

Aug. 12, 2018

'Individual **prayer** for priestly **vocations**'

By ADAM URBAN

Director of Youth Ministries

Our priests lead and guide us on life's journey, and the important role they play cannot be truly measured.

They administer the Sacraments, witness Christ's faithfulness to the Church, guide us in life's most significant moments, and they are our fathers in a relatively fatherless generation.

Not only do they fulfill these extraordinary roles, but also they are ordinary men who love sports, food, reading, woodworking, music, and numerous other hobbies.

As members of the body of Christ, we are called to pray for men to answer the call to live such heroic lives. It can be discouraging to pray for anything that seems out of our control, but we must encourage one another and trust the mercy of God that our prayers are heard.

As we continue as a diocese to pray, fast, and give alms for priestly vocations, a quote from Saint Faustina's diary echoes our importance for individual prayer for more priests:

"By prayer and mortification, we will make our way to the most uncivilized countries, paving the way for the missionaries. We will bear in mind that a soldier on the front line cannot hold out long without support from the rear forces that do not actually take part in the fighting but provide for all his needs; and that such is the role of prayer, and that therefore each one of us is to be distinguished by an apostolic spirit."

Saint Faustina gives us hope that we can be spiritual missionaries, and the richness of our tradition states that our prayer can motivate us to become real missionaries.

Four years ago the diocese started a summer mission program for high school students called Prayer and Action. Prayer and Action's central theme is that a true life of prayer calls people to serve their neighbor.

Does our prayer reflect any action to help the diocese in the crisis for priests? Do we speak about the joys of the priesthood in our homes and families, or do we secretly believe the life of a priest would be lonely and a drudgery?

Do we pray for vocations to the priesthood and religious life, but secretly hope that our children or grandchildren are not called?

Do we know and understand what a priest really does, or simply believe that they just celebrate Holy Mass and pray?

Let us all continue to pray and act in ways that promote vocations to the priesthood and religious life. In prayer may we have the courage to ask God what He is calling each of us to do to continue to build up the kingdom in the Catholic Diocese of Dodge City. Our Lady of Vocations – pray for us.