

# STEWARDSHIP OF PRAYER



*For even if I am absent in the flesh, yet I am with you in spirit, rejoicing as I observe your good order and the firmness of your faith in Christ. So, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, walk in him, rooted in him and built upon him and established in the faith as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving.*

~Colossians 2:5-7

## **Stewardship of prayer**

is the basis of all other facets of stewardship and is the firm foundation which makes all things possible in our parish. During this time of renewal, you are invited to reflect upon your personal prayer life, set prayer goals for the next 12 months, and make a private commitment using the commitment form enclosed in this packet.

St. Paul reminds us in his letter to the Ephesians:

***At every opportunity pray in the Spirit, using prayer and petitions of every sort. Pray constantly and attentively for all.***

~ Ephesians 6:18

## **HOW PRAYER WORKS IN OUR LIVES:**

1. Prayer opens our hearts, minds, and souls to God's teachings.
2. Prayer converts us from being self-centered to God-centered.
3. When prayer becomes an integral part of our lives, circumstances in our lives suddenly are no longer coincidences but God-incidences. We know He is always there with us walking hand in hand.
4. We look back on our lives and see clearly how God answered our prayers, sometimes in a way that was not at all expected. We recall the adage, "God might not always come when you call, but he always comes in time." When we pray, we know that God indeed answers prayer.
5. Prayer creates grace and blessings in our lives.
6. Prayer unites families, communities, and nations.
7. Prayer changes people and people change things.



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# THE GIFT OF PRAYER

In their pastoral letter, *Stewardship: A Disciple's Response*, the U.S. bishops state:

**The Christian steward is one who receives God's gifts gratefully, cherishes and tends them in a responsible and accountable manner, shares them in justice and love with others, and returns them with increase to the Lord.**

All we are and all we have is a gift from our Creator, for us to use wisely when building up God's kingdom here on earth.

It is said that **time is the most valuable of all resources**. You can't borrow more. You can't buy more. You can't store it away for a rainy day. Once it is gone, it is gone forever. The most common expression of love is spending time with one another. Giving time - our most precious resource - to another person is a tangible

time



expression of saying "I value you. I value our relationship. And, I want to give to you what I cannot give to anyone else, ever again - this moment, right now."

We were created to want to have a real connection with others, a real human connection with someone that leaves us changed. It's wired into who we are. **We desire that human connection** so much that we seek it out, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week on social media. We even call being on social media, "being connected."

connected

But are we really connected? Deep down, we want more. Being connected on a land line wasn't enough, so we made it possible to go mobile. Being connected on the Internet wasn't enough, so we made it wireless. Being



connected on the computer wasn't enough, so we made our notebooks and tablets connected, too. We are trying so hard to stay connected with each other electronically that we are missing the point. It's a REAL connection that keeps us searching. **A meaningful relationship is what we all want, but with whom?**

**What about God?** Do you spend as much time trying to connect with God as you do "connecting" on social media? How much more should we be developing an intimate relationship with God?

**Time spent in prayer is time spent with a best friend, THE best friend.** It is a never-ending conversation with God, the Almighty, Creator of Heaven and Earth, the great "I AM" ... and our loudest cheerleader. He offers Himself to you each week in the Mass, in the Holy Eucharist. He listens to you when you sob out your

friend

sorrows and He comforts you. He rejoices with you in your victories. He asks only that you spend some time with Him.



Spending time with God provides "quiet time" to contemplate what our relationship with God is and what it could become. It teaches us patience, as we learn to trust in God and His plan for us. **It gives us time to hear His voice in our**

**hearts and to respond to His call** for a true conversion of our hearts and our spirits.

If you want a true measure of what - or who - you value, ask yourself: When I have free time, how do I choose to spend it? Where do I choose to spend it? With whom do I choose to spend it?

By **making prayer the start and end of your day**, you are giving time to a relationship that should come before all other relationships in your life. Start the day by asking God for wisdom in your daily actions and interactions.

conversation

Thank Him for your abundant blessings. Starting the day this way puts you in the frame of mind that you truly are God's child and that He is with you. End the day by telling Him of your triumphs and failures, your great moments and your weak ones. Ask for His forgiveness and His blessing. Ending the day like this gives you peace of mind and of spirit.

