



**Our Catholic Schools' Week
9 – 13 October 2017**

The Universal Call to Holiness



St Edward the Confessor

Daily Reflections for Staff

Introduction

- **The universal call to holiness:** God the Father calls us to listen to his Son, to be baptised in the Holy Spirit and to live as disciples of Christ.
- **The call to a way of life:** as a disciple of Christ we express our faith, hope and love through our everyday living in relation to each other and to God.
- **The call to work:** God calls us to many different kinds of work, ranging from paid work to care of family members. Work on its own does not give meaning to life however; it is human beings who make work meaningful.

It is by integrating all three elements that we become the person God is calling us to be.

By the grace of God we are enabled to live out our unique vocation. In the words of Blessed John Henry Newman: 'God has created me to do Him some definite service.'

What follows is a short reflection on the universal call to holiness with a simple response and prayer.

Monday

**'But just as he who called you is holy,
so be holy in all you do. Be holy because I am holy.
(1 Peter 1.15- 16)**

Reflection:

Holiness is not just for bishops and priests and nuns.
God calls everyone to holiness.
God call us to be holy, to be like him in all that we do.
Holiness is a journey to God's presence.
It's my journey – no one else's.
The path to holiness takes courage!

Response:

What does it mean to be holy?
Do I have the courage to continue my journey to be like God
in all that I do?

Prayer:

Loving God,
I offer my life to you today.
Give me all that I need to live a life worthy of your call.
Amen

Tuesday

**'Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things'
(Col. 3.2)**

Reflection:

Holiness is integral to our everyday lives. Being holy frees us from the unhealthy attachment to earthly things and it keeps our focus on loving God and our neighbour through simple things like spending time with our families, serving our communities and working hard in our jobs. Being holy helps us to do everything for the glory of God

Response:

What attachments do I have that prevent me from responding fully to the call to holiness?

Prayer:

Loving God,
give me the grace today to love you and my neighbour through simple thoughts, words, actions and deeds.
Amen

Wednesday

**'Christ so loved the world that he gave himself up
for the world'
(Eph. 5.25 – 27)**

Reflection:

Holiness is a gift from God. It is not something we can achieve on our own. Jesus suffered and died on the cross to make us holy.

Pope Francis reminds us that we are called to be saints not by praying all day every day but by living out our everyday lives in love and Christian witness.

Response:

How open and responsive am I to God's gift of holiness?

Prayer:

Loving God,
give us an open heart to receive your grace
and the courage to live out our belief on a daily basis
Amen

Thursday

**'Be confident of this, that he who began this work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Jesus comes'
(Phil.1.6)**

Reflection:

Holiness is a life-long process. We don't achieve it and remain in that state. Sometimes we fail but we can take comfort in God's forgiveness and in knowing that we are a work in progress.

Response:

God's forgiveness is given readily and freely.
How ready am I to forgive myself and others?

Prayer:

Loving God,
give us the strength to get up again when we fall.
Allow us to be strength for those around us
and to do the same for them.
Amen

Friday

**'Give up your old way of life, renew your mind
and put on the new self, created in God's way,
in the goodness and holiness of the truth'
(Eph. 4.21 – 24)**

Reflection:

Conversion isn't about beating ourselves up for doing something wrong but little conversions.

For example every time there is an urge to gossip or demean someone Pope Francis encourages us to bite our tongue and to move forward with fortitude.

God calls us to be holy and to grow in holiness every day. If we do this we will certainly achieve true happiness in our lives.

Response:

What small conversion could I make today?

What small conversion could we agree to do as a staff?

Prayer:

Loving God,
give us the courage to stand out from the crowd,
to be the voice of hope when all around us despair.
Amen

Called to Become

You are called to become a perfect creation.
No one is called to become who you are called to be.
It does not matter how short or tall
or thickset or slow you may be.

It does not matter whether you sparkle with life
or are silent as a still pool,
whether you sing your song aloud
or weep alone in darkness.

It does not matter
whether you feel loved and admired or unloved and alone,
for you are called to become a perfect creation.

No one's shadow should cloud your becoming.
No one's light should dispel your spark.
For God delights in you, jealously looks upon you,
and encourages with gentle joy
every movement of the Spirit within you.

Unique and loved you stand,
beautiful or stunted in your growth,
but never without hope and life.
For you are called to become a perfect creation.

This becoming may be gentle or harsh, subtle or violent,
but it never ceases, never pauses or hesitates,
only is – creative force – calling you.
Calling you to become a perfect creation.

(By Edwina Gately)