*Host or designated reader/leader begins the Upper Room prayer hour by reading this message from Fr. David:*

**Message for August 2018**

Dear Friends in Christ;

The final sacrament we deal with is Holy Orders. It’s the one that is most forgotten. It is of the utmost in importance, however, because the Bishop, the Priest and (or) Deacon bring the sacraments to us (the signs and reality of God’s presence in the world). I want to focus this Upper Room on the three Evangelical Counsels also called Counsels of Perfection which are at the heart of every religious vocation. The Counsels are poverty, chastity and obedience.

Fr. David

*Open with Sign of Cross and the:*

**Prayer to the Holy Spirit**

L: **Come, O Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of Your faithful, and enkindle in them the fire of your love. Send forth Your Spirit, O Lord, and they shall be created.**

R: And You shall renew the face of the earth

L: **Let us pray – God our Father, pour out the gifts of your Holy Spirit on the world. You sent the Spirit on Your Church to begin the teaching of the Gospel; now let the Spirit continue to work in the world through the hearts of all who believe. Through Christ our Lord.**

R: Amen

L: **You, O lord, will open my lips.**

R: And my tongue shall announce Your praise.

L: **Incline unto my aid, O God.**

R: O Lord, make haste to help me.

L: **Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit**.

R: As it was in the beginning is now and ever shall be world without end. Amen

**Read and Discuss**

*Read Mark 10:17-22*

* What is the most common thing that people desire?
* Why isn’t holiness that thing?
* What can you do about downsizing your world view and increasing the Kingdom of God?

*Read CCC 915-916 & 1973-1974*

* Why do these three counsels (Poverty, Chastity, and Obedience) define **consecration** to God and not the virtues of faith, hope and love?
* Why do these counsels need to be lived within the context of a “structured life” to be real?
* Intimacy is referred to herein #916; how do the counsels of poverty, chastity and obedience accomplish a true feeling of closeness to God?
* The perfection of the Christian Life or the perfection of living out the New Law is charity and the Evangelical Counsels are “charities” markers. In your life which marker is the most difficult to achieve?

*In conclusion:*

* Can you be poor and have money? discuss
* Can you be chaste and have sex? discuss
* Can you be obedient and still have your own way? discuss
* Why does the Church demand a vow or a solemn promise be taken by its clergy and religious? How are the Counsels essentially different from any lay person who may want to live them out?
* Does the Church require or desire for lay people to live out the Evangelical Counsels? Why or why not? Is the answer “to some degree?” To what degree?
* Holy Orders brings order to the chaos of sin in the world. How does equipping a man or a woman with the evangelical counsels make them more ready to fight this battle?
* Have a discussion about Priestly Celibacy. It’s a discipline in the Church. How does it benefit the celibate male or female practically and spiritually?
* What is the most difficult of the three Counsels to live out?
* Why can Diocesan Priests own and buy things and Religious Order Priests and Nuns cannot?
* Humility is key to the practice of the Counsels? Discuss, then pray Litany.

The Litany of Humility

O Jesus, meek and humble of heart,   
*Hear me.*   
From the desire of being esteemed,   
*Deliver me, O Jesus.*   
From the desire of being loved,   
*Deliver me, O Jesus.*   
From the desire of being extolled, *etc.*   
From the desire of being honored,   
From the desire of being praised,   
From the desire of being preferred to others,   
From the desire of being consulted,   
From the desire of being approved,   
From the fear of being humiliated,   
From the fear of being despised,   
From the fear of suffering rebukes,   
From the fear of being calumniated,   
From the fear of being forgotten,   
From the fear of being ridiculed,   
From the fear of being wronged,   
From the fear of being suspected,

That others may be loved more than I,   
*Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.*   
That others may be esteemed more than I,   
*Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.*   
That, in the opinion of the world, others may increase   
and I may decrease, *etc.*   
That others may be chosen and I set aside,   
That others may be praised and I go unnoticed,   
That others may be preferred to me in everything,  
That others may become holier than I,   
provided that I may become as holy as I should,

**Sign of the Cross - Our Father – Hail Mary – Glory Be – Sign of the Cross**

*Next month’s UPPER ROOM is on the first of Jesus’ Titles in the Gospel of John*