

By William A. Barry, SJ

Why do we pray? Do we pray for utilitarian reasons—because it benefits our physical or psychological health?

Honesty compels me to say that I often do pray for utilitarian reasons. First of all, most of my prayers of petition ask for some good result, either for me or for someone else or for all people. Moreover, I feel contented when I remember in prayer the people who mean much to me, even if my prayer is not answered. I notice, too, that I feel better about myself when I pray regularly. I feel more centered, more in tune with the present, less anxious about the past or the future. So I suspect that I do pray for the purpose of psychological or physical health. But does that exhaust my motivations for prayer?

Prayer Is a Relationship

Thinking of prayer as a conscious relationship, or friendship, with God may be illuminating. Why do we spend time with good friends? As I pondered this question, I realized that I relish times with good friends for some of the same reasons just adduced for spending time in prayer. If I have not had good conversations with close friends for some time, I feel out of sorts, somewhat lonely, and ill at ease. When I am with good friends, I feel more whole and alive.

Still, I do not believe that my only reason for wanting time with them is to feel better. I want to be with them because I love them. I am genuinely interested in and concerned for them. The beneficial effect that being with them has on me is a happy by-product. Moreover, I have often spent time with friends when it cost me trouble and time, and I did it because they wanted my presence. Haven't we all spent time with a close friend who was ill or depressed, even when the time was painful and difficult? Such time spent cannot be explained on utilitarian grounds. We spend that time because we love our friend for his or her own sake.

Of course, there are times when we need the presence of close friends because we are in pain or lonely. Friendship would not be a mutual affair if we were always the ones who gave and never were open to receive. But if we are not totally egocentric, we will have to admit that we do care for others for their own sakes, and not just for what we can get from the relationship. We spend time with our friends because of our mutual care and love. Can we say the same thing about our relationship with God?

Our Deepest Desires

Prayer is a conscious relationship with God. Just as we spend time with friends because we love them and care for them, we spend time in prayer because we love God and want to be with God. Created out of love, we are drawn by the desire for “we know not what,” for union with the ultimate Mystery, who alone will satisfy our deepest longing.
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ST. MONICA PARISH

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PASTOR: **Rev. Robert Wong, SJ**

PARISH OFFICE HOURS

Monday – Friday

9:30 am – 1 pm / 1:30 pm – 4:30 pm

MASS SCHEDULES

WEEKDAYS: **9:00 am**

SATURDAYS: **9:30 am & 5:00 pm**

SUNDAYS: **9:00 am & 11:00 am**

CONFESSION SCHEDULE

SATURDAYS: **4:30 pm – 4:55 pm**

CONFESSIONS: 10 MINUTES BEFORE DAILY

MASS OR BY REQUEST AT OTHER TIMES

NOVENA TO

OUR LADY OF PERPETUAL HELP

WEDNESDAYS: **7:00 pm**

MASS FOLLOWED BY NOVENA

& BENEDICTION

BAPTISM COURSE

EVERY 2ND TUESDAY OF THE MONTH AT **6 pm**

BAPTISMS

4th SATURDAY AFTER 9:30 am MASS

HOUSE BLESSINGS

PLEASE CALL THE PARISH OFFICE

February 17, 2019

6th Sunday in Ordinary Time

When we put our trust in the Lord and strive to live the beatitudes in our daily lives, we are likely to bear much fruit. This is our faith in the power of the Resurrection that promises us life eternal. *Blessed is the one who trusts in the Lord, indeed.*

LITURGY OF THE WORD

In the first reading, trusting in the Lord brings a refreshing life of abundance. Saint Paul, in the second reading, says that Christ's resurrection brings life to all who believe. Jesus, in the gospel, teaches the beatitudes.

Today's Readings:

1st: Jeremiah 17.5-8

Psalm: 1

2nd: 1 Corinthians 15.12, 16-20

Gospel: Luke 6.17, 20-26

PARISH UPDATES

2018 Tax-Receipts – Please collect your receipts from the Parish and Archdiocese’s Project Advance. Volunteers ensure you have the correct records. May God bless you for your generosity!

