



I will listen for what God, the Lord, has to say; surely he will speak of peace to his people and to his faithful. (Psalm 85:9a)

July 29, 2025

Hello Everyone —

Don't you just love an unscripted story taken from life? There are certain exchanges you simply cannot make up. Here's one:

A young girl bounded up the steps of the porch where she found her beloved grandmother sitting quietly in her rocking chair — staring at her hands. She was just sitting there staring at her hands. Finally, the girl asked her grandmother why she was staring at her hands. The grandmother replied:

“Have you ever really looked at your hands? — how they serve you so well throughout the years? These hands — though wrinkled and weak — are the tools I used to reach out and embrace life.

“These hands braced and caught my fall when as a toddler I crashed on the floor. They put food in my mouth and clothes on my back. As a child, my mother taught me to fold them in prayer. These hands tied my shoes and pulled on my boots. They held my husband and wiped my tears when he went off to war.

“These hands were clumsy when I tried to hold my newborn son for the first time. Decorated with my wedding band, they showed the whole world that I was married and exclusively loved someone special. These old hands wrote letters to him when he was away and trembled when I buried my parents and the man I loved most in the world.

“These same hands held my grandchildren and consoled my neighbors. They have combed my hair and washed and cleaned the rest of my body for these many years. To this day when not much of anything else of me works — these hands hold me up — lay me down — and continue to fold in prayer.

“But — more importantly — it will be these hands that God will reach out for and take when he leads me home. And with my hands, God will lift me to his side and there I will use these hands to touch his face.”

Whether folding the laundry — writing a letter — or caring for her granddaughter — the elderly woman's hands were constantly at prayer. You see, in the wisdom that comes with age — she

understood that real prayer is not limited to a formula — or ritual action — but **it is an awareness of God's presence in our lives**. Isn't that why we pray after all? It is more than just something we do on Sundays and holy days — or when we find ourselves in crisis mode. Prayer is not a bargaining device — but the means to communion.

As we know from Scripture, one of Jesus' disciples asked the Lord to teach them how to pray. Some years ago, a dear priest friend, Fr. Corbin Eddy, wrote the following while pondering what is involved in praying as Jesus prayed.

“First of all, I am to address God in familiar terms. God is to be engaged in intimate conversation. God is honored by being taken so seriously as to be addressed personally. In this way his name is hallowed.

“Secondly, there's the primacy of the first petition: 'Your kingdom come.' It's not about being sure what that means for me personally or for the society and culture of which I am a part, but about asking anyway.

“In the meantime, there's room to consider my daily bread, the resources I need to live well and creatively today, even if I'm not sure what those are either. Ask anyway.

“I am also to acknowledge my sinfulness and to remember how challenging forgiveness and reconciliation are, even in my limited experience.

““And finally, by the way, dear God,' I continue, 'I'm not looking for any big trouble. I'm not sure just how much I can take, but would rather not be pushed to my limits, thank you very much.'”

“A disciple asked him, 'Teach us, Lord, how to pray’”

Continue, dear Lord, to teach us

As I do for you, please pray for me,

Most Reverend Jeffrey S. Grob
Archbishop of Milwaukee

