

2025

WORLD DAY of PRAYER for VOCATIONS

2025 JUBILEE YEAR ✠ "THOSE WHO HOPE IN THE LORD WILL RENEW THEIR STRENGTH." ~ISAIAH 40:31



Above: Fr. Nathan Dail prays with students at Boise State University. Across the country, more campus ministries are thriving as bishops prioritize young adult ministry and assign dynamic priests to work with college students.

Masthead photo: At their annual convention, Vocation Directors from across the U.S. held a Eucharistic Holy Hour in an historic outdoor amphitheater in Huntington, NY. Support the work of the National Conference of Diocesan Vocation Directors at NCDVD.org.

NATIONAL SPOTLIGHT

THRIVING CAMPUS MINISTRIES SPARK NEW VOCATIONS

"It's standing-room only at Sunday evening Mass," says Fr. Tim Holeda, pastor of the campus parish at Florida State University, where 700 students fill the pews and more than 100 spill into the aisles. "I had to add an extra student Mass," he says happily. "Our student ministry is rockin'... we have hundreds in Bible studies, hundreds at retreats. It's been amazing for a long time, but now it's exploding. God is good!"

Fr. Holeda also happens to be the Vocation Director of the Diocese of Pensacola-Tallahassee, and the boom at FSU is leading to a bumper crop of seminarians. The small diocese will ordain four priests this year and expects to accept at least five men for seminary studies.

FSU is just one example of thriving campus ministries that have led to increased vocations. One of the best examples is the Diocese of Austin, whose four major universities each has its own dynamic campus ministry. The diocese accepted 24 men to seminary last fall.

Part of the upward trend is the effectiveness of FOCUS missionaries who follow the principle of "spiritual multiplication" by starting small Bible studies on campus whose participants go on to start their own groups. FOCUS reports that more than 1,000 alumni have entered seminary or religious formation.

One big takeaway: as Catholic parents guide their children in choosing a college, it's wise to place high importance on the health of its campus ministry!



TOR Sisters accompanied students from FSU to the annual March for Life.



A PRIEST IN TIMES SQUARE

Did you know there's an enormous statue of a Catholic priest in Times Square? Fr. Francis Duffy was a teacher in New York City who was ordained a priest in 1896. He served in the Spanish-American War as chaplain of the legendary Fighting 69th Infantry, and later in World War I. Hundreds of soldiers testified to his incredible compassion and bravery as he accompanied the wounded in the thick of battle. Fr. Duffy remains the most decorated cleric in U.S. Army history.

Future Pope?

Listen to enough vocation stories, and several patterns emerge.

There's the convert-to-priest, the devout guy who went straight to college seminary, the men who felt called later in life, and surprisingly common, those who wanted to be priests ever since they were little kids.

When parents openly discuss priesthood and religious life as joyful, fulfilling vocations—not just rare exceptions—it plants seeds that may one day bear fruit. A child who grows up knowing that marriage, priesthood, or religious life are all viable paths is more likely to discern with freedom when the time comes.

So parents take note: our future priests and sisters are already in cry rooms, climbing on pews, and sneaking extra donuts after Mass!

HEROIC PRIESTS

NEEDED: FAITH AND VALOR



“Soldiers and military families simply don’t have enough priests,” says Fr. Peter Pomposello, an Army priest chaplain. The Archdiocese of the Military Services is the largest diocese in the U.S., but has only about 200 priests, which includes chaplains stationed at far-flung bases overseas.

Fr. Pete, who is popular on Instagram as @fr.unclesam, feels that we need to start younger. “We need to get young boys dreaming of a life of heroic service,” he said. “Many want to grow up to be soldiers. Some want to be priests. I say to them: ‘Why not both?’”

His starting place is to tell the stories of real-life heroes. “You don’t have to make this stuff up,” he said. “Our history is full of priest-chaplains who gave their lives for God and country. I can’t think of anything more inspiring for young men today.”



The Brave & Blessed Spiritual Field Kit helps boys ages 5-12 imagine a life of heroic service. Includes a pack of 20 trading cards featuring priest chaplains and rosary prayers. Available at vianneyvocations.com



PRAY 180

INTENTIONAL PRAYER FOR VOCATIONS

“Realistically, what can I actually do to promote vocations?” This was a question Fr. Greg Gerhart heard repeatedly. As any good Vocation Director would do, he asked people to pray. “But I sensed that a lot of people wanted more direction, something more concrete,” he said. In the wake of his very popular *Discernment 180* books, Fr. Greg has written *Pray 180*, which helps people supercharge their prayer for vocations, while also improving their own spiritual lives. The new book helps them create a rule of life, commit to various spiritual practices, and read a daily reflection for six months (180 days). “The idea is to be intentional—not just to offer an occasional prayer, but to grow in holiness while interceding daily for vocations.”



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