

Day 1: The priest as a man of public prayer

Behavioral Objective

The students will learn that the most important thing each person can do in life is set aside time for prayer. Often times a priest must spend time in public prayer. Students will know this by writing a paper explaining the ways in which a priest prays in public.

Anticipatory Set

How many of you are playing little league? Softball? How many of you are trying out or play basketball? How many of you play soccer on a team? Imagine yourself at the free throw line at a basketball game. Everyone is quiet and you have the ball. The game is tied with 1 second remaining in the last quarter. It all depends on you whether you win or lose. If you make this shot, you win, if you miss, you're tied and it goes into overtime. Everyone is watching. Do you feel pressure? Do you feel nervous? So, you get the ball and bounce it a few times and you are praying, Lord help me to make this shot. So, you shoot...

Whether you make the basket or not, that's for your own imagination. Sometimes, a priest is called on to pray in public. Everyone listens to his words and prays along with him. He is a man who is called upon to lead prayers with other people. Today we are going to talk about the priest as a man who is a person who leads people in prayer. He leads people in prayer and spends time in prayer because he is called to lead people to Jesus Christ. In prayer we are lead to Jesus Christ.

Input

I think it is important that you as fifth graders tell me different times you believe priests are called to pray in public. I will write them on the board. You write them on a sheet of paper for yourselves.

Let the children begin to name times: when they say "at mass" ask them what is happening at the mass: school mass, weekend mass, anniversary mass, funeral mass for child, for high schooler, for young adult, for elderly person, a wedding mass, a graduation mass, grandparent mass, Easter Sunday mass, Christmas eve mass – try to get them to be specific and not general; as the audience is different, so is the priests' leading in prayer be different. Other answers should include: meal prayers. Again, be specific: why is the priest with these people to eat? Is it the boy scout or girl scout ceremony dinner, a funeral luncheon, a wedding rehearsal dinner, a wedding reception dinner, a family inviting father to dinner, a baptism lunch, a graduation party, a birthday party, a sick person's visit? Before meetings, after meetings, at reconciliation, at baptisms, weddings, anointing the sick, with a person in the hospital, at a prayer gathering (they'll explain them), with a class at school, with the PSR students, with parents, etc.

What do you think it takes for a priest to be able to be a man of public prayer? How do you think he gets good and comfortable praying with people for people in front of people? To be able to be a man who has a close relationship with God. How does he get that close relationship with God? He has to be a man who prays by himself to God. Tomorrow we will talk about his personal time with God in private prayer.

Often times Jesus is found praying in front of large crowds. Let's look at some examples of this in the Bible.

EXAMPLES OF JESUS PRAYING IN PUBLIC: Matthew 5:1-12; Mt 6:9-14; Mt 26:36-44; Jn 17:1-26 (there are many more examples)

A priest leads people to Jesus Christ and one of the best ways to do that is to spend time in prayer with the people. The way in which he gets good and continues to get better at praying in public is to make sure he is spending good time in pray by himself to God. Is this any different than what you are supposed to be doing right now? No, you too are supposed to be people of prayer. Every night and every morning and before and after you eat you are supposed to be in prayer. Now, you've been told that each year so now, it is time to say that you also need to spend time in prayer throughout your day, not just every night and every morning, but during the day as well.

How do you get good at being people of public prayer? You know if the protestant boys and girls were asked to pray, they usually can do this without much problem, but Catholic boys and girls, men and women don't like doing this. At first, go ahead and say, "Together let's pray, Our Father..." and every one else will catch on and you won't pray alone. You could say, "together lets pray Hail Mary or Glory be to' and people will catch on and you won't pray alone. The priest does this once in a while. If something really bad has happened and the priest is called to the place, often times he will pray a decade of the rosary or the entire rosary with the family; he is not able to just make up a prayer to God using his own words, so the Church provides us with many prayers – provides the priest with these same prayers as well. Sometimes, things are calm or good and the priest is called to pray: then, he can make up the prayer using his own words. You as fifth graders can do that too. Simply give God a name, tell God what is happening and what you want him to do and thank him for doing it. "Dear God, we are here to have this basketball game and we are really hoping we do well. Please help us. We thank you for helping us, Amen." Your name was "Dear God" "We are here to play a basketball game and hope to do well" is telling God what is happening. "Please help us" is telling him what you want or asking him what you want. And then you ended by thanking him.

Heavenly Father, we are here in this religion class learning how to be students of prayer. Help us to pray to you well. Thank you for hearing this prayer and helping us.

