

# This Year for Priests Faith Folder is Dedicated in Memory of Ryan Barrett

I have never met Ryan Barrett, or any member of his family. However, I have corresponded with his mother, Mary Ellen, online briefly. Through that brief encounter I was touched by her family. I did not know much about them and had just begun reading Mary Ellen's blog but I knew there was something special about this woman and her family. Then I checked her blog on the morning of Friday, August 14, 2009, and read an urgent prayer request. Mary Ellen's son Ryan was missing from a father-son camping trip. Shortly after reading that post I came across a post on a different blog that indicated Ryan had passed away. The cross postings and word of this family, their tragic loss and their beautiful son spread through the Catholic blogosphere and I became so drawn to and touched by this family. Ryan is autistic and his mother wrote beautifully about their life, his calling and their journey.

In April 2008 Mary Ellen wrote a very touching article at Catholic Exchange about Ryan's strong faith, devotion and love of the priesthood. Did Ryan have a vocation to the priesthood? Mary Ellen also wrote beautifully of their life with an autistic child, putting a tangible picture to autism through her words. Ryan's precious life may seem to have ended abruptly and too soon. Perhaps he could have been a priest. But as I learn more about this family and this precious young man, I think he is indeed a priest. God has a plan for each one of us and He is working through His young priest, Ryan Barrett, in ways many of us may never know. His life, death and Heavenly journey are touching the lives of so many. Ryan, like our ordained priests, is guiding the flock and bringing us closer to God.

I have been forever touched by Ryan, Mary Ellen and their family. Before this happened I had created the Year for Priests Faith Folder in recognition of Pope Benedict XVI's declaration of the special year from June 19, 2009 to June 19, 2010. This special year is meant to bolster the formation, spirituality and dedication of our priests. I believe Ryan Barrett's story will do just that.

In the following four pages you will read a few articles and blog postings by Mary Ellen and others about Ryan and the impact his life has made. (I hope I'm not infringing on any copyrights.) You will also find information about how to donate to two charities selected by the Barrett family in memory of Ryan. I encourage you to do so. I am donating 50% of all sales from the Year for Priests Faith Folder throughout this Year for Priests evenly between the two charities chosen by the family and am forever dedicating this Faith Folder to the memory of Ryan Barrett. Please keep Ryan and the Barrett family in your prayers.

God Bless and thank you for purchasing this Year for Priests Faith Folder.

Lindy Meyer

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This is from Mary Ellen Barrett in response to my request to make this dedication.

Dear Lindy,

Thank you so much for wanting to dedicate your beautiful Year of the Priest lapbook to Ryan. Dave and I are both touched and honored to have Ryan's name associated with such a beautiful tribute to our holy priests. At the funeral Mass the Bishop who confirmed Ryan asked us all to ask Ryan in heaven to intercede on behalf of vocations. Bishop Libasci said that we should wait for miracles from our "little priest".

This makes your generous gift of this dedication even more special to us. We will pray and ask Ryan to ask God to bless your work in a special way and place a calling to follow Christ in the hearts of many of the boys who create your lapbooks.

Thank you so much, dear Lindy. You have given us great comfort.

Blessings,

Mary Ellen