

Just say yes to God's invitation



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I concluded my last article on this subject saying you can be a Lay Apostle, and "if there is none [such prayer group] to be found, perhaps you could consider beginning your own," with the approval of your pastor. All you have to do is say yes to God's invitation to serve Him. Your religious education or affiliation doesn't matter, neither does anything you have done in your past life. All that matters is your willingness to serve.

Lay Apostles walk closely with Jesus every day. The first goal is the personal movement toward unity with Jesus, concentrating first on their own holiness and the perfection of their own souls. They do this through their vocations as mothers, fathers, priests, religious, single people, daughters, sons, sisters and brothers.

They serve Jesus through service to others, and learn to love Jesus through loving others. They become united with Jesus by treating others with His love and gentleness, and try to make this world a heavenly kingdom by bringing kindness back into it.

Some souls pray a great deal but do not love. This is not unity to Christ, but unity to prayer. The goal of prayer is unity with Christ, and Christ is love. Prayer brings us to love, to softer hearts, to forgiveness, and to patient service to others.

Some apostles will be called to spread the Volumes, as it is called, some to support the mission in prayer, and some to suffer in obscurity, with only Jesus as the witness to their souls' constant progress. Everyone will be called. Everyone is chosen to serve.

As Jesus said to Anne: "Do not ask if you are called to serve. Assume you are called to serve. The fruits of this mission are magnificent and will increase daily. Serve, My beloved apostles, serve."

If you feel called to share this mission with those around you, consider giving a presentation in your local area, but always in agreement with your pastor. This type of grassroots effort has already helped to spread the mission around the world. Jesus will help you. His Spirit will open the hearts of those who are called to serve.

You will find most people hungry for God's love. Every time you speak of the messages, you are as much an apostle as the original Twelve sent by Jesus to bring His Word to villages and towns across Judea and Galilee.

In my previous article I also described the five guidelines to becoming a Lay apostle:

- Saying the Allegiance Prayer: Dear God in heaven, I pledge my allegiance to You. I give You my life, my work and my heart. In turn, give me the grace of obeying Your every direction to the fullest extent; and saying the Morning Offering: O Jesus,

through the Immaculate Heart of Mary, I offer You all my prayers, works, joys, and sufferings of this day for all the intentions of Your Sacred Heart, in union with the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass offered throughout the world, in reparation for my sins, and for the intentions of the Holy Father. Amen.

- One hour of Eucharistic Adoration each week.
- Participating in a monthly prayer group.
- Confession once a month.
- Being committed to following Jesus.

Many may like to know some facts about Anne's life. The Lay Apostles know that Anne was asked by our Blessed Mother to remain anonymous to be able to live her vocation fully. We do not know her family name, but we know that she was originally from Chicago, Ill., and is now living in Ireland.

Anne is a simple woman with ordinary problems. At the age of 20 she was divorced, and her first marriage was declared null for serious reasons. Although she was not fervent in her faith earlier, in her mid-20s, while she was a single parent working and bringing up a daughter, she suddenly became a more devout Catholic

and a daily communicant.

She saw her faith as sustaining, and began a journey towards unity with Jesus through the Secular Franciscan Order. She experienced various levels of deepened prayer, including a dream of the Blessed Mother who asked her if she would work for Christ.

During the dream she told Anne that this spiritual work would mean she would be separated from others in the world, and also from her extended family. This did not worry Anne, and she agreed to do anything that was asked of her.

Shortly after Anne started suffering from endometriosis, and she has been ill ever since with one thing or another. Her sicknesses were always the types that mystify doctors in the beginning. Anne regarded this as part of her cross, and mentions it in her biography because she knew that so many suffer in the same way.

She was told by her doctor that she would never conceive children. Since she was a single parent, this did not concern her, and she assumed it was God's will. Soon after, though, she met a wonderful man, and since her first marriage had been annulled and she was free, they got married and had five children. □