

## Day 4 — The Priesthood

*Text from the Bible*

**Heb 5:1-3**

*+In the name of the Father*

*Preparatory prayer*

God, our Father,  
you gave Father Richard Henkes the strength  
to resist evil,  
to speak for love and truth  
and to follow Jesus Christ on his way of the cross  
until death.  
His dedication to others  
gives us hope and strength  
for our faith journey today.  
We ask you, Father, in the Holy Spirit  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

*Text from Fr. Henkes*

Richard Henkes writes before his ordination to the priesthood:

I have pondered my whole life about the relationship between the ideal and reality and always sought a balance between them that I have never found. It will probably be in the future as I've already experienced: the hardest and most dangerous hours will be those in which my expectations deceive me for the first time. I have already tried to temper my expectation of the priesthood so that - even if disappointment is present - it is far away. My strongest desire is sacrificial devotion for love. Mainly, I want to become a sacrificial priest, a cross bearer for others. I must refine this devotion in order to transcend what is earthly. [...]

It is quite strange to me lately. If I balance the work of my personal-sanctification with my apostolate, then a very certain basic mood comes about. I realize that I cannot sanctify myself (Which I've learned through experience!!). God must send His grace; I have to listen to his voice, to cooperate with his work. In God's work on others: I can do nothing. God works with his grace, I can only be a soul sacrifice for others, a cross bearer, a lightning rod of God's wrath; if I repent on behalf of other people, then the way is ready for God's grace. I used to want to do everything alone, now I see that I can do nothing; but one thing I can do is become an oblation for others. [...]

*Silence for reflection and for personal intercessions*

*Our Father...*

*Hail Mary...*

*Glory be...*