

A Sanctifying Presence

**Baptism makes us sharers in Christ's holiness.
Our daily lives thus become a means
through which the holiness of Christ
sanctifies the world.**

Your Experience

Name a time when your presence, words or actions helped someone experience the sacred or holy.

Name a relationship where your guidance has helped someone grow as a person of faith.

What Vatican II Says

They [the laity] are called there by God that by exercising their proper function and led by the spirit of the Gospel they may work for the sanctification of the world from within as a leaven. In this way they may make Christ known to others, especially by the testimony of a life resplendent in faith, hope and charity. *Dogmatic Constitution on the Church (Lumen Gentium) No. 31.*

[The Laity] exercise the apostolate in fact by their activity directed to the evangelization and sanctification of [peoples] and to the penetrating and perfecting of the temporal order through the spirit of the Gospel. In this way, their temporal activity openly bears witness to Christ and promotes the salvation of [peoples]. Since the laity, in accordance with their state of life, live in the midst of the world and its concerns, they are called by God to exercise their apostolate in the world like leaven, with the ardor of the spirit of Christ.

Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity, (Apostolicam Actuositatem) No. 2

What the Catechism Says

Hence the laity, dedicated as they are to Christ and anointed by the Holy Spirit, are marvellously called and prepared so that even richer fruits of the Spirit maybe produced in them. For all their works, prayers, and apostolic undertakings, family and married life, daily work, relaxation of mind and body, if they are accomplished in the Spirit - indeed even the hardships of life if patiently born - all these become spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. In the celebration of the Eucharist these may most fittingly be offered to the Father along with the body of the Lord. and so, worshipping everywhere by their holy actions, the laity consecrate the world itself to God, everywhere offering worship by the holiness of their lives." (CCC 901)

In a very special way, parents share in the office of sanctifying "by leading a conjugal life in the Christian spirit and by seeing to the Christian education of their children." (CCC 902)

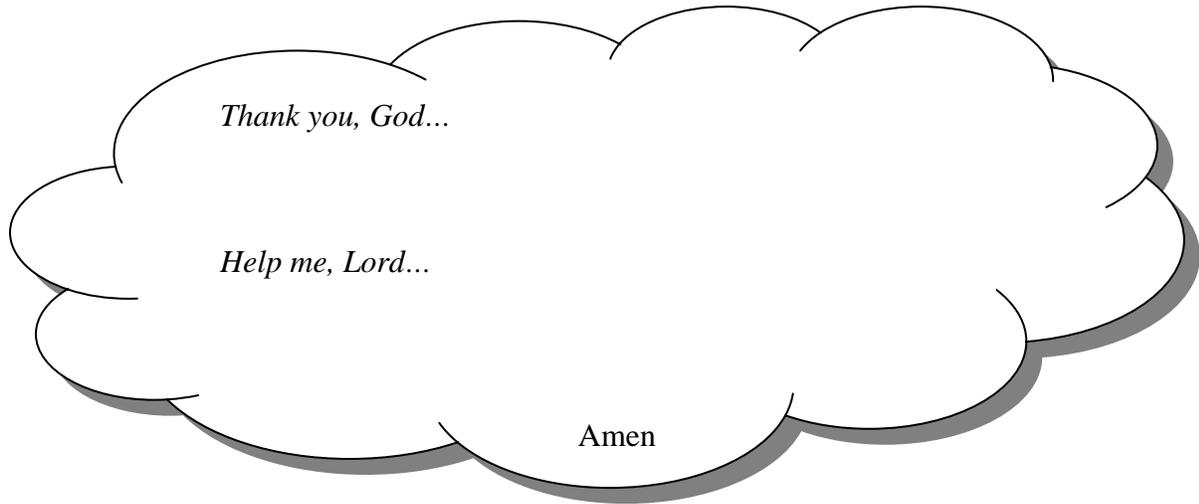
Your Experience

Name a practice you or a family member has done that has helped bring a sense of the holy into your family life.

Praying Your Experience

You have been reflecting on your call
to bring Christ's baptismal gift of holiness,
to the world.

Please use the space below to bring to God what is in your heart.



