



## Pastor's Column

St. Peter Catholic Church

January 28, 2018 ~ Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time

### *The Power of Prayer*

Recently, one of our parishioners confided in me regarding her profound conviction of the power of prayer and her utter gratitude to God that prayer does indeed work. It might seem a bit trite simple to tell someone in need, "Just pray." But in very truth, unless we *do* "just pray" for what we need, then anything else that we may try doing in order to address our need is vastly fruitless.

Prayer provides the profound substance and meaning for absolute everything else that we strive to do in addressing the needs of ourselves, our neighbors, and our world. All else that we do constitutes the "what" we do in order to address these needs; prayer, in a certain sense, constitutes the "why" we do it. As the turkey for our Thanksgiving feast, so prayer is for all else that we strive to do in serving the various needs we perceive.

And prayer works. I, for one, can say in all honesty and with absolute confidence that the vast majority of my prayers are answered. And my prayers are far more specific than the vague, the generally-speaking "Thy will be done" variety of prayer; I pray for snow on Christmas Eve, and we get a white Christmas after all (and you are welcome!). Back in college, I prayed for a specific girl to be my girlfriend, and I asked her out the next day, and she said "yes," and we enjoyed a relationship for several months. After that break-up, I prayed for the Lord to show me clearly my vocation, and lo and behold, I was practically drop-kicked through the front doors of Bishop White Seminary. In the spring when I began to hear rumors that I might be transferred from Chewelah, I actually prayed very specifically which parishes I did *not* want to go to, and there were *many* parishes listed, and here I am today! Prayer works. The power of prayer is powerful indeed.

And why not be bold with our prayer? Why not be specific? If you want *this* request both to be heard and answered, then pray it, by gum! Provided, of course – as Jesus Himself modeled for us in the Garden of Gethsemane – that we are always open to whatever God's will might be. What He prayed was *very* specific: He did *not* want to suffer the Passion and Crucifixion. Very bold, and very specific! But He humbly tailored His prayer so that whatever the Father's will, "Thy will be done."

To that end, beginning this weekend, and to continue supporting us in our Parochial Year for Evangelization, our parish is launching a Prayer Campaign. We already have our Parish Book of Intentions, which will continue of course. And we already have Fr. Haspedis' "Prayers to God" table, which also will continue of course. I propose this Prayer Campaign as another prayer tool for us, the Prayer Warriors of St. Peter, to help us actually see the power of prayer at work. Here is how the Prayer Campaign works: in the prayer corner, there are two boards on tables, one designated for "Prayers Requested" and the other for "Prayers Answered." There are sticky-notes on the tables in the prayer corner. We write our prayer request on a sticky-note and then place that sticky-note on the "Prayers Requested" board. When we experience God's answer to that prayer, we transfer that sticky-note from "Prayers Requested" to "Prayers Answered." The "Prayers Requested" board will quickly be filled with sticky-notes, and over the days and weeks ahead, we will see those sticky-notes slowly but surely moving to the "Prayers Answered" board. And we will actually see in that quick and easy glance the power of prayer hard at work for all of us, a people of faith.

Be bold in your prayer! Be specific! And then behold as literally before your very eyes you see how prayer truly does work, how prayer truly is powerful indeed.

~Fr. Lewis