Merciful God, we are about to go to confession. Please know we are sorry for our sins and want to make a good confession. Help us with our confession. Thanks.

God, my dog is sick; please make him better. Thanks.

See, you could each pray in public: Give God a name, tell God what is happening, what do you want him to do and thank him for doing it.

Or, just use a memorized prayer. The church gave them to you for a reason, so use them. We don't need to be afraid to be people of prayer in public. Our baptism calls us to pray out loud in public with other people. The priest has to do it because he leads people to Christ, but all of us, really should be leading others to Christ. Let us be people who are comfortable praying out loud with and for others.

Let's each take a turn praying a prayer out loud using our own words. I'll give you a minute to think of one then we will go around the room praying to God.

At some point during this lesson, you may want to have written the steps on the board: give God a name, tell God what is happening, what do you want God to do, thank him.

For your assignment, I want you to write a one page paper describing how a priest publicly prayed at 5 separate events in one day.

Day 2

Behavior Objective

Students will demonstrate their knowledge that priests are people of private prayer. They will identify several times in each day when they themselves can pray. They will learn to both speak, and listen to God.

Anticipatory Set

How would you feel if you did not eat any food for 3 days? How would you feel if you did not drink any liquids for four days? How would you feel if you did not go to the restroom for five days?

Now, what if you had a friend who said he has not eaten anything in three days because he just didn't have time to eat? Or if you met a friend who said he has not gone to bed in two weeks because he just hasn't had time to sleep? Would you think they were both crazy? Absolutely. No matter how busy we are, we have to make time to sleep, eat, go to the bathroom, get something to drink. These are our basic human needs to keep us physically alive. But, are we just physical beings? No; we are also spiritual beings. We have a soul! We can just as easily starve our soul to death as we can starve our physical body. We might continue to breathe and walk if we are spiritually starved, but it will show in our attitude and in our behaviors. If we are going to feed our souls and be alive in both body and spirit, we have got to pray in the same way we must eat and drink. There really can be no excuses – no matter how busy or tired we are. As Pope John Paul II says, "if you are too busy to pray, you are too busy." And, whatever we are doing to keep us from our relationship with God has become a false god for us – which means we are breaking the first commandment: "I am the Lord your God, you shall not have any gods besides me." Today, we are going to talk about the private prayer of a priest and how every person is supposed to spend time in private prayer.

Input

Let's look at the number of ways in which we can pray. Another way of saying this, what kind of prayers are there that we know. Let's begin listing them on the board. You list them on your paper while I list them on the board. Let them name the memorized prayers, petitions, thanksgiving, contrition, made up: help them with rosary, bible readings, lives of the saints books, spiritual reading, prayers before the blessed sacrament, stations of the cross, journaling, etc.

I would like to talk to you about how the priest spends time in personal prayer with the sacred scriptures. It is extremely important he have a devotion to the Blessed Mother, which means he would be praying his rosary regularly. He prays his memorized prayers often and he is constantly in spiritual reading. However, because you know he must prepare himself to preach on the word of God, how does he pray using the Bible? Can we do the same thing?

First, let's read a reading from sacred scripture:

FIND GOSPEL READING

Now, that's just reading it; let's prepare to pray: I want you all to sit up straight in your chair: Now, get comfortable. Don't slouch too much or you will be uncomfortable soon. Close your eyes. Listen to your breath. Notice you are breathing in and breathing out. Concentrate on your breathing. As you breathe out say "Jesus" and as you breathe in, say, "open me to your word." Stay focused on your breathing: as you breathe in, say, "Jesus" as you breathe out say, "open me to your word." Say this for them as you follow your own breathing. Let's listen with our soul as

we hear this reading one more time.

Now, I am going to read this reading again, and this time, try to become a person in the story: Make the story come alive in your imagination: tell yourself what is happening in this story.

After reading the story again, ask the children to explain what is happening: Now, can you tell me what difference this makes to you in your life today? How does what you just heard matter to you in your life today?

There are many ways to pray with scripture: this way we just described is only one way: We could draw pictures of what we see in the story; we could act it out, we could read it three times slowly and find out which word or phrase jumps off the page at us and then repeat that phrase or word throughout the day. What is important is that we read that story a few times and each time we read it, we got more meaning out of it. God was speaking to us; that is prayer. Now, we could learn a lot about what others think this reading is about: those are called commentaries. Priests often read commentaries and other books called homily helps to help them prepare for their homily. However, priests cannot prepare for their homily unless first they pray over the scripture passages. When we as parishioners pray over the scriptures, we will get more out of mass; mass won't be so boring: so, prepare yourselves to go to mass by reading the scriptures for that Sunday: where would you find out what the readings will be for mass on Sunday? The bulletin, the Catholic Missourian, the internet to name three places.

