

Ever Want to Be King for a Day?

DECREE ON THE APOSTOLATE OF THE LAITY

Most of us lay people define ourselves by what we are not: ordained or in a religious community. Yet, what does it mean to be a layperson? Most importantly, it means we are baptized. Once we're immersed in the life of Jesus at baptism, we're on a mission from God. We participate in this mission through His sacred offices of priest, prophet and king.

Priest: God wants us to offer sacrifices. (1 Peter 2:5). When our lives are offered to God and mixed with the sufferings of Jesus, we become more like Jesus. This makes us a vital energizing force for good in the world (Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity 4).

Prophet: God has sent us, like the prophets of the Old Testament, to be examples of hope. This means that the most important thing in our lives is heaven for ourselves and for those around us. It also means that we are confident that God will help us to make the decisions that will lead us to Him.

King: Have you ever wanted to be king for day? A king fights and serves. We are kings when we fight daily to stay close to God through prayer. Then we are able to avoid the things that distract and trap us (sin). We are kings when we think about how we can help other people.

Perhaps you've heard someone say, "you don't go to heaven (or hell) alone." That's where apostolate comes in. If we are baptized, and especially if we are confirmed, our lives are all about helping others meet and stay close to God so that we –and they- will be happy forever. We grow closer to God, first of all, through prayer and study. During the upcoming *Year of Faith* members of the lay faithful are encouraged to [read](#) and [study](#) the documents of Vatican II.

According to Vatican II, it is our job as Catholic laity to "throw light upon" this world. Who in our lives might have no person other than ourselves to be a witness to the truth of the Gospel? Herein lays the specialness and uniqueness of our lay vocation. Priests and religious do not live within our families, neighborhoods, corporate offices, factories, etc. in the same way as you and I. "It is a fact that many individuals cannot hear the Gospel and come to acknowledge Christ except through the lay people they associate with" (Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity 13).

Finally, "the Council, then, makes to all the laity an earnest appeal in the Lord to give a willing, noble and enthusiastic response to the voice of Christ, who at this hour is summoning them more pressingly, and to the urging of the Holy Spirit" (Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity 33).

Q1: How do I stay close to God each day?

Q2: How is God calling me to "throw light upon" the world?

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