



Center for Spiritual Development

Daily Reflections

Image by Christine Sponchia

PRAY FOR EVERYONE, ALWAYS

By Sr. Jane DeLisle, CSJ

An Excerpt from Today's First Reading

Beloved:

*First of all, I ask that supplications, prayers,
petitions, and thanksgivings be offered for everyone,
for kings and for all in authority,
that we may lead a quiet and tranquil life
in all devotion and dignity.*

*This is good and pleasing to God our savior,
who wills everyone to be saved
and to come to knowledge of the truth.*

*It is my wish, then, that in every place [all] should pray,
Lifting up holy hands, without anger or argument.*

1 TIMOTHY 2:1-4, 8

In a nation, church, and world that seem desperately at odds and divided into "us" and "them," the invitation from St. Paul today is to pray in every manner for one another and all of creation.

Prayer reminds me to trust that there are countless reminders of God at work around us and endless opportunities to pray for the people and places God cares for. All of us are loved and created by God. Praying without ceasing is a relentless act of releasing our concerns into the care of a God who is always available, in all places, for all people -- and for creation as well.

Praying for loved ones and seeming foes is a good idea. It helps me remember to rely on God more intentionally. God is at one with the world, in love with all, and at work within us all. I cooperate better with the overflowing love of God among us when I stop to pray in supplication, thanksgiving, petition, and desire to love God and the dear neighbor in every form and stance in life.

Praying with and for the other, even those whom I find difficult or offensive, makes room for goodness to flow and grace to flourish in me and -- I hope -- in the other. Many years ago, I encountered someone whom I found difficult and had to relate with more than I preferred; I found her aggressive, somewhat mean-spirited, and difficult to engage socially and in ministry. Every day, and for many years, I intentionally prayed that God would soften her heart and ease her aggressive personality. I had no plan other than to hold her up for God to do whatever God knew best. This daily prayer strengthened me to work more effectively with her and over time, seemed to have some effect on her ways of being. Though not a miracle, it was a way of engaging a positive and powerful course of action.

Let us pray for leaders of every ilk, for family members and neighbors, for clergy and bishops. Let us pray for those we find challenging and who may have a different opinion and alternate way of proceeding in life. God knows what is best, and prayer is a positive, loving, and life-giving energy for the one for whom the prayer is intended -- and, to my surprise, for the one who prays with sincerity.

Let us join in prayer for one another ***that we may lead a quiet and tranquil life in all devotion and dignity. 1Timothy 2:2***



Little girl with military men and a monk in the background
Photo by Alicia Rodriguez

For Pondering

- How does prayer help me cope with difficult people and situations?
- For whom do I pray most frequently?
- For whom am I invited to pray to love as God loves?

For Prayer

*Loving God, I come before you today and pray for those in need.
I pray for those whom I find difficult to understand or be in their company.
I pray for the grace to trust others and myself to God's love and mercy.*

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