



A weekly reflection by members  
of the Precious Blood Community

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Fr. Matt Keller, C.P.P.S.

*"Every priest stands daily at his ministry" (Hebrews 10:11).*

I am aware that many of the readers of this reflection are not priests. However, a significant number of our members in the Precious Blood Family are priests. I am a priest and a Missionary of the Precious Blood, a part of our Precious Blood Family. I write this reflection on the ministry of the priesthood.

A priest's ministry is often defined based upon his assignment. I am the pastor of St. John the Baptist in Glandorf, Ohio. This is my ministry; another priest is assigned to the chaplain of a school, prison, or hospital, and that is his ministry. As a priest, in his assignment, whether in parish ministry or as a chaplain or some other form of ministry, he performs a lot of important work as a part of his ministry. God works through the priest touching other people's lives so that they can have an encounter with Christ. Some of my favorite tasks as a pastor are visiting a religious education classroom and answering questions they may have. I enjoy attending high school sporting events and other activities of parishioners. I particularly enjoy watching them compete in a sport or other event, and then on Sunday, they are at Mass, sometimes serving or reading at Mass. I enjoy being at a parish event and just simply being present and visiting with parishioners. Baptizing a child or witnessing a marriage is also a great joy and privilege. Or responding to those calls to a dying person's bedside. I also get the privilege of being the confessor in the confessional that the Lord uses to bestow his ministry on his people. As a parish priest, I get the privilege of being a part of people's lives on the most joyous and difficult days of their lives. This is often defined as being ministry.

But at the heart of the ministry of priesthood, it is not just about what is seen but it also about what is unseen that also plays a part of the ministry. A part of my ministry as a priest that people do not see but I think is most important is my prayer life. Without prayer, the ministry of priesthood does not exist. Recently, I was working on preparing a homily, and I knew the point I wanted to make, but I was having trouble getting to that point. So, I brought it to prayer, I asked the Lord for help, and the Lord got it to that point, I think, in less than ten minutes. Other times, I am anxious or not sure how things will work out. I bring it to prayer; I give it to the Lord and the Lord helps to make it work.

When I was ordained, I made the promise to pray without ceasing, to pray the Liturgy of the Hours. In preparation for the priesthood as a formation house, we would pray Morning Prayer and Evening Prayer together. As I journeyed toward the priesthood, I learned to pray these hours privately when the formation house community was not praying together. In the years since I have been ordained, I have learned to incorporate the other hours into my prayer life. To me praying the Liturgy Hours is more than prayer, it is part of my ministry, it is praying for the church. It is something that I do every day. Even on the occasion I am away from the parish either for a day off or vacation. I still make time to pray, the hours. Priests who are retired and not active in ministry still take part in this ministry.

Another element of the ministry of priesthood I have is the privilege of offering the sacrifice of the Mass. It is through my hands and words of institution that Christ comes present in the Eucharist Body, Blood, and Soul Divinity. While it may no longer be required that a priest celebrate Mass every day, as a priest, I see it as part of my ministry to celebrate Mass every day; even on those days when I am not scheduled to celebrate Mass publicly, I try to celebrate Mass privately.

As I take the time to stand in this not always seen part of my priestly ministry to pray the Liturgy of Hours and celebrate Mass, other forms of my ministry fall into place—not always in the way that I have envisioned, but always in accordance with what God wants from me.

*Fr. Matt Keller, C.P.P.S. is a Precious Blood Missionary and currently serves as the Pastor of St. John the Baptist Church in Glandorf, OH. To learn more about the Missionaries of the Precious Blood, [click here](#).*

This weekly reflection is made available to everyone in our Precious Blood family. Feel free to share it with others. Would you be willing to write a reflection? If so, please contact Vicky Otto at [votto@pbspiritualityinstitute.org](mailto:votto@pbspiritualityinstitute.org)