

The Role of a Priest

(00:00 – 03:00)

Basic Question

- ❑ According to the teachings of the Church, what is the most important role of the priest?

Key Idea

- ❑ Through the Sacrament of Holy Orders, the priest is ordained to act in the Person of Christ to offer sacrifice.

Beginning Reflection

Tell the participants that at the beginning of the DVD, they will see Monsignor Moroney relating a conversation he had with a group of enthusiastic seminarians to whom he asked the question, “What kind of a parish do you dream about when you’re ordained a priest?”

Ask each participant to turn to a person near to him or her and discuss the following question:

- ❑ Whether you are a priest, deacon, religious, or layperson, what kind of parish or Catholic community do you dream about?

Ask a few participants to share their ideas if they are comfortable doing so.

Then ask the participants to think about the following questions as they watch the first three minutes of the DVD:

- ❑ According to Msgr. Moroney, what are some of the roles that our secular culture tries to assign to the priesthood?
- ❑ Where is the real answer to the question of the role of the priest to be found?

Show DVD (00:00 – 03:00)

Activity

Group Discussion

Pause the DVD and ask the following question:

- ❑ According to Msgr. James Moroney, where do we best find the answer to the question of what the true role of the priest is?

The best answer is found in the Sacred Liturgy. It tells us the true role of the priest.

Point out that the Roman Missal tells us that

“the priest is the one presiding and acting in the person of Christ, possessing within the Church the power of Holy Orders, to offer sacrifice in the person of Christ.”

Additional Resources

Code of Canon Law, 1008

By divine institution, the sacrament of orders establishes some among the Christian faithful as sacred ministers through an indelible character which marks them. They are consecrated and designated, each according to his grade, to nourish the people of God, fulfilling in the person of Christ the Head the functions of teaching, sanctifying, and governing.

Directory on the Ministry and Life of Priests, 7

Acting *in persona Christi capitis*, the priest becomes the minister of the essential salvific actions, transmits the truths necessary for salvation and cares for the People of God, leading them towards sanctity.¹