

17th Sunday in Ordinary Time

July 24, 2016--It has been the subject of many a study and article in medical and theological journals for decades. Men and women of medicine and of faith agree that those who **pray daily**, those whose **lives are faith-based** live longer, healthier, and happier lives. When we think of those people we know personally or the figures that we admire on a national or global scene, they are always the people who have God in their lives and a love of Him in their daily diet. **Prayer** is real and it works and we are here because of that very fact.

For you and I, it was perhaps the first prayer that we learned: "The Lord's Prayer" or "The Our Father" was taught to us in most cases by our mothers and rendered as part of our lives until our last breath. Its simplicity is inspirational and its message clear--our heavenly Father knows us better than we know ourselves and provides for whatever we need.

It is not an easy prayer to say (if we mean it) or to live (if we dare). To forgive others so that we might be forgiven is a tall order. But those words spoken by Our Blessed Lord so long ago would not just be words He said. In the end, He did just that and spoke words of forgiveness to the hands and nails that pinned him on the cross that would ultimately save us.

My friends, these summer days, as refreshing and relaxing as they are, can also provide us with times of quiet and reflection. Whether it is days spent at the beach, walks in mountain places, or early morning/late evening reflections, the opportunity to appreciate the glory of God that is to be found in nature are there for us every moment of every day.

I will always remember a picture that hung by the entrance of my college seminary chapel. It was of a glorious sunset, the sky ablaze with the rich and bold colors orange and red and included a quote from His Holiness, the late St. John XXIII, that said, *“All that I have seen of the Creator makes me believe in all that I have not seen.”*

My friends, let us heed the wise words and counsel of the Divine Master and pray daily, often, and always--for our loving Father in heaven hears every word.

God Love You.