

# Reflection on the Year of the Priest Logo

The Year of the Priest Logo brings together a number of symbols in a way that captures the essence of the priesthood. Notice first of all that the circle of the logo is incomplete; there is an opening there through which we are invited to enter and discover the riches within. This 'opening' expresses a central truth about a priest's life - he does not seek completion within marriage or through a career in the world, but leaves his life open to be filled and completed by Jesus, his Divine Spouse. Christ alone fills and completes human existence; without Him, the heart is empty and restless.

The opening in this circle can be seen also as an expression of the openness the priest is called to have towards others. His is not an existence that is hermetically sealed off from people: his is an existence for others. As Christ opened his heart to all, so the priest is called to open the door of his heart to the needs of humanity. As Christ's heart was pierced, so the heart of the priest will be pierced by the hostility and indifference of many. But in the bitterness of suffering, the priest is challenged not to allow his heart to become closed or harsh, but to remain open so that through his wounded heart; through the breach that has been made in his humanity, the grace of God acting through him can further Christ's work of redemption and reconciliation. This theme of reconciliation, so central to a priest's life, is brought out in the logo also through the colour purple. As the liturgical colour of reconciliation, purple is worn by the priest in his administration of the sacrament of Penance, through which we are reconciled to the Father and to the Church after sin weakens or even ruptures these bonds of communion. It is a colour that expresses not only the pain of separation but also the joy of coming home.

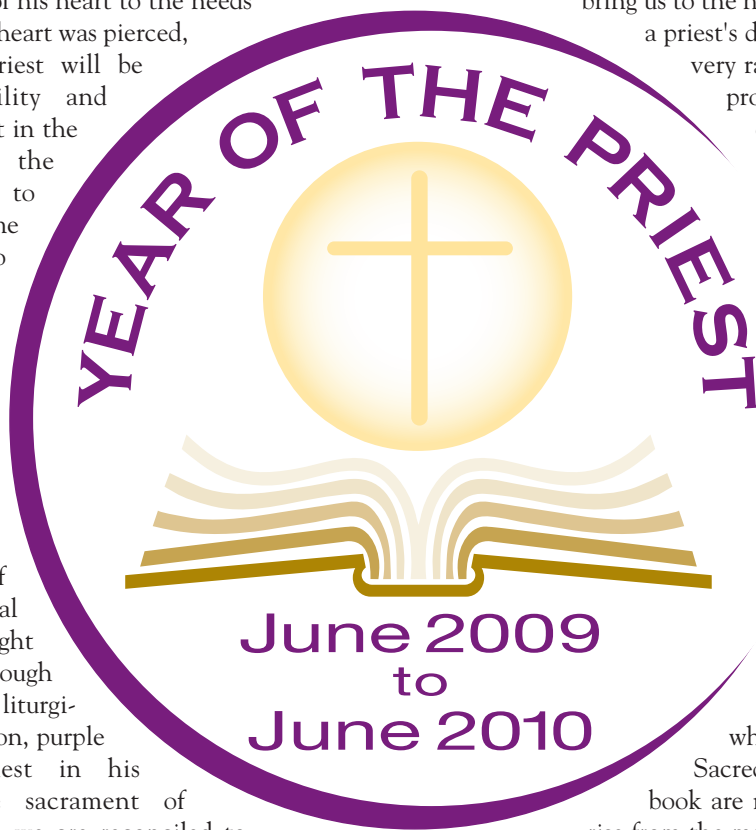
But since the work of reconciliation always passes through the cross, the colour purple is also the colour of penance. As the boundary colour on the logo, it serves as a reminder to priests that in the exercise of their ministry, penance imposes a necessary boundary on the whims and appetites of the self, without which, priestly ministry will lack fruitfulness.

Moving within the circle, we find an open book and a host scored with the sign of the cross. Once again, colour is

important and this time serves to bring out the deep connection between creation and revelation. The book represents the Sacred Scriptures with the colour brown predominating. It is a colour that represents the earth and the point that is being made here is that God spoke to us first through creation and then, in the fullness of time, the Word became flesh and dwelt among us on earth. This link between creation and revelation is further elucidated in the golden yellow of the host. It's a colour that draws our imagination to the fields of golden grain ready for harvest. It's a colour that also draws our eyes upwards to behold the golden rays of sunshine streaming from the sun. In both of these cases we have images of Christ - the grain of wheat ripe and ready for harvest and the sun that is the light of the world.

The book and the host - these are symbols, ultimately, that bring us to the heart of the matter - the heart of a priest's day, the heart of his life and the very *raison d'être* of his existence: to proclaim the Word of God and to offer up the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. These are the privileges that have been conferred upon him through sacred ordination and from these sacred fonts, his life and his mission will glean its momentum, will find its orientation, and will be animated by the power of divine love. Looking closer at each of these symbols we see first of all that the book lies open; a reminder that God is no longer a closed book for He has spoken and what He said has been written as Sacred Scripture. The pages of this book are not static but curling upwards, rise from the margins like wings. Its a powerful

image that articulates the truth of God's written word: it lifts us to the heights and bears us to the heavens. But it also articulates a challenge for priests - to unlock the power of God's word through their preaching, so that the hearts of those who listen may burn within them and rise to great heights. The host, finally, appears to rise from the pages of Scripture. It is a fitting image that expresses the unity of Word and Sacrament. At Mass, when the host is elevated, we know that the bridegroom is here. It is the Lord! We have the priest to thank for that for his 'yes' has enabled Jesus to become present on our altars. Through the priest, the Incarnation is sustained over time and enters into our time, our day, our parish Church, our lives, our community, our hearts.  
Deo gratias!



This logo has been designed for people to use free of charge to promote the Year of the Priest - Visit [www.worldpriest.com](http://www.worldpriest.com) for more resources.