



Vocation and Youth Ministry
Religious of the Sacred Heart of Jesus
International

Prayer for Vocations
February 25, 2021

Reading from the book of Esther (14,1.3-5.12-14):

Queen Esther, seized with mortal anguish, had recourse to the LORD. She lay prostrate upon the ground, together with her handmaids, from morning until evening, and said:

“God of Abraham, God of Isaac, and God of Jacob, blessed are you. Help me, who am alone and have no help but you, for I am taking my life in my hand. As a child, I used to hear from the books of my forefathers that you, O LORD, always free those who are pleasing to you. Now help me, who am alone and have no one but you, O LORD, my God.

“And now, come to help me, an orphan. Put in my mouth persuasive words in the presence of the lion and turn his heart to hatred for our enemy, so that he and those who are in league with him may perish. Save us from the hand of our enemies; turn our mourning into gladness and our sorrows into wholeness.”

To help your reflection:

We are beginning a new liturgical season: Lent.

Lent and Vocation, what do they have to do with each other?

I remember that in my adolescence, I did not understand much about what Lent meant. I only remember “not eating meat on Fridays” or “depriving oneself of buying things and giving that money to the poor”. And at the same time, if I thought about “vocation to religious life”, it was more or less similar: “not eating or doing many things” and “depriving oneself of everything to give to the poor”.

Thank God, that memory is almost anecdotal, because I have experienced Lent as a great opportunity to touch the depth of God’s love for each one of us and for all humanity. It reminds us every year that it is a time to try again with what we have abandoned, that it is a time to try again to be available for God’s will, that it is a time to return to our sources, to feel that ardor in our hearts and to look at our vocation.

Esther recognizes that she is “in need of God”. The more we need, the freer we are. As long as we recognize our needs, we can welcome God’s help that embraces us and envelops us until we feel that our infidelities diminish before God’s great love.

Our Vocation to be Religious of the Sacred Heart of Jesus is so that our mourning and that of others may become joy, and our suffering and that of others may become salvation, as long as we recognize that we are in need of that restorative and reconciling embrace. Thus, Lent and Vocation are real and have meaning in the midst of the reality of so much suffering and mourning.