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Pennies for Heavens – Our Knights of Columbus Council’s Vocation program welcomes your support for its fundraising appeal from Feb. 24 thru Mar. 3 by putting your loose change or any bill denomination in the wheelbarrow provided. The collected funds support our young boys for a weekend retreat at Westminster Abbey in Mission and for the girls to attend a day trip at the Poor Clares’ monastery. It helps them to experience and discern the way of religious life.

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Save a date – Our Lenten Mission will be introduced at all the weekend Masses on March 16 & 17. The Mission itself is on March 18, 19 & 20 at 7:00pm. Fr. Pierre LeBlond, OP will be the presenter. Mark your calendar!

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Fiat Women’s Vocation Discernment – This is open to single Catholic women ages 18-35 who are open to and/or discerning a vocation to consecrated life. Annual retreat, March 1 -3, Westminster Abbey. For more info. Check out their poster or call Sr. Mary S. DeMuth, OP, 604-443-3254 or womensvocations@rcav.org

ARCHDIOCESAN EVENTS

The Art of Keeping Kids Catholic

Learn how to listen to what matters to children for their involvement. Learn how to involve family in service and church activities. Learn ways to involve loved ones in a fun and social way to prioritize faith in their daily lives.

Join us for an evening presentation and mini workshop to help equip us with the skills for engaging and keeping children in the faith on Monday, Feb. 28, at 7 p.m. at St. Augustine’s Church, Vancouver. *Dolores Madaisky, B.A. in Psychology, M.A. in Family Studies, is passionate about improving parenting through the development of communication skills. She has done many workshops for schools and for the Archdiocese.* To register, visit <https://rcav.org/event/the-art-of-keeping-kids-catholic>

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Mass of Remembrance

Join us for our month Mass of Remembrance as we pray for our family members that have passed away this month. Masses are on Sunday, Feb. 24, at 12:30 p.m. and 2:30 p.m. in our Evangelist Chapel, at Gardens of Gethsemani. <https://www.rccav.org/events/201>

Pastoral Council Meeting –

Tuesday, March 5, 7:30 pm is our next scheduled meeting. Please mark your calendar to attend.

Office closed on Monday, February 18 for BC Family Holiday.

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That desire, we can say, is the Holy Spirit of God dwelling in our hearts, drawing us to the perfect fulfillment for which we were created—namely, community with the Trinity. That desire draws us toward a more and more intimate union with God.

We pray, then, at our deepest level, because we are drawn by the bonds of love. We pray because we love, and not just for utilitarian purposes. If prayer has beneficial effects—and I believe that it does—that is because prayer corresponds to our deepest reality. When we are in tune with God, we cannot help but experience deep well-being. **Ignatius of Loyola** spoke of consolation as a sign of a person’s being in tune with God’s intention. But in the final analysis, the lover does not spend time with the Beloved because of the consolation; the lover just wants to be with the Beloved.

Thanks and Praise

Another motive for prayer is the desire to praise and thank God because of his great kindness and mercy. In contemplating Jesus, we discover that God’s love is not only creative but also overwhelmingly self-sacrificing. Jesus loved us even as we nailed him to the cross.

Excerpt from ***God’s Passionate Desire*** by William A. Barry, SJ.

Wanted: Used Car for Redemptoris Mater

The Archdiocesan Missionary Seminary Redemptoris Mater is in need of a used car. If you know of someone who would be willing to donate a used car, please have them contact Fr. Gilbert Nunez at gnunez@rcav.org or call the seminary at 604-709-8509.

Stewardship Reflection

The words of the psalmist echo the theme of all of today’s readings. “Blessed the one who trusts in the Lord.” As good stewards, firmly grounded in that hope, may we bear fruit in due season — assisting the poor, feeding the hungry, and consoling the sorrowful whenever we have the chance.

See Psalm 1

Mass Intentions February 17 - 23, 2019

Mon, Feb 18 - Arsenia Capitulo (RIP)
Tue, Feb 19 - Andre & Sofia Fernandes (TG)
Wed, Feb 20 - 9am, Ms. Ammini (RIP)
7pm, Cyril Saturnino Dias (RIP)
Thu, Feb 21 - Melba Caoile & family (TG)
Fri, Feb 22 - Semplicio Fernando (RIP)
Sat, Feb 23 - 9:30am, Deceased Legionaries
& Auxiliaries (RIP)
5pm, Deceased of Lau family (RIP)