

IN GENERAL, WHAT IS HOLINESS? HOW SHOULD A PRIEST BE HOLY?

MT: Holiness is the simple duty for each one of us, for we have been created for greater things, to love and to be loved. Holiness is not the luxury of the few. That's why Jesus said: "Be holy as the Father is holy." And holiness is nothing special for a priest, it's a duty for a priest to be holy because he comes in such close contact with Jesus. How holy his words must be, how holy his life must be, how holy his touch must be, if he has to be that living sacrifice on the altar. Especially that holiness, a living holiness that will be able to allow Christ to live His life in him. Holiness for the priest is that complete oneness with Christ so that He can live His life in him, praying in him, working in him, being one with the Father in him, that's the holiness that is his. There's no comparison; the only comparison, the only competition a priest can have in holiness is Jesus Himself because he has to be so completely one with Him that Christ can really count on him and live His life totally in him, and that His Father can love the world through him.

WHO IS OUR LADY FOR A PRIEST?

MT: Our Lady is the Mother. She was, she is, and she will always remain the Mother of Jesus; and Jesus said: "Who is My Mother? My Mother is the person who does My will, who does the things that are pleasing to the Father." And no one can please the Father more than a priest. Therefore, she is the closest to a priest. And no one could have been a better priest than Our Lady. Because she really can, without difficulty, say "This is My Body," because it was really her body that she gave to Jesus. And yet she remained only the handmaid of the Lord so that you and I may always turn to her as our Mother. And she is one of our own so that we can always claim her, turn to her and be one with her. And, of course, that is why she was left behind, to establish the Church, to strengthen the priesthood of the apostles, to be a Mother to them, until the Church, the young Church was formed. She was there. For just as she helped Jesus to grow, so she also helped the Church to grow in the beginning. She was left behind for so many years after Jesus ascended to heaven, so that she was the one who formed the Church. She is the one who forms every priest. And no one can have a greater claim on Our Lady than a priest. And I can imagine she must have had, she still has, a very tender love, a special protection also, for every priest, if he only turns to her. But to be able to really be a priest according to the Heart of Jesus you need much prayer and penance.



A priest needs to unite his own sacrifice with the sacrifice of Christ, if he really wants to be completely one with Jesus on the altar. And then his life of sacrifice, his life of penance, must complete Jesus' because as St. Paul had said, we must complete the things that are missing in the sufferings of Christ.

WHAT WOULD YOU SAY TO SEMINARIANS DRAWING NEAR TO ORDINATION?

MT: Put your hand in Mary's hand and ask her to lead you to Jesus. When Jesus came into her life, she went in haste to give Him to others. And you too when you become His priest, with her go in haste to give Jesus to others. But remember, you cannot give what you do not have. And to be able to give, you need to live that oneness with Christ, and He is there in the Tabernacle. Make it a point that first thing in the morning that Jesus be the center of your life. During the day, learn to pray the work; work with Jesus, work for Jesus. Always keep close to Mary. Ask her to give you her heart, so beautiful, so pure, so immaculate, her heart so full of love and humility, that you may be able to receive Jesus and give Jesus in the Bread of Life to others. Love Jesus as she loved Him, and serve Him in the distressing disguise of the poor.

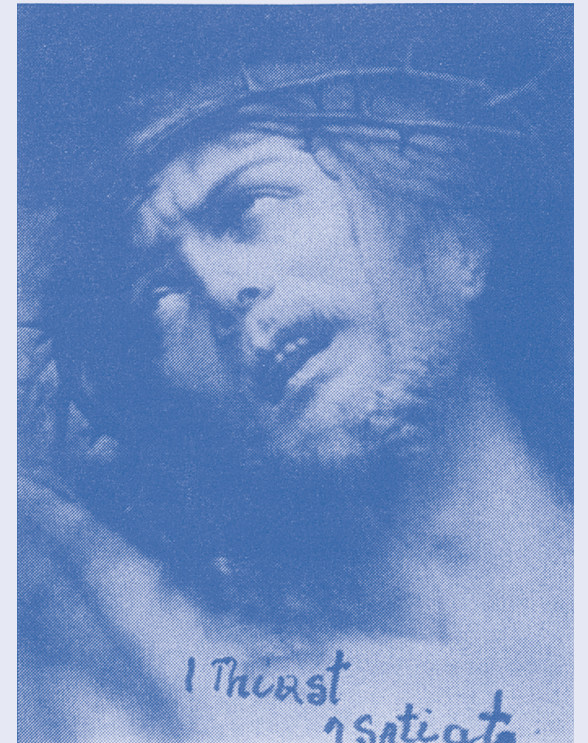
My prayer for you is that you grow in that likeness of Christ through purity of life and humility of heart. Pray for us also that we may grow in that holiness. So that people, when they look up, see only Jesus in you and in me."