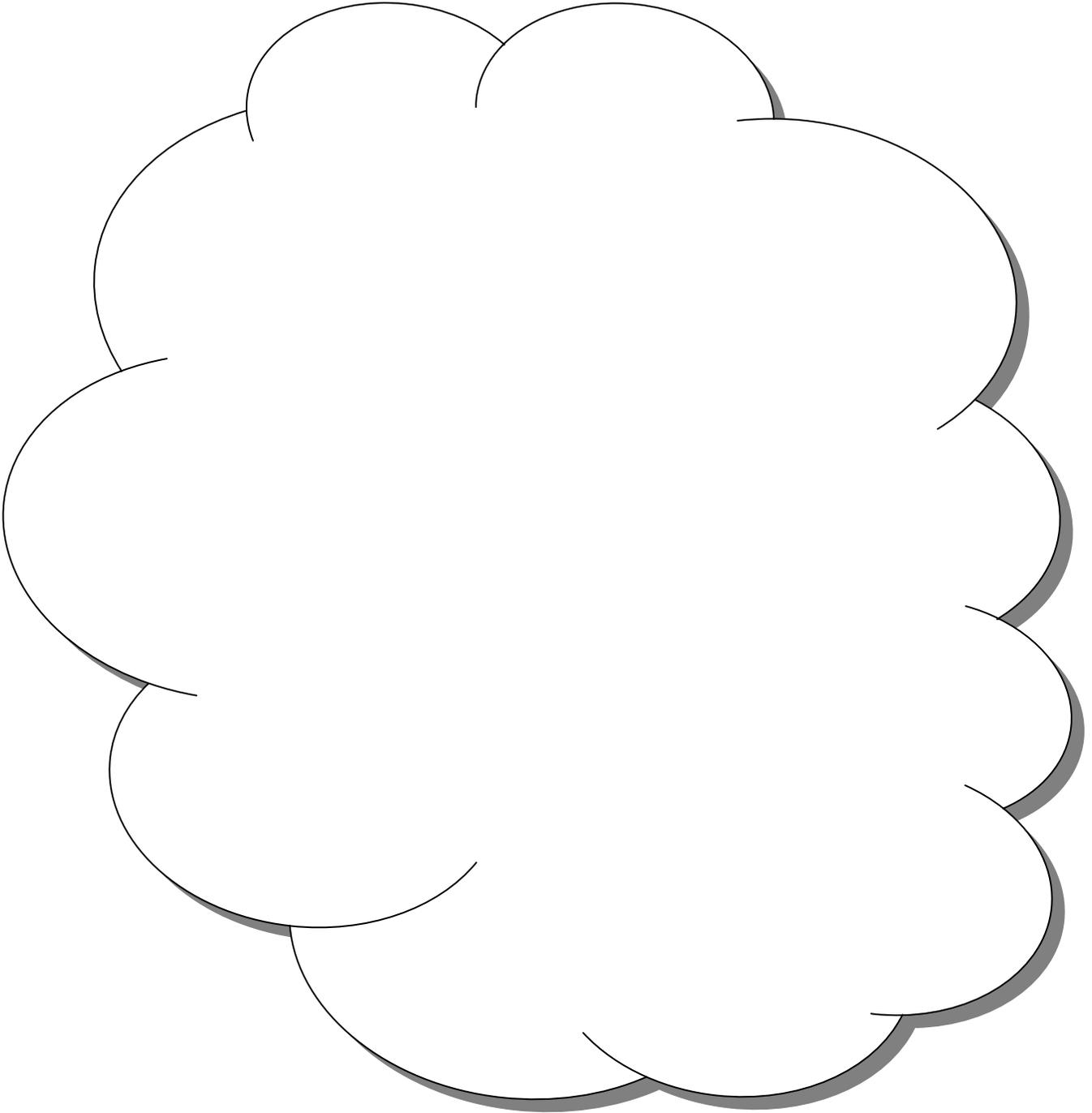
Thank you, God...

Help me, Lord...

Amen

Integrating Activity

Draw an image or write a poem, word or phrase
that reflects what it means for you
to be called to share Christ's holiness
with the world.



Further Reading

We come to a full sense of the dignity of the lay faithful if we consider *the prime and fundamental vocation* that the Father assigns to each of them in Jesus Christ through the Holy Spirit: the vocation to holiness, that is, the perfection of charity. Holiness is the greatest testimony of the dignity conferred on a disciple of Christ.

Pope John Paul II, Apostolic Exhortation *On the Mission and Vocation of the Lay Faithful (Christifideles Laici)*, 1988. No. 16.

The ways of holiness are many, according to the vocation of each individual. I thank the Lord that in these years he has enabled me to beatify and canonize a large number of Christians, and among them many lay people who attained holiness in the most ordinary circumstances of life. The time has come to re-propose wholeheartedly to everyone this *high standard of ordinary Christian living*: the whole life of the Christian community and of Christian families must lead in this direction.

Pope John Paul II, Apostolic Letter *Novo Millennio Ineunte*, 2001. No 31.

[Y]ou are called today to renew your commitment to walking on the way of holiness, keeping up your intense life of prayer, encouraging and respecting personal ways of faith and making the most of the riches of each one, with the guidance of your priest-chaplains and those in charge who can teach ecclesial and social co-responsibility. May your life be “transparent”, orientated by the Gospel and illumined by the encounter with Christ, loved and followed without fear. **Pope Benedict XVI, Message on the Occasion of the Sixth Ordinary Assembly of the International Forum of Catholic Action. Castelgandolfo, August 10, 2012.**