Checking for Understanding

In one page, describe your typical day and then write when prayer could still fit into your day. Before, after, during events, beginning of day, end of day. You should find at least 5 times to pray during the day. Remember, we are all called to have a close relationship with God, not just the priest. The priest has a close relationship with God only if he spends time in personal prayer. How do you spend time in personal prayer with God?

Day 3

Behavior Objective

Students will realize there is a connection between the cross and the life of a priest. They will show this by writing a one page paper on the ways in which a priest helps people carry their crosses.

Anticipatory Set

I want you to think about Lent. Lent is a time when we put Christ first in our lives. We give things up so we can remind ourselves that nothing, not the video games, not the soda or anything else can come before God. When it does, there is something out of order. We don't give things up just to give them up but to help us get closer to the Lord. Question, if we give something up for us that is not healthy for us, is it a sacrifice? No. It is moving away from sin to living a life of virtue. We can only sacrifice things that are good for us, otherwise it is not a sacrifice, it is simply moving away from sin. So, if you say for Lent, "I'm going to stop picking on my brother." That's not sacrificing, that's moving away from sin to something virtuous. You can't just ignore your brother; you would have to do something nice with him. That is virtuous; not sinful. If you drink 12 cans of soda a day and you say you are going to give up soda, that's not healthy for you to drink that much soda, so you move away from sinful behavior to virtuous behavior. Drinking one or two a day, while it is not real healthy isn't doing lots of damage, so you could give up those two a day and say you were offering a sacrifice. Not everything we enjoy is sinful. If it is not sinful and you stop doing it, you are sacrificing. Today, we are going to talk about the times in a priest life in which he sacrifices for others.

Input

When a man goes through the ceremony to become a priest, it is called an ordination. He is ordained to the priesthood. During that ceremony which takes place during a mass called an ordination, there is a place where he is asked to model his life after the cross of Jesus Christ. What did Jesus do on that cross? He sacrificed his life for us so we might have eternal life. Similarly, a priest is supposed to make sacrifices in his life so the people he serves may be reminded that everything they say, do and think leads them closer to Christ and heaven.

What do you think is one of the biggest sacrifices a priest makes because he is called to be a priest? Being married to a woman and having biological children of his own. That is correct. Is marriage a good thing? Absolutely, it is one of the seven sacraments. Is having children a good thing? Of course; the Catholic Church, back to sacred scriptures tell us that children are a great blessing from God. So, since marriage and children are good, then obviously the priest sacrifices these for the good of being a witness to the world. The witness is to ask each individual "is everything you are doing leading you and the people you love to God?"

Lots of people think one of the hardest things about being a priest is that we do not get to stay in one spot for several years. You can probably think of your grandparents who have lived in the same house for twenty-five years or longer. You may never have moved and may not move until you graduate from high school and go to college. Priests in this diocese move about every 5-8 years. Some do not stay that long in one spot and some do get to stay longer, but most of the time, it is a few years and then they move. Is living in the same place for a long time, sinful? No, then moving to another location is a sacrifice so that priest can use his gifts in that new location to spread the message of Jesus Christ. Who owns the house called a rectory where the priest lives? The parish own it. Father doesn't own the house in which he lives. The church owns it. He is responsible for taking care of it, but it is not his. Is it sinful to own your own home? No. Since the priest does not own his own home, it is called a sacrifice. It would be hard to move

away if he did own his own house, so he sacrifices that good so he can be more mobile and free to go from one place to another spreading the message of Jesus Christ.

