

PRAYER

I love my Catholic faith. I love the beauty and the tradition. I love the ceremony and sacraments. I love the richness and the depth. And I love how it is universal. It is for EVERYONE.

My prayer as I wake up each morning is Thank You, God. I say it silently and then spend just a few minutes listening. Some days, I have what I can best describe as a nudge with an idea or a thought or a solution to an issue I am dealing with - which I believe is from God. Other days, I just lay quietly.

Then, I spend about 15 minutes thinking about the previous day – identifying and asking forgiveness for any of my regrets. I thank God for all my many gifts and blessings – everything from the very fact I am awake to the snugly warm bed I am laying in – the fully stocked pantry and fridge, my family and friends I am surrounded by, the gift of my faith, the Mass and the Eucharist, my job, recognizing EVERYTHING is a gift from Him!

Finally, I bring to God my hurts, disappointments, my fears, my concerns, my worries, and anxieties. I pray for my aging parents who live many states away – for their care and their well-being. I pray for my adult children and my grandson – for their safety – for their faith walk-for their needs. I pray particularly for my daughter who stopped coming home 4 years ago and who we get to see only a couple of times per year. I ask for God to guide me in ALL things and to help me throughout the day to do HIS will and be HIS hands and feet – serving HIS people through work, my family, and friends.

It is this time in prayer that powers me throughout each day.

It doesn't mean my life is perfect – far from it! But when the sorrow comes – my heart aches – my anxiety peaks – my fears get the best of me – I pause a moment and share it all with God.

It is HIS presence in my life that brings me peace and comfort and gives me the grace I need to be a good employee, a loving spouse, a forgiving parent, and a devoted daughter.

I encourage all of you to find the peace you seek through prayer. Take time today to connect with God. Start with a simple “Thank You” and see where it leads you. Invite HIM in to your life – your joys and sorrows – your successes and fears – all of the messy-ness of life. You won't regret it!

How I live my faith through giving of my TIME

What is one thing no one ever has enough of – outside of money - TIME.

It seems like the days, weeks, months, and years go by faster and faster.

I want to share with you how my faith has grown through giving of my Time.

A few years ago, my husband and I were asked to present weekends for Catholic Marriage Ministry. After the initial surprise and looking behind us to see if they REALLY meant us, my mind immediately went to – I don't have time for this. We have three kids, pets, jobs, chores, activities, there is no way I have time for this ministry. I don't keep up with my To Do list now! How can I possibly do MORE? I was convinced we would say No and go on our merry way.

Since we had such a powerful transformation in our marriage because of this Marriage Ministry, we didn't dismiss the idea right away. We talked about it. We prayed about it. We brought "the decision" with us to Mass.

And we said.....Yes. Funny how God works!

We have spent countless hours in this ministry. All of the time we have given and continue to give is "prime-time": evenings and weekends – sometimes we give ALL our time on a weekend – Friday afternoon through Sunday night.

My To Do list continues to grow and never really gets completed. My home is will never be featured in Better Homes & Gardens. My kitchen cabinets need a good wipe down and I am pretty sure I saw more cobwebs last night in my living room.

But, I have come to realize my time is God's – for Him to use me to do His will and serve others.

I am not sure I have the right words to express the rewards I have received through giving of my time to serve God. My connection to God has grown. My faith is deeper -richer. There are times I can FEEL the presence of God while serving Him in everything I do whether in ministry, in my job or in doing simple chores.

The thing is - the more I say YES to serving Him with my time, the more things just seem to work out in a day.

I would encourage you to think about how you give of your time to share God's love. Can you help at your parish? In the parish school? Check on a loved one? Make a meal for someone in need? Care for the lonely?

I suggest you answer the question "How can I share Gods' love today?" every day. When you give your gift of time, those you help know God loves them as well. And isn't that what we are all here for? To Love One Another?