



Diocese of Northampton

YEAR of PRAYER
and VOCATION
2017/2018



Prayer for June:
St Columba's Prayer (adapted)

O Lord, grant us that love which can never die, which will enkindle our lamps but not extinguish them, so that they may shine in us and bring light to others, and that they may shine forever in your temple.
Amen

“That is why I am reminding you now to fan into a flame the gift of God that you possess through the laying on of my hands.

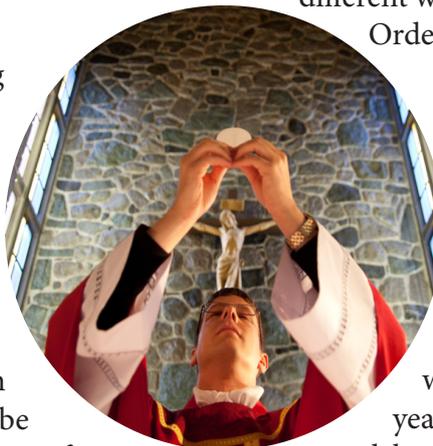
2 Timothy 1:6

We are used these days to finding shopping trolleys dumped in water. What if you were to find expensive cars like Ferraris and precious items like Rolex watches deliberately broken and sunk in rivers and lakes? Well, this was exactly what ancient peoples of north Europe did. Except they chose what was most precious to them - their polished swords, shields, jewellery, and so on - to throw broken into waters as an offering to their gods. Sacrifice is a deep human instinct which true religion directs towards God.

sacrifice. By these sacrifices, the people sought the forgiveness and blessing of God. The place of sacrifice was eventually at the Temple in Jerusalem.

As the new Israel, the Church has only one priest: Jesus Christ. He offered himself in one perfect sacrifice so that through him we may find forgiveness and communion in God. All in the Catholic Church participate in the one priesthood of Christ, whether through Baptism or in a different way through the Sacrament of Holy Orders.

Priests are go-betweens, offering sacrifice to God on behalf of the people. God chose Israel to be a priestly nation, so that through Israel other nations could bless themselves. But a nation must be made holy if it is to be holy for others. In the heart of Israel was another order of priesthood drawn from the family of Aaron of the tribe of Levi. People brought them the best of their flocks and the first fruits of their harvests for



We pray this month especially for those ordained as deacons, priests and bishops. May they be fruitful in their ministry to build up the Church. We also pray for lay ministers who serve the Church in various ways. Finally, we thank God for Bishop Peter's 50 years of priestly ministry and for priests celebrating significant anniversaries this year at the Jubilarians' Mass on June 8th.

School Feast Days

Please pray this month for Sacred Heart, Luton, St Anthony Slough, Bishop Parker Milton Keynes, St John Rigby Bedford, St Thomas More Bedford, St Louis Aylesbury and St Peter Marlow.

A Practical Suggestion

Lay ministers are Catholic Christians who are not ordained priests but who serve the Church in a special way. Do you know of any lay ministers working in your school or parish?
Talk about this with your teacher and others.