

# Year of the Priest

On June 19<sup>th</sup> 2009, Pope Benedict XVI declared this the “Year of the Priest”. Our pontiff’s desire is “to foster the priest’s yearning for spiritual perfection”. As a sign of solidarity with our Church, we here at Our Lady of Lourdes Parish suggest that each of our parishioners hold in prayer one of our diocesan priests, each day for the remainder of the “Year of the Priest”, beginning with August 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2009. Please consider the following prayer, or any other of your choosing.

Remember, our priests’ mission is “to sanctify, teach & govern”.

**Father (*name*)**

**You came from among us  
to be, for us, one who serves.  
We thank you for ministering Christ to us  
and helping us minister Christ to each other.**

**We are grateful for the many gifts you bring to our community:  
for drawing us together in worship,  
for visiting us in our homes,  
for comforting us in sickness,  
for showing us compassion,  
for blessing our marriage,  
for baptizing our children,  
for confirming us in our calling,  
for supporting us in bereavement,  
for helping us to grow in faith,  
for encouraging us to take the initiative,  
for helping the whole community realize God's presence among us.**

**For our part, we pray that we may always be attentive to your needs  
and never take you for granted.  
You, like us, need friendship and love,  
welcome and a sense of belonging,  
kind words and acts of thoughtfulness.**

**God our Father, we ask you to bless our priest (*name*)  
and confirm him in his calling.  
Give him the gifts he needs  
to respond with generosity and a joyful heart.**

**We offer this prayer for our priest, (*name*)  
Who is our brother and friend,**

**Amen**