

The Widow's Mite

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Widows at Prayer

One of the most important concerns of any religious group, especially when they are just beginning their journey as an entity in the Church, is that they be clear as to what their charism is. By charism, here, I mean the gift that they are desirous to bring to the Church. No religious group is set up for its own sake only. We are in service to the Church, hence to all the members of the Church community.

As Widows of Prayer, you are dedicated not just to prayer in general but to specific prayers for the Church and its ministers, for vocations and for your family. One of the primary forms of prayer to center on, therefore, is intercession. Hence the importance of being clear as to how you are to accomplish that task.

To begin with, believe in your prayers and the power for good that is in those prayers, especially when they are prayers you offer in oneness of heart with each other. I have encountered many signs of the power of your prayers already. The need to offer thanks for prayers answered is more evident by the week, a sign that the Lord is indeed listening to you. The depth of your belief in your prayers will determine the effectiveness of those prayers. Don't let your humility get in the way of your confidence. Both are vital for a life of intercession.

As concerns prayers for individual persons, remember that negativity and criticism must never enter into those prayers. Stirring movements of love in your heart for the person you are praying for, as you are offering prayers, will empower your prayers more than anything you might say to the Lord. Another caution; do not predetermine what God ought to do for the person you are lifting up in prayer. Believe me, God is good at finding the very best way to bless his people.

Central to your life of prayer is ecclesial prayers; that is, prayers for the Church and those who minister (or may be called to minister) in that Church. Do not pray that minister will repent – that is between the Lord and themselves. Pray that they will be

blessed. Like Saint Therese, gather roses for the people you pray for. Do that through your life of sacrifice and penance and reparation. Gather for them white roses of purity, red roses of zeal, blue roses of contemplation, gold roses of holiness. More than anything else, we need holy priests and holy religious. That is what you need to pray for in your ecclesial prayers. And even more important, that is what you yourself need to be. Pray with zeal and intercede with generosity. What you obtain for others you will also obtain many times over for yourself. That is the way God works and it is indeed wonderful.

*John Guimond, Capuchin
Advisor to the Widows of Prayer
of Huntington-Fort Wayne, Indiana*

Widows of Prayer

One of the purposes of the Widows of Prayer is to pray for priests and for vocations. This is a wonderful ministry because of the great need for priests in the Church today. But there is another aspect of prayer and support of priests that we should not overlook. There is so much negative criticism of priests now especially in the media that can cause priests to become discouraged. They need words of appreciation and encouragement from all of us.

There is a verse in the Gospel of St. Luke (22:28) which I always find very interesting and amazing. They are the words that Jesus spoke to His apostles. "You are the ones who have stood loyally by me in my temptations." I find those words of Jesus amazing because I did not think that the apostles were always so supportive of Jesus but He must have known that they needed words of encouragement too.

Praying for priests is important but they also need to hear that they are loved and appreciated. We have the example of Jesus who expressed His appreciation to the apostles for their loyal support. We need to do the same thing for our priests today.

*Fr. Kieran Hickey, O.F.M. Cap.
Advisor of Widows of Prayer*

News From The Fort Wayne Group:

We have chosen "Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament" as the name for the Widows of Prayer in Fort Wayne. We have 5 insignia wearing members, and eight in Formation.

Fr. John Guimond travels from Huntington, Indiana each week to teach us from the book "Turned to the Lord." He also celebrates Mass monthly for the Widows of Prayer and their deceased husbands, at MacDougal Chapel here in Fort Wayne.

We have placed a notice of this Mass in Parish Bulletins and the diocesan paper, "Today's Catholic", and hope to get other widows interested in our Ministry through this publicity and through personal contact.

Dorothy Ward, WP

News From The Appleton Group:

We meet each Tuesday afternoon at St. Pius X Chapel for Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament from 1-2:30 p.m., followed by Mass and the Liturgy of the Hours. Anyone is invited to join us for this special time of prayer for priests and others in church ministry and for those being called by God to religious life.

