From the Divine Mercy Spiritual Committee

Why Pray?

Last month, we explored what we thought was a simple-sounding question: What is Prayer? We came to realize that prayer isn't a technique to master or a box to check off. It's where we meet God, however that happens for each of us: in words, in silence, in the ordinary shape of an ordinary day. So why do so many of us put it off, or worse, just don't do it? Why does something this good so often feel optional? Let's explore that.

One of the fruits that a life of prayer provides is an awareness of the presence of God within the rhythm of daily life. I challenge myself to start each day with my Morning Offering, a simple prayer offering God everything the day holds before I know what that is, so that my heart is prepared for the day, setting me up to handle whatever may come. Then at night, a brief examen, a few quiet minutes reviewing the day with God, that helps me to see how God acted, and how I responded. Bookending my day like that, through it all, my soul begins to perceive God not as a distant figure, but as an intimate presence who is quietly accompanying me through the circumstances of my life.

Full disclosure, showing up like that doesn't always mean I feel anything. Some days it's just words, no sense of God on the other end. I bring my whole self anyway, doubts and all, and keep showing up.

Prayer is where that parable of the hidden treasure and the pearl of great price finally makes sense to me. I'm the treasure. I'm the pearl. Christ found me first and gave everything to have me.

Prayer is an act of obedience, the same way Jesus prayed to remain in the Father's will, keeping me centered and aligning my life with His instead of forcing my own plan onto Him. Psalm 149:4 says the Lord delights in His people; that's you, and that's me. Every time we turn toward Him in prayer, and when words fail, "Jesus, I trust in you," covers just about anything.

So, why do I pray? To find peace instead of carrying my worries alone. To ask for wisdom when I'm confused. To say thank you for what I already have, and ask for help with what I don't. To intercede for the people I love, our clergy, this pastorate. To find the strength to resist what pulls me toward sin, and the courage to keep growing toward whomever God is calling me to become.

Committing to prayer changes everything from the inside out. It means letting go and trusting His timing over mine, opening me up to grace I can't manufacture on my own. It softens our hearts, opens our eyes, and breaks through the noise of daily life so we can actually feel God at work, and that's the quiet revolution both the world and the Church need.

C.S. Lewis, a Christian writer on faith and prayer, put it best in *Letters to Malcolm: Chiefly on Prayer*: "I pray because I can't help myself… It doesn't change God. It changes me."

You don't have to have it figured out, or say it right, or even feel like praying. Just show up as you are, day already full. That's the only thing prayer has ever asked of us, and somehow, it's the very thing that changes everything. All that's left is to take a moment and pray.

Want to go deeper on any of this? Each month, alongside this series, we're posting additional resources online: books, videos, articles, whatever helps a topic come alive, so you can explore it further on your own time and in your own space. Find them at divinemercysf.org/prayer-series.

Divine Mercy Pastorate Spiritual Committee