How many of you go to the Lake every weekend? How many of you spend almost every evening at a practice for some sport? As long as you are going to a Catholic Mass each weekend you are free to be at the lake and it is not sinful. You are able to enjoy your sports – just remember to be other centered and not self-centered when playing or practicing your sport. A priest does get a day off each week. He should take some rest each of the other 6 days of the week. However, most all priests of this diocese will not have a chance to leave on a Friday at 5PM and return to his rectory at 10:30 Sunday night because he wanted to just get away for the weekend. He is not going to get to spend a lot of time doing what he wants to do – a couple of hours a day maybe if he is good with his time the other six days a week either. A priest sacrifices a lot of personal time for the sake of spreading the kingdom of God to those he meets. Watch your parents over the next week. How much time do they spend at work, taking care of you the children and taking care of the other parent? You would find they spend almost all of their time doing one of those three things: working, taking care of children or taking care of other parent. The priest does the same thing: it's just all rolled into one: doing priestly work. Being a priest is work. The priest is married to the Church and his children are the people he cares for in his parish. And, just as mom and dad need to take some down time for themselves, so the priest needs to take some down time too. It's just not going to happen on the weekend. He sacrifices his time to be with the people. If you got sick at 2AM and needed to be rushed to the hospital would your mom or dad say, "I'm tired, wait until 6AM when I get up"? No, neither would a priest when he gets a call at 2AM to go to the hospital to pray with someone.

Sometimes priests help people deal with their suffering. When anyone suffers, that is an opportunity for that person to get closer to Christ. We place our suffering on the same cross in which Jesus was nailed. We call that aligning our suffering with Christ on the cross. When we align our suffering, we come as close to Christ as we can because that was his closest moment to us. It is the work of the priest to help people see that they can place their suffering with Jesus. Jesus is close to the person during suffering, not far away. Sometimes a priest helps a family who had someone die. The family is sad and angry. The priest has to be there to help them through that. Sometimes a person is sick in the hospital and has been in the hospital a long time. The priest is called to be with that person and support that person and the family members who are tired and are feeling a lot of stress because that person is in the hospital for so long. If a house of a parishioner's burns down, the priest gathers a collection for the family so they can buy clothes, furniture and toys for the children. At the same time he visits with the family. There are priests who go into prisons and visit with people who did very bad crimes. He is called to support the person in prison at the same time helping the person in prison realize he did something bad and that he or she has a debt to pay. The priest also consoles the victim of crimes. He helps them realize what is justice and what is revenge. Priests are called to serve in our armed services as chaplains: Navy, Army, Air Force. Navy chaplains take care of the Marines too. When the soldiers are called out to battle, the priest gets them spiritually ready for the battle by offering them reconciliation and anoints them if they are wounded or buries them if they were killed in battle.

Where there is suffering in the human person, there a priest should be ministering to that person. That is part of the life of sacrifice and molding his life on the cross that he promises at his ordination.

Checking for understanding

I have given you lots of ways in which a priest offers sacrifice in his own life. Let's write them on the board while you write them in your notebook.

Marriage, children, house/home, free time, weekends.

Another type of sacrifice is being with people while they are hurting or suffering. This is sacrifice because it is trying to get people to see that Christ is right there beside them and not far away. I gave you many situations where a priest is with someone who is suffering. Can you name some of these situations?

Death, grieving family, sick in hospital, victims of fire, people in prison, victims of crime, in the military during war.

Can you name other situations?

Input

Some of you might be scared thinking a life of a priest must be really bad if he has to deal with so much suffering. Remember that the priest receives an incredible amount of grace from God when he has to go into difficult situations. God knows this man who is a priest is too weak to do his work, so God loads the priest up with a supernatural grace because really, it isn't the priest that people want to see and God knows that. God knows the person really wants to see Jesus Christ. So, the priest through the incredible graces he is given for those moments brings the face of Christ to that situation. Only through the grace of ordination can this be understood. But, just know it is not about you the priest in these scary situations. It is about Jesus Christ and when God calls a priest to take Jesus Christ to a hurting person and the priest is faithful to his prayer life, God will provide all that is necessary for everyone: the person who is hurting and the priest. Of course because the priest is human and wants to take care of himself, after the encounter with the person: after spending the night with a car accident victim in the hospital, the priest can take it easy the next day. He can take care of himself and go see a movie or have a round of golf before getting back into work. People who also receive God's graces will understand. Anyhow, tomorrow, we will learn how a priest also lives a life of resurrection-- that is a life of joy. It isn't all funerals and car wrecks in the priesthood.

Independent practice

For your homework, I want you to write a one page paper on how the priest lives a life of sacrifice.

Day 4

Behavior Objective

Students will demonstrate their knowledge that priests are called to be at the most important points in a person's lives showing people that Christ is the most important person in everyone's lives. These moments are called "resurrection stories." This will be demonstrated by writing a page on places in which a priest lives resurrection stories.

Anticipatory Set

As far as God is concerned, what are the most important moments in your life? Can you name them for me? Accept all answers. As far as your friends go, what are the most important moments in your life? Accept all answers.

