



Prayer in Vocation

Saint La Salle Ordained a Deacon (March 21, 1676)

A School Prayer:

Today we remember the day Saint La Salle was ordained a deacon, one stage in becoming a priest. Loving Creator, Saint La Salle heard your call in himself to become a priest and to live out that vocation in the ministry of education. May we, like Saint La Salle, be patient with the call you speak within us. May we open ourselves to hearing your call through the people and events in our day today. We pray through your Son, our brother Jesus. Amen.

A Classroom Prayer:

Jesus, so many different demands on our time often make us feel scattered. As we remember Saint La Salle and his decision to be ordained a deacon at a time when he had many other decisions he had to face, we are reminded that we too can find a unity in our lives. May we, like Saint La Salle, be open to your call to us in the many people and decisions we face today. Amen.

A Prayer for Parents *(could be used in a newsletter):*

At age 21, Saint La Salle took on the responsibility of caring for his younger siblings while he continued his theological studies and the process of becoming a priest by being ordained a deacon. Through our friendships, family, and prayer, may we as parents find balance in our lives, such that we may live our dream, be attentive to our parental responsibilities, and assist our children in seeing the hand of God in the events of their lives. Amen.

The Story:

In the midst of some rather major decisions, John Baptist de La Salle was ordained a deacon at age 24. His parents had died within a year, thus forcing him to return to his home in Rheims to care for his younger siblings. Upon settling their care in the hands of another relative, he was able to devote himself again fully to theological studies. He also was in the midst of resigning his position as Canon, a position of prestige and finance, to take on the administration of a local parish whose priest was departing. As he was not yet a priest, De La Salle would have taken on an unusual, but acceptable, role of his time. Normal to other decisions in his life, he sought the advice of his family and the permission of the Archbishop, all of whom were against the idea. De La Salle then dropped the plan. De La Salle later on admitted that all along he felt that an inner voice was telling him that God did not want him to be a parish priest. But still, he continued to move more deeply into the decision of priesthood by being ordained a deacon on the eve of Passion Sunday in 1676. Time would eventually unfold to him the ministry of teaching as the context in which he would serve others in his vocation as priest.

Through his personal prayer, openness to the advice of his spiritual director and others, and a practical sense of what was needed; De La Salle constantly strove toward seeing the hand of God in the events of his life. As such, he ultimately achieved a balance and a peace with his decisions.