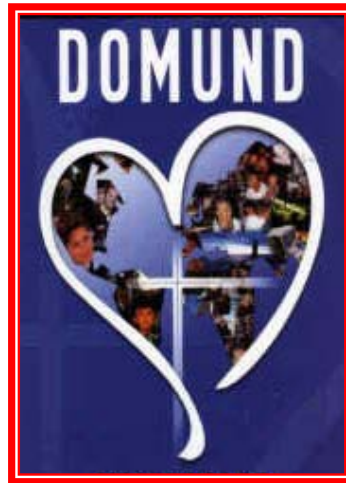


# The presence of the priest is vital for humanity.

## Introduction

### Dear Parents:

This month, Pope Benedict XVI in his message on World Mission Sunday said: "I ones more confirm that the work of evangelizing all peoples is the essential mission of the Church". Due to our quickly changing society that seems to have lost a sense of the ultimate realities and the reason for existence, the work of evangelization is ever more urgent. Therefore, moved by the spirit and inspired by the example of the Apostle Paul, **we must be aware that the people of God are numerous in every city where the apostles of today are found.** "For the promise is made to you and to your children and to all those far off, whomever the Lord our God will call." (Acts 2:39).

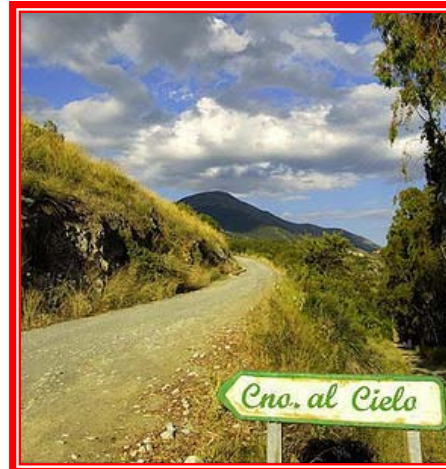


**One of the objectives of the Church mission is to communicate that life in Christ is a gift and a service offered to society so that persons can grow and overcome conflicts with a deep sense of humanity.** In this endeavor, we Christians are both recipients of evangelization and committed to carry out the mission. **It is necessary to bear in mind that the disciple must prepare for the mission and at the same time the mission will allow him to develop and be better prepared for it.** In this endeavor, the priest plays a very important part, he must continue to shine and bring joy to a world and to a humanity that is in the shadows and needs him, not only to give humanity the life of Christ; but to help us survive, since, as St. John Vianney, the holy priest of Ars would say: "Leave a parish without a priest for twenty years and you will be adoring the beasts. Society without the presence of priests becomes barbaric and inhumane". It is therefore necessary to renew our commitment of announcing the Gospel that brings about freedom, progress, fraternity, unity and peace.

Let us take time to reflect as a family who the priest is and in doing so we will evangelize as we teach and learn as we evangelize.

## Message

The French writer PAUL CLAUDEL tells us: "Whenever I go to Mass I am overwhelmed by the thought that, that mysterious man is God when he is at the altar. Trembling in admiration my knees bend and I incline my head while my eyes look at the ground. I feel I am receiving a great light over my soul. I am transported to a supernatural world. I look for the man and I can only see the minister of God."



**Who is that strange and mysterious being who walks in this world and does not belong to it; who forgives sins and he himself is a sinner; who takes to God our human miseries and brings back to humanity the wealth of God; who is not a natural father according to the flesh and yet populates heaven with souls? He who seems useless and yet is most necessary; who is close to us when we are born as he pours the baptismal waters upon our head; accompanies us in our pilgrimage through life when we become adults; when dying he assists us at the last moments of our life. He alone gives light, comfort, hope, joy to our hearts. He walks quietly so he won't be a bother; but where there are tears to wipe or a wound to heal he stops and regardless of the anguish felt he brings about a piece of heaven. The Catholic priest is a blessing for all of humanity.**

**St. John Vianney, was very humble but well aware that as a priest he was a gift for the people.** He spoke about the priesthood as if it would not be possible to perceive all the greatness of this gift and of the work entrusted to a human being. **He would say: "If I would meet a priest and an angel, I would greet the priest and then the angel. The angel is a friend of God while the priest takes the place of God.**

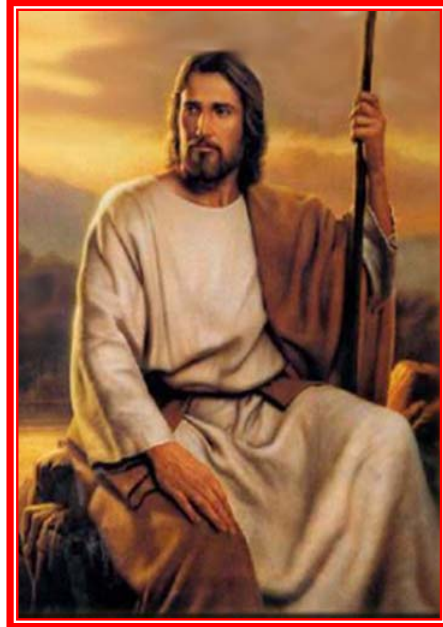
**He would also explain: "You will not be able to point out a benefit from God without bringing to mind a priest".** God's works would be of no good to us without a priest. **What good is a house full of gold if there is no one to open the door? The priest has the keys to the treasures of heaven. He is the one to open the door; the administrator of God; the administrator of His goods. "When trying to destroy religion, begin by attacking the priests".**

**All these texts could appear to be an exaggeration but they reflect the high esteem that the holy priest of Ars had for the priesthood and for his priestly ministry and perhaps show the weak faith and diminishing esteem we have for the "Gift and Mystery" as excellent as Pope John Paul II would call the Catholic Priesthood**



➤ **THE PRIEST IS AN ELECT.**

**Elect is one personally called by Him.** It means to be loved with predilection by God. It also means that God trusts in the elect regardless of his lowliness, and weakness, in order to give him His almighty grace, transform him and make him His representative. This election requires a free and loving response; determination to leave your own land; give up completely all that which had been chosen before and be absolutely dedicated to the service of God who chose him to continue His work of salvation, consoling, enlightening consciences, healing hearts, etc.



➤ **THE PRIEST IS CONSECRATED.**

A chalice like a Church is consecrated exclusively for the things of God; if it is used for some other reason it would be a profanation. Therefore, when **the priest is consecrated, his gestures, his words, his actions can no longer be mundane. Everything he touches will be exorcized and blessed.**

**A consecrated person is intimate with God,** most beloved of His Heart. A consecrated man is a **man of charity** with a heart filled with the feelings of God. He must love what God loves and as God loves. His capacity to love is not frozen, on the contrary, he loves with an undivided heart that is clean, complete, detached, without a trace of selfishness. **A consecrated person is a man of the cross. With the cross and from the cross he expiates his sins and the sins of all people.**

➤ **THE PRIEST IS SENT**

**The priest is not one for himself but for others.** He does not absolve himself neither does he administer the sacraments to himself. **Our Lord tells the priest: “As my Father has sent Me, so I send you. Go and teach all nations. Whoever listens to you listens to me; whoever despises you despises me”.** The priest is sent as ambassador to communicate the message from God. **He is sent because there are many blind persons who need to recover their sight; the grain is ready for harvesting; many are sick, many crippled in their soul; many who await a word of comfort.**

## Discuss

- How do you show respect for the priest?
- Do you ask him for advice and guidance that can help you to be missionary disciples of Jesus Christ in our present society?

### Bibliography

Pensamientos del Santo Cura de Ars, sobre el sacerdote  
¿Quién es el Sacerdote?

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