Input

Today we are going to realize that if an event is getting us closer to God, then it is an important event for God and our relationship. It is the only thing that matters to God. If it keeps us in the same place or moves us further away from God, then it offends God. If it keeps us at the same distance from God, then it does not matter too much. Sometimes what our friends think is an important event in our lives actually draws us further from God or keeps us at the same point. Let me give one example: You have the basketball and without the ref being able to see it, you elbow your opponent in the ribs and go up for the lay-up. You win the state championship game. Your friends think that is the most important moment in your basketball career. God sees the unnecessary elbow and is not pleased with that nor with the win. That elbow took you further away from God.

Or just the opposite could also happen. Three of your really good friends are going to embarrass a classmate who is not very popular. You see what is about to happen, so you go over to your friends and tell them to come with you to do something else. Now, your friends are upset with you because you took their mean fun away; but God is happy because "when you did for the least of my brothers you did for me." You are brought closer to God, but it is hard to feel that warm feeling because your friends are treating you like a jerk. "Blessed are they who persecute you for the sake of righteousness..." "

Everyone who live lives of holiness, which all of us are supposed to do because we are all called to do that by our baptism, are called to bring others and ourselves closer to God. A priest is a visible reminder of that very fact. As we learned yesterday, the priest lives a life without getting married so he can ask every person by his witness, "is everything you do think, and act lead you and others to heaven?" Priests must tell people when they are living that way; when they are presented with or demonstrating a resurrection story.

Priests baptize babies. The bigger the parish is, the more baptisms they may have. Of course, they may have permanent deacons in the parish, and then, he may have the deacons baptize the babies. And, if the baby is really sick, then anyone can baptize the baby. But, normally, the priest does the baptizing of the babies. This is not just a time to bring the family over for a nice dinner and get the baby some nice gifts. Something very important has just happened to this baby. This baby has been claimed for Jesus Christ and placed within the body of Christ. This means that the parents, godparents and whole Catholic Church is going to help this child find out what this child is supposed to do for God. This is a huge resurrection moment for not only this child and the child's family, but also for the entire church! No wonder the priest loves to baptize infants.

Soon, like 7 years from that moment, the priest gets to celebrate the sacrament of reconciliation and First Communion with these little children. Again, for the first time Christ takes away our sins and we receive Christ's body, blood, soul and divinity, these are other huge resurrection stories. The priest should be there to celebrate with the whole church family and with the family who has the child going through these huge events. A lot of times families again invite friends and relatives over for a dinner and opening gifts. That is fun; but the most important thing already happened. Now, we celebrate that awesome resurrection story.

Celebrating birthdays, getting together with friends, having a nice meal at a restaurant, going to a sporting event to watch a person use God's gifts given to him/her, these are all resurrection stories and the priest is and should be part of them. The priest should be a person who spends a lot of time building people up with compliments and saying nice things to others. He is the one who should help others find their gifts and talents and help that person use the gifts and talents they have received to better the community: finding people to help in a soup kitchen. The priest doesn't have to serve and cook every meal; but he should be encouraging others to use their time and talent to help those who have no food by volunteering in the soup kitchen. Though the priest is the one who anoints people in the hospital, he is not the only person in the church who can visit people in the hospital. He should see who has the gifts, time and talents to visit people in the hospital on a regular basis and get them to do it. Feeding the hungry, visiting those in hospitals, are ways in which we can build up the kingdom of heaven. Priests get others involved to do these things. Let's read MATTHEW 25: 31-46 to see how we are all supposed to work together to bring the kingdom of God here so we can be with God in heaven. Since it is the priest's job to help others get to heaven, when he helps his people do the things listed in Matthew 25, he helps them get to heaven.

And, finally, we wouldn't be honest nor complete if we didn't spend a few minutes talking about the ultimate resurrection story, our own death. As Catholics, we believe that when we die, we will be judged and at some point we as a people of hope, believe we and our loved ones by the grace of God and our cooperation with his grace will be in heaven some day. We may have to spend some time in purgatory getting ourselves washed of our sinfulness. However, our journey is not complete until we celebrate the ultimate resurrection, our soul and our body being united with Christ in heaven which will take place when Christ comes to judge the living and the dead. So, even though we are sad and missing the person who has died: whether it is grandpa or grandma or whoever it may be, we are also happy for them in a sense because they enter into that final part of the journey to the ultimate resurrection story: their entering into the kingdom of heaven.

