical text: Matthew 20, 1-15

"The kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out at dawn to hire laborers for his vineyard. After agreeing with them for the usual daily wage, he sent them into his vineyard. Going out about nine o'clock, he saw others standing idle in the marketplace, and he said to them, 'You too go into my vineyard, and I will give you what is just.' So they went off. [And] he went out again around noon, and around three o'clock, and did likewise. Going out about five o'clock, he found others standing around, and said to them, 'Why do you stand here idle all day?' They answered, 'Because no one has hired us.' He said to them, 'You too go into my vineyard.' When it was evening the owner of the vineyard said to his foreman, 'Summon the laborers and give them their pay, beginning with the last and ending with the first.' When those who had started about five o'clock came, each received the usual daily wage. So when the first came, they thought that they would receive more, but each of them also got the usual wage. And on receiving it they grumbled against the landowner, saying, 'These last ones worked only one hour, and you have made them equal to us, who bore the day's burden and the heat.' He said to one of them in reply, 'My friend, I am not cheating you. Did you not agree with me for the usual daily wage? Take what is yours and go. What if I wish to give this last one the same as you? Or am I not free to do as I wish with my own money? Are you envious because I am generous?'*



Reflection

God's love breaks the mould

It is not easy to believe in God's unfathomable goodness which surpasses and breaks every mould we know. Many people may be scandalised by this. Is it possible that God is not so reliant on our personal merits as we sometimes think, but is more concerned with meeting our needs? How lucky for us if God is as Jesus has suggested! We can all trust that God even though merits are mean and poor. But is it not dangerous to open up to this unfathomable and infinite world of God's mercy evades all human calculations? Is it not safer and more reassuring, particularly for those who feel that they are faithfully living according to the law, not to break out of the religious mould in which our duties, merits and sins are clearly defined?

Jesus' message invites us to allow God to play God. God is good towards everyone. He looks at us and lovingly whether or not we deserve it. His mysterious love goes much further than the faith of believers and the atheism of non-believers. Before God, the only thing which Christians have to do is to show grateful joy and total trust in Him.

Grupos de Jesús, Jose Antonio Pagola

Petition for the day

Believing means giving up self, breaking out of our comfort zone and the rigidity of ego and focusing our lives on Jesus. We pray, Lord, for our communities, so that every day we continue renewing our decision to follow Jesus Christ who remains alive among us and invites us to renew and promote our spiritual and fraternal life. Let us pray

Prayer for Hospitaller Vocations.

Father of mercy,
who gave your Son for our salvation
and who strengthens us always with the gifts of your Spirit,
grant us Christian communities which are alive, fervent and joyous,
which are fountains of fraternal life, and which nurture in the young
the desire to consecrate themselves to you and to the work of evangelisation.

Sustain these communities in their commitment
to offer appropriate vocational catechesis
and ways of proceeding towards each one's particular consecration.
Grant the wisdom needed for vocational discernment,
so that in all things the greatness of your merciful love may shine forth.

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it may be a source of true vocations for the service of the holy People of God.





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