*God bless you
Lee Teresa M.*



Mary, Cause of our Joy

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**Mother Teresa
of Calcutta
Speaks on Priesthood**

Letter to a Priest

Dear Coworker of Christ, Father...

You have said 'yes' to Jesus and He has taken you at your word. The Word of God became Jesus, the poor one. And so this terrible emptiness you experience. God cannot fill what is full - He can fill only emptiness - deep poverty - and your 'yes' is the beginning of being or becoming empty. It is not how much we really 'have' to give - but how empty we are - so that we can receive fully in our life and let Him live His life in us. In you today - He wants to relive His complete submission to His Father - allow Him to do so. It does not matter what you feel but what He feels in you. Take away your eyes from yourself and rejoice that you have nothing - that you are nothing - that you can do nothing.

Give Jesus a big smile - each time your nothingness frightens you. This is the poverty of Jesus. You and I must let Him live in us and through us in the world. Cling to Our Lady for she too - before she could become full of grace -full of Jesus - had to go through that darkness. "How could this be done..." but the moment she said 'yes' she had need to go in haste and give Jesus to John and his family. Keep giving Jesus to your people not by words - but by your example, by your being in love with Jesus - by radiating His holiness and spreading His fragrance of love everywhere you go. Just keep the joy of Jesus as your strength - be happy and at peace, accept whatever He gives - and give whatever He takes with a big smile.

You belong to Him - tell Him - I am yours - and if you cut me to pieces every single piece will be only all yours. Let Jesus be the victim and the priest in you. I have started going to visit our houses in India - so I have a beautiful time alone with Jesus in the train.

Pray for me as I do for you.

*God Bless you
Lee Teresa M*

Mother Teresa of Calcutta Speaks on Priesthood

WHAT IS THE RELATION OF A PRIEST IN HIS DAILY LIFE, IN HIS MINISTRY WITH THE THREE PERSONS OF THE TRINITY?

Mother Teresa: We read in the scriptures that God loved the world so much that He uttered the Word and the Word became Flesh; and He comes and dwells within us and with us. And so the priest today is the one that has been sent also, to be that living love, that God's love for the world today. The priest is that sign, he is the living flame, he is the sunshine of God's love for the world, he is the burning flame, he is the hope of eternal happiness. So for the priest to be completely at the disposal of the Father he must be completely one with the Son, and utter and bring the love of the Father and the Son and the Spirit, in his life, in his attitudes, in his actions, because today God loves the world through each priest who takes the place of Christ Himself. He is another Christ.) and to his own people ("Feed My lambs, feed My sheep").

WHAT SHOULD THE EUCHARIST BE FOR A PRIEST?

MT: Christ made Himself Bread of Life to satisfy our hunger for His Love, and then He makes Himself the Hungry One so that we may satisfy His hunger for our love; and therefore, how clean the heart must be of a priest to be able to speak (through the fullness of the heart the mouth speaks), to be able to say the words: "This is My Body" and make the bread into the Living Christ. How pure must be the hand of the priest, how completely the hand of Jesus must be the hand of the priest, if in it, when the priest raises that hand, is the Precious Blood. A sinner comes to confession covered with sin, he leaves the confessional a sinner without sin. How completely the priest must be one with Jesus to allow Jesus to use him in His place, in His name, to utter His words, do His action, take away the sins, and make ordinary bread into the Living Bread of His own Body and Blood. Only in the silence of his heart can he hear God's word and from the fullness of his heart he can utter these words: "I absolve you" and "This is My Body."

WHAT SHOULD PRAYER BE FOR A PRIEST?

