

Priest Appreciation Talk Outline in a Parish or Group Setting

This talk answers the question: How have priests touched and made our lives different?

General:

The goal of this talk is to say thank you to our priests, but more importantly to present to the people of the parish (especially the young men of the parish) an attractive view of the priest hood.

This is why pastors might welcome the talk, because it is a way of validating the call a young man may be experiencing. We must be careful, as some priests and pastors could see this as patronizing, or manipulative. It should never be used for any purpose other than to reflect our appreciation of our priest and the hope of developing and deepening relationships with our priests. In today's world, there are not enough voices saying what a worthy vocation the priesthood is. The louder voices in today's world present negative views of the priesthood, making one wonder why anyone would want to be a priest. We must raise our voices to the contrary for future priests and parents of future priests to hear. This presentation is not limited to Mass only; it can be given at any celebration honoring priests, like a luncheon. It could be given by the local permanent deacon as a part of his homily. Remember it is only a suggestion to give you a head start, so you can work with it and personalize it. If you use it, let us know how it works out.

Nuts and Bolts:

- Talk length: Tailor to what the pastor wants - 2 standard lengths are:
 - 3 - 4 minutes for post communion time
 - 7 - 8 minutes for homily time
- Have both the short and longer version with you – after Father hears the short talk he may ask you to move to homily time for the next Mass and give you more time.
 - Workshopping:
 - We strongly urge any couple giving a talk representing WWME have their talk workshopped by an experienced couple
 - Will help you prioritize your sharings, which should be in even the shorter talk and which should be saved for a longer talk
 - A fresh pair of eyes will help clarify and trim repetition
 - Will help with time factor

Outline:

I. Introduction

Greeting and information on speakers (may be given by priest introducing them)

II. Background on World Priest Day

Your chance to mention WWME. Be prepared and have fliers.

III. Sharing: Your experience of priests & priesthood

A. Childhood

B. If you have a good wedding story include it

C. Adult stories: 1. Some sacramental -- Baptism, 1st communion, loss of loved one
2. Stories to reflect how you changed and reflect the humanness of priests.

D. Thank the priest celebrating the Mass.

Things to avoid

1. Don't make it sound like only WWME couples can have these special experiences of priests, the more relate-able we are to the entire congregation, the better. And don't share stories that leave Father looking like a functionary, even a sacrament story - where you expect Father to impact you, this should be shared in a very personal way.