**THE HISTORY OF THE VOCATIONS CHALICE**

**PARISH PROGRAM**

The vocations chalice was the inspiration of Fr. George Zeck who was Pastor of the tri-parishes of Our Lady of Lourdes (Pine River), St. Alice (Pequot Lakes), and St. Christopher’s (Nisswa). The three separate parishes were merged into a single parish now named Our Lady of the Lakes. In the year 1999 Fr. George asked a parishioner to make 3 boxes for traveling chalices, one for each parish. Each chalice is blessed and placed in the box for display and safe transporting. The intention is to bring into our homes deliberate and thoughtful prayer for vocations to the priesthood and religious life. Fr. George’s successor, Fr. Mike Patullo, continued with the inspired program with the dedicated assistance of devoted parishioners.

Every Sunday a different parishioner takes the chalice and displays it in their home, as a reminder to pray for vocations. It can be displayed in a living room where family may gather to pray, near the dinner table as a good reminder to pray before or after your meal, or in your prayer room, some place significant. Having the vocations chalice displayed in a prominent place in our homes helps remind us to pray for vocations; it is a good visual for children and young adults to see. Whatever works for your family. It is meant for all ages, grandparents can pray for their grandchildren, parents for their children, single people for the parish or a friend. The busy family may only have time to pray an Our Father and Hail Mary with the intentions of vocations, while the retired or grandparent may have more time to sit by the chalice and pray. The prayers are always heard. The following Sunday the vocations chalice is returned back to the church for the next person to take home.

How do we know praying for vocations works? In the little village of Lu, in northern Italy, it was the deepest desire of many mothers for one of their sons to become a priest or their daughters to place her life completely in God’s service. Under the direction of their parish priest they gathered every Tuesday for adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, asking the Lord for vocations. Through the trusting prayer of these mothers and the openness of the other parents, an atmosphere of deep joy and Christian piety developed in the families, making it much easier for the children to recognize their vocations.

From the tiny village of Lu came 323 vocations: 152 priests and 171 nuns; as many as 3 or 4 from one family. Our Lady of the Lakes has been blessed with 6 vocations: 4 to the priesthood, 1 sister and 1 to the consecrated life since beginning the vocation chalices.

It is now time for the spread of this inspired prayer ministry. The parishes of St. James and Holy Family will be the next two parishes in the Diocese of Duluth to begin praying for vocations in this manner. Bishop Felton blessed the two new vocations chalices in August of 2022.

Interested in having the Vocations Chalice in your home for a week? Simply complete the Interest Card and either place it in the collection basket or drop it off at the office. Our parish coordinators will contact you to let you know in advance when to pick up the chalice.

“The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few;

pray therefore the Lord of the harvest to send

out laborers into his harvest.” Luke 10:2-3