

Fourteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time
July 6, 2025
Year of the Holy Spirit

“He said to them, ‘The harvest is abundant but the laborers are few; so ask the master of the harvest to send out laborers for his harvest.’” (Luke 10:2)

I would like to begin this reflection with a quote from Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen. The quote is taken from his book entitled *The Priest is Not His Own* first published in 1963. I specifically mention the date of the first publication because his words, true then, are still very much true in 2025.

*“Why did Our Lord, when He spoke of vocations, single out precisely the word **pray**? Because prayer is the expression of the Christian community And the yearning of the Church. As the Church gets the kind of pope she deserves, so she gets the kind and number of priests she deserves. Why do some countries have so many vocations? Because the Catholic people of the countries, rich in their faith, **want** priests, and they pray to be given the priests they want. . . . Prayer in the Church is alone primary; publicity and its methods are secondary. The search for vocations begins on our knees.” (Pp. 82-83).*

Archbishop Sheen would further write a reminder to his Catholic readers of how sin affects not only the person who commits the sin, but its effect upon the community as a whole. Sin, even those committed in private, affect the entire Body of Christ. In essence, NO sin is private; ALL sin is public. We know this to be true. Often, we have reflected upon the image of a small cut on a finger, if not treated, may become infected and thus place the entire person at risk. Our sins, no matter if we consider them small, can place our family, our parish, our Archdiocese, our country or our world in a most precarious position. Sin is not a small matter.

Yet, one priest offering to God the Eucharistic sacrifice of His Son upon an altar can become an antibiotic treating this malady. Not by his own merits does the priest perform this role. The medicinal effects are solely due to the saving action of Jesus Christ. It is His sacrifice, offered once upon the cross, which still resonates in our day. Our world, our country, our Archdiocese, our parish and our families NEED priests to continue this saving work. Not only do we need priests, we NEED holy priests. God wants His children to be holy and we need our shepherds to be living examples of this holiness. Sadly, too many are satisfied with (using a Peanuts reference) the “Joe Cool” priest. We may watch their videos on TikTok or Instagram and read their posts on X or Facebook, but do we honestly desire their spiritual examples? Are these who we want accompanying us during those “dark nights” which are present in each of our daily lives?

We would do well to recall the Temptations of Jesus in the wilderness. The guiding lesson—Evil (Satan, sin) is only defeated by Good (God). It is the Holy Spirit, to Whom we have dedicated this year, Who defeats the evil which is present within our society. A “Modern” Christianity, which embraces the fads of our times, does nothing to limit the rise of evil or instill the virtues of

holiness. We can build stylish non-denominational buildings, sing contemporary songs, perform avant-garde worship services and position Christianity as a novel addition to society, BUT is this what we believe will inspire one young man to surrender himself to God through becoming a priest? My family, it is YOUR FAMILY, who provides us the answer. It is your family, desiring to grow in holiness and love of God, which can offer the world the priests she so desperately needs. Each priest represents the community he serves. And, the virtues or the vices present within this priest affects the community he serves. The virtuous life of a priest begins with the virtuous lives of his parents. We need holy priests and holy priests begin in holy families. We pray today that God may grant us holy priests while also praying that we will become holy families producing the holy priests we are praying for. And, never forgetting to offer just one small prayer to God for the priests we have now, asking that they become holy as well for they are the ones currently keeping the wolves at bay.