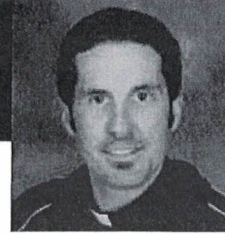


A Word From Fr. Tom Niehaus

July 28, 2019



Pray from the Heart

What is the most heartfelt prayer that you have ever made in your life? Were you in a situation where you needed God's help? Was there a time when someone you knew was in a terrible accident or in trouble and requested prayer? Have you seen miracles at work and been compelled to pray in thanksgiving for a wondrous healing or special grace? There are many situations in life where we have opportunities to pray. It seems at times that our prayers only rise in times of need. Prayer is a conversation with God both listening and speaking.

The more we pray the more we become familiar with the Lord and the designs of His will. Special people are given the gift to go so deep in their prayer with the Lord that they become united in a special prayer of the heart as they hear Him say, "I love you." And in turn respond by saying to Him, "I love you." Jesus was rooted in prayer with the Father, turning to Him in all circumstances and drawing His strength from these intimate encounters. As Jesus was found in prayer, one of the disciples asked Him, "Lord teach us to pray, just as John taught his disciples (Luke 11:1)." This request has been echoed down through the ages by men, women and children. I find still in 2019 people asking me to help them to pray. This is a beautiful request of the heart that demonstrates a true longing that people have to grow in their relationship with the Lord. When asked this question Jesus surprisingly does not give them the answer, "Pray from the heart." Rather He says, "When you pray, say: Father, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come. Give us each day our daily bread and forgive us our sins for we ourselves forgive everyone in debt to us, and do not subject us to the final test (Luke 11:2-4)." The "Lord's Prayer"

or "Our Father" is the perfect prayer to say as it has been taught to us by Jesus Himself. This prayer which is so familiar is a powerful way to engage in sincere dialogue with the Father just as Jesus did.

The Lord's Prayer communicates a deep trust and dependence upon God for all things in life from our bodily care to the health of our souls which can be weakened by sin,. Therefore a prayerful cry for forgiveness and humility to forgive before the time of our final judgment on the day of our death concludes the prayer. The Lord's Prayer can be a wonderful springboard to deeper prayer and reflection upon the mysteries of faith that invite us to imitate the life of Christ and strive for eternal life. Do you take some time each day to pray? Try praying the Lord's Prayer as the first words of your day if you do not know what to do for prayer and let Jesus lead you the rest of the way!

Companions of Christ Summer Conference

As an aspiring member of the Companions of Christ and a major reason why I have been given permission to serve as a priest in the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis and to do so in the Most Holy Redeemer-Montgomery, St. Canice-Kilkenny and St. Patrick-Shieldsville area while living in a Companions of Christ household in Le Center, MN, I am to participate in the annual conference. This year's annual Companions of Christ conference will be held at Broomtree Retreat Center by Irene, SD from July 29th to August 2nd. The presenters will include Dr. Paul Ruff on the topic, "Living with Courageous, Christ-Centered Vulnerability in our Lives and Relationships as Men,"

and Fr. Tom Margevicius on the topic, "It's the System Stupid. Why, After Having Been Ordained for Some Time, It's Still Hard to Preach."

In my absence, Fr. George Grafsky will be available to celebrate the weekday Masses and is available for any funerals and emergency calls that might take place. Please pray for me and may brother Companions of Christ as we gather for this time of enrichment in the ways of the Lord.

United in the Hearts of Jesus and Mary,

Fr. Tom Niehaus