

Year for Priest Initiatives Flood Internet

Cardinal Reports Global Positive Response

VATICAN CITY, JUNE 19, 2009 ([Zenit.org](http://www.zenit.org)).- The Congregation for Clergy is launching a new Web site for the Year for Priests, which begins today. The enthusiasm surrounding this occasion is echoing in initiatives across the globe.

A letter from Cardinal Cláudio Hummes, prefect of the congregation, expressed the hope that "this may be a time of grace that will produce great apostolic fruit, especially of fidelity and intense renewal in the work of the ministry."

He explained that their new site offers spiritual resources and documents for priests and lay people to celebrate the year, in English, French, German, Italian, Portuguese and Spanish.

The cardinal affirmed that the Year for Priests "has been warmly received throughout the world" and the "positive effects will make themselves felt very quickly."

He invited ordained ministers to "participate in it with every effort and creativity" and to "be unconditional disciples and audacious missionaries" for Christ.

Another initiative was organized by WorldPriest, a group of Catholic communications professionals based on both the United States and Ireland.

In addition to online resources, the group coordinated four Masses which will be celebrated on different points of the globe today, uniting English-speaking Catholic communities to pray for priests.

Each Mass will take place at 3 p.m. local time, beginning with one in Sydney, Australia, celebrated by the archbishop of that city, Cardinal George Pell.

Next, Carmelite Father Sebastian Koodappattu will preside over a Mass in Kerala, India, followed by Archbishop Michael Neary of Tuam in Ireland's Knock Shrine. Monsignor Michael Curran will complete the circle with a Eucharistic Celebration in New York.

In addition, a special Mass will be televised by WorldPriest on Sunday in honor of the World Day of Prayer for Priests, which the group promotes every year.

Father Brendan Kilcoyne, president of St. Jarlath's College in Tuam will preside over this Mass that will be broadcast by the RTE national television station.

Vocational renewal

National initiatives in England and Wales are available through the new online portal created by the bishops' conference there.

This Web site contains resources for priests, and allows users to browse through the online offerings of each of the 22 dioceses in the conference.

Thus, for example, one can access the new Web site from the Archdiocese of Birmingham that features a multimedia "virtual seminary," posters, prayer cards, priestly testimonials and a seminary blog.

Father Eddie Clare, committee chairman of the National Office for Vocation, affirmed that one important outcome of this year will be a "renewed emphasis on vocations."

He added, "The more we value our priests and their irreplaceable presence at the heart of the Church, more men may consider that this may be their calling in life."

One institution that is offering visual demonstrations of the irreplaceable role of priestly ministry is the Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C.

In a new Web site launched for the Year for Priests, it is featuring slide show presentations about its ordained alumni and the ways they have served the Church.

The year will run until June 19, 2010, and will center on the theme: "Faithfulness of Christ, Faithfulness of Priests."