

October 27, 2019

WHAT TO PRAY FOR and HOW?

PRAY ALWAYS WITHOUT BECOMING WEARY! Never give up! Last weekend's readings remind us of the importance of PERSEVERANCE WHEN WE PRAY! In Luke's Gospel (18:1-8), Jesus uses the parable of the widow and the unjust judge to show the need for all of us to be perseverant in our prayers. If the dishonest judge gave a just decision in favor of the widow because of her persistence in asking for such a decision, "*will not God secure the rights of his chosen ones who call out to him day and night?*" Two weeks ago, our church was packed at the 11:30 am Mass. We had invited Fr. Martin Scott to preside at our Mass followed by Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and a HEALING Service. One could feel the presence of the HOLY SPIRIT! While people were praying and singing together in the church asking for God's healing, a large number also chose to avail themselves of the Sacrament of RECONCILIATION (Fr. Ben heard non-stop confessions for nearly four hours). SPIRITUAL HEALING is essential for all of us. As the soul and the body are "one", the healing of the soul (spiritual healing) and the healing of the body (physical healing) are closely connected.

As people were approaching me for healing at the end of the Mass, I asked them individually "WHAT DO YOU WANT TO PRAY FOR?" Many times it is not easy to know what we need to pray for. It is important that before praying for a particular intention, we spend some time in silence with the LORD and ask HIM : "LORD JESUS you know all the challenges I am facing today, and you alone (better than I) know exactly what grace I need to receive from you so as to face those challenges in a Christian Way. LORD JESUS, help me to understand my REALITY. LORD JESUS help me to know what to do. Without you, I am nothing. With you, I can do everything. LORD JESUS help me to know my littleness, my shortcomings, my sinfulness. Help me to do a good confession. Help me know the priority areas (physical, emotional, spiritual) that I need to pray for.

As we pray, let us always ask the HOLY SPIRIT for help. St Paul tells us (Romans 8:26-28): "*The Spirit comes to the aid of our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but the Spirit itself intercedes with inexpressible groaning... We know that all things work for good for those who love God...*" Prayer is a dialogue with God. Prayer is being aware of the Love of God in our lives, and responding to that Love in Faith, Hope and Love. While Faith is a Gift from God, it requires our remaining open to receive such Gift. Faith and Prayer are closely related and reinforce each other: while Faith is nourished through Prayer, Prayer also helps us increase our Faith.

I hope the above can assist you reflect on your own prayer life. God is always seeking our love. Since our baptism, we are all called to respond to God's love by loving Him and loving our

neighbor as ourselves. It is important to pray for our own intentions, but it is equally important to pray for the intentions of OTHERS so as to go out of ourselves and reach out to those in need around us. It also important we pray together as a Christian community. The power of communal prayer (daily and Sunday Mass, daily Rosary at church 8:30 am weekly and 7:30 am Sundays) can lead to miracles.

Do you believe in MIRACLES? I do and so does Naomi's mother. I have already talked to you in one of my homilies about NAOMI, a six-year old girl suffering of brain tumor. With the help of her mother, she still manages to attend first-grade classes at St Peter's School twice a week. Her mother is expecting the birth of a baby girl any day now. She also has another 2-year old girl. She is a woman of Faith and Hope. I admire her perseverance in prayer. I had the opportunity to meet Naomi and her mother as I celebrate once a month the School Mass at St Peter's. Earlier this week, I announced that I was offering the Mass that day for Naomi's intentions and then sat down next to Naomi and her mother at the end of the Mass as the entire assembly, including all students and teachers prayed the Rosary for the healing of Naomi.

You may recall the prayer card we distributed three weeks ago with the picture of Father Martin on one side and a prayer on the other side. This is the prayer that all children and teachers pray daily at St. Peter's school:

*Let us pray
with confidence to God for the healing
of Naomi Lily
through the intercession of Father Narcisse Martin, former pastor of
St Peter's Church in Waldorf (1894-1923)
and whose canonization process is under consideration by Archbishop
Wilton Gregory.*
TOGETHER, and IN UNION WITH NAOMI, we say the prayer
that Our Lord Jesus Christ taught us:
"OUR FATHER who art in heaven,
Hallowed be Thy name,
Thy Kingdom come,
THY WILL BE DONE
on earth as it is in heaven...
AMEN!

One in Christ,
Father Alain