So, funerals are sad and sometimes they are hard for a priest to do; but always, the priest is there to offer hope, to offer assurance, to make the resurrection story known to these people who grieve. When that is done well, there is no feeling like it in the world for the priest. God is so good to the priest who brings the face of Christ to the people who hurt. May some of you know this feeling some day!

Checking for Understanding

I want you to write one page explaining the ways in one day a priest may see ordinary events and explain the resurrection story within these ordinary events. Please list at least 5 events in your one page.

Day 5

Behavior Objective

Students will be able to realize through a one page reflection paper that priest have a ministry of presence about them that goes with them to whomever and wherever they go.

Anticipatory Set

I want you to pretend for a few minutes that we are going to go swimming. We are going to go to the local lake. Now, to take a group of people swimming, we are going to have to have a life guard. What is the lifeguard going to do while we swim? What is he or she supposed to do if one of us gets in trouble? Let's say Sam gets into water that is too deep and the lifeguard has to enter into the water. Will Sam feel safe if the lifeguard starts to drown along with Sam or will Sam feel safer if the lifeguard takes care of him/herself and at the same time helps Sam to shore? Sam will feel safe if the lifeguard keeps him/herself safe while saving Sam. We are going to talk today about how a priest is very much like a lifeguard who has to enter into the water to save someone. The priest doesn't take a life jacket or flotation device with him; he takes himself to the person who is hurting or the person who is celebrating. When he takes himself to the person who is hurting or celebrating, or any time he comes in contact with a person, he is doing ministry of presence.

Input

Use examples from the last two days' lesson plans about how the priest is with people in their good moments and in their bad moments. If possible, use examples the children would have written about in their reflection papers. Rotate between good and bad events a priest may face in a day. It seems like this would be very tiring to be very happy with a group of people at say a baptism then very sad with a person who is planning a funeral for someone who lost a loved one.

Remember, the priest brings himself and that is called ministry of presence, but really, who does the priest bring to the situation... they are not there for themselves, who do they represent? Jesus! Then, a lot of times is it really the person who happens to be the priests' business? No. Whether celebrating or deeply sad or just going through an event that doesn't have any feelings, the person wants the words of Jesus Christ. So, yes, the priest knows which words to choose and knows how to present himself (think about it; you would act differently at a birthday party than you would at a funeral) but, because he is like the lifeguard who helps the person, he doesn't get his own feelings or emotions real wrapped up in to the situation so much so that it destroys his sense of trust in God at the end of the day. Father definitely cares and is definitely feeling the feelings in the room whether good or bad, but he is more calm than those celebrating or those mourning. Why? Two reasons: 1) He is really bringing Christ to these people more than he is himself 2) He is the lifeguard who doesn't want to be in the same situation as the one who he reached out to otherwise he will not be as affective.

How does he do that? How is he able to really celebrate with a family who is baptizing their baby and really grieve with a family who is preparing for a funeral? Isn't he just pretending or doesn't he really care? He is not pretending and he really does care. He keeps himself healthy by being calm and bringing Christ to the people because you can only bring to people what you already have.

The priest has to have a good relationship with Jesus Christ or else he won't be able to bring Christ to the people. The priest can't bring what he doesn't have and at the same time said another way, if the priest has Christ, he can bring Christ. So, that the priest prays in the morning and prays several times a day helps him bring Christ. When the priest gets ready for his next

event of the day: baptism, funeral preparation, the priest offers a prayer for the event and family in the event. When the family arrives, the priest offers another prayer this time with the family. Then, as the event goes along, the priest can offer silent or spoken prayers whichever is better for the situation. And, as the family leaves the priest prays with the family; then after they leave he prays again and finally the next time he stops for formal prayer time, he offers them in prayer again. Because people get heavy and the lifeguard only brings one person to shore at a time, the priest only deals with one person at a time. Once the person is brought safely to shore, it is time to think about and pray about the next person to be moved to shore. If the priest continues to think about everyone and every situation and feel the same amount of feelings as the people in the situation feel, the priest will begin to sink and then he won't be helpful to anyone. He will also forget that it is about bringing Christ to these people.

Checking for understanding

Let's name some more ways priests offer ministry of presence to people.

Independent practice

Assignment: People often say that they don't want to be priests because the priest has to get too caught up in the difficulties of everyone's lives. After what you have learned this week, what ways can a priest be very affective as a priest yet not take on the problems that people are dealing with?