



# The Maronite Voice

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## ***Priesthood Sunday is a Day to Reflect upon and Affirm the Role of the Priesthood in the Life of the Church***

*Dear Friends,*

During the year we honor different people at different occasions. We celebrate Mother's Day on the second Sunday of May to honor our mothers and express our appreciation for their love and care. We celebrate Father's Day on the third Sunday of June to honor our fathers and to show our gratitude for their hard work and dedication. There is also Teacher's Day, Secretary's Day, Veterans' Day, as well as national holidays such as Independence Day, Thanksgiving Day, Labor Day and many other various celebrations and commemorations to reflect upon the importance of the ministry and the messages behind them.

In all of these days there is no special day set aside for priests, the spiritual fathers who dedicate their lives for others. Therefore, the USA Council of Serra International came up with the idea last year to express their appreciation for the hard working priests who dedicated themselves to serve the people of God. It is the intention that Priesthood Sunday, October 26, 2008, would be a special day set aside to honor priests in the United States. It is a day to reflect upon and affirm the role of the priesthood in the life of the Church. The priest has the role of the leader that brings people to God, the role of the minister of the Sacraments to dispense God's graces to the faithful, the role of the servant who attends to the needs of his flock and the role of the teacher who preaches the Truth and educates the people in the ways of the Lord.

The Sedro for the Ordination Liturgy of the Priest reflects this role beautifully:

“You have given your servant a holy calling;  
may he be a steward of your divine mysteries,  
a chosen priest and a trustworthy leader,  
a spiritual guide adorned with chastity,  
a teacher wise in all virtue for the sake of your flock,  
a ministry priest, alert and diligent,  
who has been entrusted with the keys of the heavenly kingdom.”

Priesthood Sunday will also offer an opportunity for priests and their parishioners to build a stronger working relationship for the future. Together, they can discuss the various challenges that are encountered in the lives of the priests and support them in their effort to overcome them. Together, they squash any negative criticism and focus on up-building the Church, the bride of Christ.

Together, Bishop Gregory and I take this opportunity to extend our heartfelt thanks to all the priests working in our Maronite Church of the U.S.A. They have given their lives for the service of God and the service of the people. We urge all of you to keep the priests in your prayers, not only that Sunday but all year round, to show your appreciation for their service in words and in deeds and to encourage young men to answer the call to the priesthood and religious life. Therefore, our Church will remain a beacon of hope and a spring of salvation for all. □

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