New widows of the area are invited to 8:30 a.m. Mass at St. Pius X on the second Saturday of each month. This Mass is designated for the husbands of the Widows of Prayer, but in a special way for the husbands of the newly widowed. The new widows are invited to join us for breakfast after Mass to learn more about the Widows of Prayer.

We meet the third Thursday of each month from 2-4 p.m. for ongoing spirituality with our Spiritual Advisor.

For those who cannot come in the afternoon because of work, etc. we have begun an evening a month get-together for those in Formation. If you would be interested in attending this Formation evening to learn more about Widows of Prayer, call Mary Reardon at 920/733-2652.

News From The Huntington Group:

We have chosen "Mary, Queen of Peace" as the name for the Huntington Widows of Prayer.

We have 9 insignia wearing widows and one in Formation.

The Huntington and Fort Wayne groups go to Victory Noll once a month to meet together for ongoing spirituality.

Mae Leedy, WP

Who Are the Widows of Prayer?

We are women whose lives have changed dramatically due to the death of our husbands. Most of us have raised families, some as many as 10 children, and have experienced a myriad of life's heartaches and joys.

We have realized the tremendous blessings of the Lord and have answered His Call to spend a portion of our daily lives in prayer for His priests and those being called to religious life.

Those discerning the Call need time to discover whether God is calling them to be a Widow of Prayer. To assist in this process we have developed a few guidelines:

- A woman should be widowed at least a year before making a commitment to join, and should be a practicing Roman Catholic.
- As the Call unfolds there is a period of one year to ascertain the reality of the Call. During this time she is guided by a Formation Director, who walks with her in her search.
- At the end of the year she may begin a temporary membership for a period of one year. After a second year of temporary commitment she is invited to make a permanent commitment.

When a widow becomes a member of the Widows of Prayer, there are a number of requirements:

We invite her to commit to a daily prayer life. Depending on her situation, the following are suggestions:

- Daily Mass
- An hour of Eucharistic Adoration
- Recitation of the Rosary
- Morning & evening Liturgy of the Hours

In reality much will be determined by the life of the individual member such as family responsibilities or work outside the home. We need to ask ourselves the question – how much of myself am I willing to give to God. When we have the desire in our heart, it's amazing how the Lord will take your hand in His and guide you gently into a life that will be amazing, even to yourself!

Members are expected to attend the meetings, prayer gatherings and retreats of the Widows of Prayer.

We are called an Association of the Faithful and are under the guidance of the Bishop of the Diocese of Green Bay.

To learn more about the Widows of Prayer and our activities call one of the following: Appleton area – 920/733-2652; Huntington, Indiana area – 260/356-0919; or Fort Wayne, Indiana – 260/422-2960.

Mary Reardon, WP

Quotes from “Widows of Prayer”

I prayed to the Holy Spirit for guidance and perseverance in my decision to become a Widow of Prayer. I made my First Promise and received my insignia August 17, 2004 at a special Mass, and the happiness and joy I felt with the closeness to Jesus, I know I made the right choice.

Theresa Broderick, WP

May of 2004 was my third time to attend the Widows of Prayer retreat at Monte Alverno, Appleton, WI. During the Saturday Mass, I made my third and final Promise. After the Mass I remained in the chapel to reflect and pray. Tears came to my eyes as I thought of my husband, who invited and introduced me to the catholic faith, knowing how pleased he must be to know of my life as a Widow of Prayer.

Being a Widow of Prayer, along with the Huntington and Fort Wayne widows has been a great blessing and joy to me.

Mae Leedy, WP

My husband died on June 30, 2003. In August of that year I went to my first meeting of the Widows of Prayer at the request of Dorothy Ward. On August 17, 2004, I received the Insignia and made the promise to continue in prayer for the following year – God willing.

My vocation of marriage for 53 years was a beautiful one, and I accepted Charley's death as a part of life. I didn't, however know that the Lord would call me to a further life of prayer.

