

FROM FATHER JOHN: *"I will bless the LORD at all times; his praise shall be ever in my mouth. Let my soul glory in the LORD; the lowly will hear me and be glad. The LORD confronts the evildoers, to destroy remembrance of them from the earth. When the just cry out, the LORD hears them, and from all their distress he rescues them. The LORD is close to the brokenhearted; and those who are crushed in spirit he saves. The LORD redeems the lives of his servants; no one incurs guilt who takes refuge in him."* ~ Psalm 34

The Lord hears the cry of the poor!!!



Pope Francis said that *"In the face of so many wounds that hurt us and could lead to a hardness of heart, we are called to dive into the sea of prayer, which is the sea of the boundless love of God, in order to experience his tenderness."*

Our Lord Jesus emphasized the importance of prayer throughout his ministry here on earth. The gospels remind us that prayer is one of the spiritual practices that we need to focus on in our journey of faith.

“When you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, who love to stand and pray in the synagogues and on street corners so that others may see them. Amen, I say to you, they have received their reward. But when you pray, go to your inner room, close the door, and pray to your Father in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will repay you.” (Matthew, Ch. 6)

Prayer is an important parts of our spiritual life and our life of discipleship. The goal of prayer is to grow closer to the Lord, to deepen our relationship with the Lord, to experience God’s love and to discover God’s will for us. But, it’s really more than just that, it’s really more than just discovering God’s will for our lives. The key movement in a life of prayer is to allow God’s will for us to become our will; it’s making God’s will our own.

St. Paul tells us to Pray all the time. This means that we must make a habit of prayer. It means praying before answering the door, before pumping gas, before eating, before going to bed, before turning on the TV, etc. What we are trying to do is develop a habitual awareness of God’s presence in our lives, in the world. We begin by praying in such a way that we are reminded that God is with us in the everyday events of our lives, that God is with us no matter where we are or what we are doing, that God is with us in the spectacular events of our life like marriages, baptisms of our children, graduations, first reception of the sacraments, illnesses, deaths and births just to name a few. We listen, we watch and we notice God’s presence in our lives and then we are able to share the God’s love with others.

Our faithfulness to the time set aside for prayer is critically important. Everyone has dry periods in their prayer life. We need to trust that our Lord will carry us through the dry times to more powerful times of prayer. This means that it is more important to show up to pray than it is that our prayer is perfect or powerful at every moment. We must be faithful to how much time we spend in prayer in order to allow God to perfect our prayer and to fill our prayer with His life and love. Sometimes prayer involves simply showing up, praying as best we can and then waiting for the Lord to share His grace and love with us. The waiting

can sometimes take months, or even years, as we remind ourselves that God will fill our prayer with His glory and His power in His own good time, not in our time and not on our schedule.

May God Bless you and all those who love the Lord.

