



Bringing Home the Word

Seventeenth Sunday in Ordinary Time (C)

July 28, 2019

The Five Prayers

By Mary Katharine Deeley

I tell my students there are five prayers: Please; Thank you; I'm sorry; Wow; and Yes, I will. The words change but, in essence, every prayer implies one or more of these attitudes: petition, thanksgiving, contrition, praise, and obedience. In his book *Man's Quest for God*, Abraham Joshua Heschel says prayer is "the invitation to God to intervene in our lives." God does—sometimes to our surprise, sometimes in ways we can't imagine, but always in a way that changes us.

Sunday Readings

Genesis 18:20–32

The LORD replied: If I find fifty righteous people in the city of Sodom, I will spare the whole place for their sake.

Colossians 2:12–14

You were buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with

Jesus knew this when he taught his disciples the Our Father. In it, we hear words of praise and petition. We hear contrition: "Forgive us...as we forgive..." (11:4). We hear obedience: "thy kingdom come..." and "thy will be done..." (Luke 11:2; Matthew 6:10). Jesus goes on to say that when we pray, God will send his Spirit to guide us and give us what we need: "our daily bread..." (11:3). No wonder the Lord's Prayer is a model prayer for everyone.

In our prayer, we have to remember that there is often a difference between what we need and what we desire. In the movie *Shadowlands*, C. S. Lewis is depicted reflecting on the nature of prayer as his wife is dying. Asked why he prayed, he responds, "I pray because I can't help myself. I pray because I'm helpless. I pray because the need flows out of me all the time, waking and sleeping. It doesn't change God; it changes me." That's the power of the Spirit—to change our hearts until all our prayers become wow (praise) and yes

A Word Pope Fr

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June 1, 2014

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Becoming Catholic: Chrysteile's Journey

By Jamie Taylor and
Chrysteile Murphy

Chrysteile Murphy's journey to the Catholic Church underscores the unique nature of each individual's quest for God.

Chrysteile's parents, sixties free spirits, felt she should decide about God herself. In her search for God, she explored many different faiths. None answered her questions. Some just added to her confusion.

Chrysteile's initial exposure to Catholicism was negative. An acquaintance's ill-formed understanding of the sacrament of reconciliation—"do anything you want to and go to confession"—didn't sit well with her. Questions remained—all of which would be answered when she walked through the doors of Sacred Heart Catholic Church in Tampa.

Chrysteile's deep yearning to learn all she could about God and Christ found a home in this beautiful church with welcoming priests and loving parishioners. Her parish experience differed from anything she'd been told about Christianity. Yet she craved more.

Dirty Hair, Clean Soul

One Sunday during Mass, it was announced that the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA) would start soon. With sweet anticipation, Chrysteile



came each week to hear the topic of discussion and be enriched by it.

Chrysteile had an awakening during the RCIA process at Sacred Heart. She and her fellow candidates and catechumens learned Church history and the richness of the sacraments. At the Easter Vigil, Chrysteile

experienced the greatest joy in her spiritual life: Her own baptism.

Chrysteile still recalls the immense anticipation and, all at once, a great peace. The water was cold, but that was irrelevant to her. God's redemptive love flowed over Chrysteile, and she was washed clean of sin.

"When Fr. George anointed us with the chrism oil, confirmed us, and we were sealed with the Holy Spirit, I was humbled," Chrysteile recalled. "No words can describe the emotions that fill you up during this entire process." She didn't wash her hair for four days! The fragrance of the chrism oil reminded her of this experience, so she held onto it as long as possible.

Belonging to the Catholic Church was an important choice for Chrysteile. Her faith in God and Christ took root and flourished there. "There is nothing like coming together as one body in Christ at Mass on Sunday and to experience the great love that is the Eucharist," she said.

Come and See

Chrysteile jumped right into church activities. She's a eucharist member of the Young Adults group and helps lead the Lost and Found program for feeding the homeless.

The priests at her parish emphasized the importance of using each person's talents for bringing about the Kingdom of God. Chrysteile loved to serve the hungry. Every other week, she and other parishioners prepared and served more than 150 people.

"Everything that God has for us is present in the Eucharist, a precious gift," Chrysteile said. "To be part of the Catholic Church and to live the faith is the most humbling and life-changing thing I've ever done for myself." Chrysteile said that, for those who are seeking the faith, if you're willing to open your heart, you will find where the abundance is. +

PRAISE

*Lord, you came to us with
forgiveness to us.
Help me forgive myself
and sisters from*

—From *Faithful Meditation*
in Ordinary Time, Rev. Fr. James
and Mary Ann