

Dear All Louisiana Priests,

In 2013, the Clarion Herald, the official newspaper of the Archdiocese of New Orleans, published a well-received, special supplement in conjunction with the Louisiana Priests' Convention.

The Clarion Herald will publish a similar supplement on September 9, 2017, distributed to readers and to all priests at the September 19-21, 2017, convention in New Orleans.

The Clarion Herald is soliciting columns (**500-600 words**) from priests across Louisiana about some aspect of their priesthood. The topic or theme is up to each priest contributor.

A general theme might be: What challenges and blessings have you experienced in your ministry as a priest?

DEADLINE: FRIDAY, AUGUST 18, 2017. Send column and a color mugshot to pfinney@clarionherald.org.

Here are other possible topics:

- Pope Francis has said many thought-provoking things about the ministry of the priesthood. What has resonated with you? What has challenged you?
- How has Pope Francis transformed your ministry?
- Young parochial vicar: What they didn't teach me in the seminary!
- A priest with two or three parishes as his responsibility: How can a multi-parish pastor make it all work? What are the challenges and the blessings? How do you split yourself into two or three?
- A retired priest remaining active in ministry but without the pastoral responsibilities of keeping the roof fixed. Is this a freeing experience? Do you finally feel as though you can be a "priest" without having those other things to worry about?
- Annulments. This is a very sensitive issue. Can someone write about this from a pastoral approach?
- Generational issues: Through the eyes of an older priest, how does he view the younger priests who have a deep devotion to some of the traditions of the church, such as the Latin Mass? This would have to be carefully written so that it doesn't come off as an attack of any kind.
- Generational issues: The same thing, through the eyes of a millennial priest.
- How difficult is the challenge of maintaining a prayer life when there are so many things to do and people to minister to during the day?
- How important has it been to keep good relationships with priest-friends? Support groups among priests?
- What is the most important thing in preparing and delivering good, effective homilies?
- Priests hobbies: What do priests do to kick back and relax? Are there any priests with unusual, off-the-beaten-track hobbies or interests?
- Give a capsule summary: Five books every Catholic should read.
- The saint or Catholic author or book of the Bible that changed your life.
- Write about a lay person or lay couple or family that has inspired you to persevere in your own vocation or to be a better priest?
- How do priests remember everyone's name? Everyone knows the priest's name ... he must learn everyone else's!
- The role of family and the priesthood?

- Through the eyes of an older priest: What were your expectations when you were ordained, and how has that changed during your years in ministry. (Personal stories would be great).

- Tell us your favorite wedding (almost) disaster stories. Mothers of the bride gone wild ... the fainting groom ... someone once said the goal of a wedding coordinator is to keep the mother of the bride away from the bride before the wedding.

- When did someone – maybe a child – teach you something profound when you least expected it?

- What was the most powerful funeral Mass that you celebrated? Most powerful wedding liturgy?

- How did you discern your own vocation to the priesthood? How did you know you were called?

- How do you encounter God outside the liturgy?

- We all share in some element of priesthood. What is that shared priesthood? How would that be described?

- How or do priests participate in continuing religious education after their priestly ordination?

- Was there an inspirational seminary teacher, priest or preacher who helped you form the type of homilist you wanted to be?

- How do you prepare for a homily at Mass? How do you prepare for any of the sacraments (i.e.: personal reflection on how you prepare to hear confession)?

- How did a religious sister or brother shape your faith and inspire your vocation?

- How did serving as an altar server influence your vocation and what do you think about the current ranks of altar servers?

- Has a re-emphasis on Scripture brought new life to your parish ministries?