



# PRIESTHOOD

*"I always thank my God as I remember you in my prayers, because I hear about your love for all his holy people and your faith in the Lord Jesus." - PHILEMON 1:4-5*

## OPENING ACTIVITY

### PRIESTHOOD A-Z

Create an alphabet of actions or places where a priest may find himself ministering. Sample Alphabet: Anointing, Blessing, Chapel, etc.

Brainstorm for a few minutes by yourself, then wait for more instructions from your teacher.



## READING

### A TOUGH PRIEST: FR. MATT FOLEY

Have you ever thought about all the different places where Jesus met people? He met them in the middle of a storm, in the desert, at the Jordan river, in the market place, at people's homes, in the temple, and on a mountain! Since Jesus met people in all sorts of circumstances, so does a priest. This is because a priest's vocation is to be Jesus for people. When a man becomes a priest, God puts an indelible (permanent) mark on his soul so that the soul of a priest is changed and marked forever as someone who is to be Christ for others.

Let's read about the adventures that one priest had in bringing Jesus to others through his presence.

*People still die,  
people still get sick.  
No matter where you are,  
the essentials are all here.*

*Excerpts from "Afghanistan to Arlington Heights, Catholic Priest Finds Perspective"*

*by Rex W. Huppke  
September 1, 2013*

Father Matt — Padre Mateo as they called him in the neighborhood — had been the heart and soul of that predominantly Latino community for eight years. He had [ministered to] many members of the warring Latin Kings and Two-Six street gangs, and now he was heading to war, drawn to be an Army chaplain. First to chaplain training ... He had to learn to jump out of planes (talk about getting closer to God), then finally got what he wanted: a deployment to Afghanistan in April 2009.



*Fr. Matt Foley plays with children during recess  
Arlington Heights, Chicago*

His duties were many: visiting with soldiers each day, catering to the injured, celebrating a daily Catholic Mass, and delivering news of a family member's death or illness to young men and women already homesick. He would bless the bodies of the fallen and perform funeral ceremonies as caskets were lifted onto planes to be flown home.



# PRIESTHOOD

## READING *continued*

“To see the soldiers carrying their comrades out, there are really no words, it’s all gestures,” Foley said. “You see them in full combat gear, carrying one of their own in a metal casket, flag-draped. This is not how we want to send our children home.”

He described what he did there as “a ministry of presence.” “To sit in an MRAP (Mine-Resistant Ambush Protected vehicle) and to be ambushed and to look across at the eyes of a 19- or 20-year-old soldier,” Foley said, his voice trailing off. “I’m glad I’m there to say, ‘We’ll make it through this.’ I’m glad I’m there for the parents who sent their sons and daughters over there.”

There’s a toughness about Foley. He first gained notoriety in Chicago when someone broke into St. Agnes to steal from the donation box. The priest tackled the man and held him until the police showed up.

So, I wondered, what will he do in the decidedly calmer environment of Arlington Heights?

“Inside those houses over there,” he said, motioning across Arlington Heights Road to rows of tidy suburban homes, “there’s still the pain and suffering that everyone else has. People still die, people still get sick. No matter where you are, the essentials are all here. We dress it up, but it’s pretty much the same.”

## BE CURIOUS

- What kind of a character does Fr. Foley seem to have?
- As a priest, how is he being the hands of Christ in each place he ministers?
- What question would you ask Fr. Foley if you could?
- If you were a priest, would you go into the army and minister? Why or why not?
- How would you handle the changes of caring for people in very different situations?

## EXPLORATION

### FLOWCHART TO EXPLORE VOCATIONS

**Boys:** think about at least four ways that you can learn more about priesthood. Make a flowchart that illustrates how you can increase your knowledge of who a priest is and what he does.



**Girls:** think about at least four ways that you can learn more about becoming a religious sister. Make a flowchart that illustrates how you can increase your knowledge of who a nun is and what she does.



*Emily Huber, a junior at Mt. Desales Academy, prays during Eucharistic Adoration at the the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary during the 19th annual Youth and Young Adult Pilgrimage.*



## VISUAL ART



*Before Saying Mass, Ignatius is Overcome with Tears*

by Carlos Saenz de Tejada

- Ignatius used to cry so much when he celebrated Mass that sometimes he had a hard time finishing the Mass, and he even feared that he would go blind. What symbols do you see that indicate where Ignatius may be?
- Why is he crying?
- What kind of a person does the artist seem to think Ignatius is?
- How does this scene show Ignatius living out his vocation?
- What is the lady in the picture doing?
- What are her thoughts?

PRAY TOGETHER

*Prayer for Generosity*  
– St. Ignatius of Loyola

Lord, teach me  
to be generous.

Teach me to serve you  
as you deserve,

to give and not to  
count the cost,

to fight and not to  
heed the wounds,

to toil and not to  
seek for rest,

to labor and not to ask  
for any reward,

save that of knowing that  
I am doing your will.

AMEN.