MT: To have fidelity to prayer, to be able to pray a priest must know silence, for in the silence of the heart God speaks. Prayer is a listening also, and it is very

important for the priest to learn how to pray, that is one of the things that Jesus tried to teach His disciples, how to pray. And the prayer of a priest is to allow Jesus to pray in him and through him. Therefore, he must be so pure, so completely at His disposal that Christ can really be one with His Father in his heart, and use it to proclaim the glory of His Father through him. Prayer is the food of life for the priest. A priest who does not pray cannot stay close to Christ, he cannot allow Christ to use him as He wants to use him. The fruit of prayer is always deepening of faith, and unless the priest has that deep faith, it is very difficult for him to pray. And the fruit of faith is always love. And if a priest does not love, how will he help others to love? And the fruit of love is service - service as Jesus said: "I have come amongst you as One to serve." And the priest is meant to be that one, to come amongst his own and be the servant of all.

HOW IS JESUS PRESENT IN THE POOR WHEN HE SAYS: "AMEN I SAY TO YOU, AS LONG AS YOU DID IT FOR ONE OF THESE, THE LEAST OF MY BRETHREN, YOU DID IT FOR ME"?

MT: When St. Paul was going to destroy the Christians in Damascus, he was thrown down and he heard the voice: "Saul, Saul, why dost thou persecute Me?" And Paul asked Him: "Who art thou Lord?" And He gave him a very clear answer: "I am Jesus Christ whom yhou persecuted." Christ didn't mention the Christians of Damascus, (it is the same thing) - "Whatever you do to the least of My brethren, you do to Me." If in My name you give a glass of water, you give it to Me. If in My name you receive a child, you receive Me. And He has made that as a condition also, that at the hour of death we are going to be judged on what we have been and what we have done. He makes Himself the hungry one, the naked one, the homeless one, the sick one, the lonely one, the unwanted one, the rejected one, and He says: "I was hungry and you gave Me to eat." Not only for bread, I was hungry for love. I was naked, not only for a piece of cloth, but I was naked for that human dignity of a child of God. I was homeless, not only for a home made of bricks, but I was homeless, rejected, unwanted, unloved, a throw-away of society, and you did it to Me. Jesus in the Eucharist made Himself Bread of Life to satisfy our hunger for God, for we have all been created to love and to be loved. And it is very clear what Jesus meant, because how do we love God? If we

have been created to love, we all want to love God, but how? Where is God? God is everywhere. How do we love God? And therefore, He gives us the opportunity to do to others what we would like to do to Him. To put our love for Him in a living action. So, therefore, every priestly vocation is not just to do this or to do that, a priest has been created to belong totally, body, soul, mind, heart, every fiber of his body, every fiber of his soul, to God because He has called him by his name. A priest is very precious to Him, a priest is very tenderly loved by God, by Jesus who has chosen him to be His "second self." And the work that the priest has been entrusted to do is only a means to put his tender love for God in living action. And, therefore, the work that he does is sacred. And the work must always lead not only himself to God, but must be able to lead souls to God. That's why Jesus said: "Let them see your good work and glorify the Father."

COULD YOU DEFINE POVERTY, CHASTITY, AND OBEDIENCE FOR A PRIEST?

MT: To love Christ is undivided love in chastity. Chastity is not just not getting married, not to have a family. Chastity is that undivided love, "no one and nothing." And for that we need the freedom of poverty, and we must all be able to experience the joy of that freedom, having nothing, having no one, we can then love Christ with undivided love. And if we really understand that we belong to Jesus, that He has called us by our name, then obedience is natural. A total surrender: He can do with us what He wants, when He wants, whatever He wants. He can cut us to pieces, yet every single piece is only His. We belong so totally to Him that He can use us without consulting us, and so, to be able to love Christ with undivided love in chastity, we need that total surrender. And now service, our whole-hearted service, whatever work has been entrusted to us by obedience, is the fruit of that chastity, the fruit of that undivided love for Christ.

That is why, for a priest who has made that total surrender to God, who is completely free, completely free to love Christ with undivided love in chastity, the work that he does is his love for Christ in action. The Precious Blood is in his hand, the Living Bread he can break and give to all who are hungry for God. Therefore, his chastity, how chaste is must be; his purity, how pure it must be; his virginity, how virgin it must be, to be able to love Christ with undivided love through freedom of poverty in total surrender, in obedience and in wholehearted service.