

## **WORLD PRIEST DAY**

### **I. Overview:**

**World Priest Day (WPD)** is a celebration of Worldwide Marriage Encounter movement's love for our priests and our faithfulness to the Worldwide Marriage Encounter Mission Statement.

We want to support the men who live their Sacrament of Holy Orders each day. This celebration and starter kit helps us as a couple, a family, a local Marriage Encounter Community and our Church with ideas on how to affirm our priests.

Priests have been and are a significant part of our lives. They have ministered to us, preached to us, counseled us, helped to present our weekend, and they continue to journey with us. Let us share our lives, our appreciation and love through suggestions on these pages. There is something here for everyone. Get your children involved. Encourage the young men in your family, in our marriage encounter families, and our church to listen for God's call to be open to become great priests.

Remember you don't have to wait until World Priest Day to do something and you can continue even after that day.

### **II. Suggestions for Couples and Families to Celebrate World Priest Day**

1. Send a card to your parish priest or bishop telling them what their sacrament and/or friendship means to you. A special World Priest Day Note Card is found on page 14 and 15 of this document and can be downloaded for your use.
2. Introduce yourself and family to your priest or bishop you have not met.
3. Invite a priest or bishop you know, or do not know, to breakfast, lunch, or dinner.
4. If you invite them to dinner, you may make it a candle-lighted dinner with china, linens, and maybe soft music. Be creative! Kids could be included in this too! Let the kids help set the table and prepare for his arrival. Or make it a down home barbecue or something unique and special to your family
5. Send them flowers or a balloon bouquet.
6. Invite them on a family picnic and pick them up if possible.
7. If you know a priest or bishop out of town, give them a call; send a note, flowers, balloon bouquet.
8. Bake them cookies, etc. (Kids love to get involved).
9. Have the kids color a picture for them or write them a letter.
10. Invite them to your home.
11. Go on an outing together, such as a dinner and a play, concert, bowling, movie, hunting, fishing, golf, tennis, etc.
12. Cook together in the kitchen.
13. Pray the Prayer Intentions during WPD Day. (Found on page 12 of this document)
14. Be creative and have fun with this special event. Let us know what you dreamed up to honor priests so that we can pass on the ideas.

### III. Suggestions that can be used in Parish Wide or Encountered Community Celebrations

1. Put a basket at the Church entry and have parishioners write notes of appreciation, affirmation and support for your Pastor or Associate Pastor. In the note highlight the qualities you most appreciate in your Pastor and your gratitude for his specific impact in your life.
  - a. Announce this event in your Church Bulletin a week before the event (October 31st.)
  - b. Suggested Bulletin Announcement: "Next Sunday is World Priest Day, a day set aside to honor the men who have dedicated their lives to the service of the Catholic Church. As you enter church for mass next weekend there will be a basket for you to place a note (of appreciation, affirmation, support) for our Pastor, Father \_\_\_\_\_, Your card can highlight the qualities you see in him and the gratitude you have for his dedication and service to your family.
2. Invite your priest or bishop to a dinner hosted by your group or community. It can be as simple or elaborate as you like – the key is building relationships with them.
3. Invite them to a breakfast or lunch.
4. Take time before or after weekend liturgies to recognize and appreciate your pastor.
5. Distribute and use the WPD Prayer found on page 9.
6. Invite them to a picnic hosted by your group or community. Pick them up and bring them.
7. Have a prayer day for your priests or bishop similar to that of a prayer scroll where hours are covered by couples and families. This is a way to pray for deeper relationships between our priests or bishops and our families. See World Priest Day 24 hour prayer intentions on pages 12 and 13.
8. Invite them to a wine and cheese party with your friends and neighbors.
9. Send the "press release" to your Catholic Newspaper. See page 4.
10. Include them in a family night hosted by your group or community.
11. Adopt a seminarian by utilizing some of the suggestions here or some of your own ideas.
12. Send goody baskets, balloon bouquets, or flowers to all priests in the deanery or diocese. Include drawings, notes and prayer bouquets from the kids. Remember to identify that it is sent with love from your group or community.
13. Pray the World Priest Day 24 hour prayer Intentions during World Priest Day and throughout the year.
14. Place an ad in the Catholic Newspaper wishing all priests a happy World Priest Day, complete with WPD logo and WWME logo – or your own creative design. Better yet, get the diocesan, or city newspaper to do an article on WPD! (Don't forget to send us a copy!)
15. Get Catholic Schools or CCD Classes involved in a poster or essay contest or in writing notes to their pastor.
16. Be creative and let us know what you dreamed up.