The peace I am experiencing in prayer has been “beyond understanding.” I thank God for this double blessing

Mary Voors, WP

When one waits for a year and studies the devoted life of St. Francis, it is truly a welcoming feeling to have it all come to fruition when receiving the Widow's of Prayer pin/emblem. On one Tuesday in August, it was a supreme delight that I made my first year promise to observe the statutes of the Widow's of Prayer and received my emblem. I had attended meetings and observed the loving way that the enrolled members wore their Widow's of Prayer emblem. They wore their pin with such honor and pride. And no wonder as the pin's design of the Eucharist is such a perfect choice to give honor to our Lord.

The ceremony was splendid with a special mass and joyous homily celebrated by our Spiritual Advisor, Father John Guimond. Lovely as well was the reception that followed.

In becoming a member one has a feeling of belonging to an organization of like-minded widows who are dedicated to an extension of the good works and prayer life that our Savior's mother, Mary, devoted her energies and still today requests that Catholic women participate in.

And isn't it nice, and aren't we lucky that our founding widow, Mary Reardon, has the same name and the same dedication and intentions as her namesake, Holy Mary, who asks us all to pray. Praying is an important function of life. How can we fail?

Jayne Weber, WP

In becoming a Widow of Prayer two years ago and making the commitment to pray for priests and those in church ministry, I never expected the personal blessings that have come to me!

My own prayer life and relationship with the Lord has deepened, and my time in prayer before the Blessed Sacrament each week has become very precious to me.

Fr. John Guimond's inspired teachings each week and selfless dedication to our group, has helped to keep us focused and to grow in our vocation.

And, the Lord has given me a community of sisters to walk this journey with me! It is a journey that continues to bring joy and tremendous peace to my heart. I am blessed!

Dorothy Ward, WP

Someone asked me how I felt about the women who have joined The Widows of Prayer. I didn't have to stop and think what to say. They are a wonderful group of women. They are very spiritual, and women that you can draw strength from. They are always willing to pray for you when in need. They are a very comfortable group to talk with about anything in general. Whether it is personal or spiritual, they are always there to help.

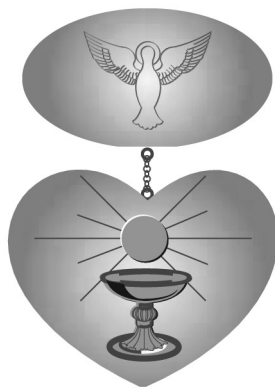
God always has someone there when I need help. I'll never forget the day when He took my husband, dad, brother—all within a short period of time. I was dependent on them. But, it was only a few weeks later that the Holy Spirit showed me through grief and prayer who was in charge of my whole life.

I thank the Lord for all the friends He has brought into my life.

Joyce Baldwin, WP

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Our Mission

Prayer for priests and others in
Church ministry

Primary Function

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament

*The Widows of Prayer, Inc. is supported by
those who believe in our ministry. We are
non-profit and tax deductible.*

Send donations to:
Widows of Prayer, Inc.
1021 W. Windtree Dr.
Appleton, WI 54914

Retreat For Widows

(open to all women)

May 13-15, 2005

Theme:

Gospel Women

Presenter:

FR. JOHN GUIMOND, O.F.M. CAP.

Cost:

\$140.00

To register call:

Mary Reardon, WP: 920/733-2652
or
Monte Alverno Retreat Center: 920/733-8526

The Oldest and Choicest

Even when you are old, I will be the same. Even when your hair has turned gray, I will take care of you.

ISAIAH 46:4

Growing old can be dangerous. The trail is treacherous and the pitfalls are many. One is wise to be prepared. You know it's coming. It's not like God kept the process a secret. It's not like you are blazing a trail as you grow older. It's not as if no one has ever done it before. Look around you. You have ample opportunity to prepare and ample case studies to consider. If growing old catches you by surprise, don't blame God. He gave you plenty of warning. He also gave you plenty of advice.

Your last chapters can be your best. Your final song can be your greatest. It could be that all of your life has prepared you for a grand exit. God's oldest have always been among his choicest.

He Still Moves Stones