



*After he had dismissed the crowds, he went up the mountain by himself to pray – Mt 14:23.*

## **Life is Fragile, Handle with Prayer**

By Stephanie Harakal

How do you pray? When do you pray? Where do you pray? Who do you pray for? Like many people, I started out as a child with “Now I lay me...” at night before I went to sleep. We also said grace before meals. When I became a member of the Rosary Altar Society, I started praying the Rosary, but it was not until I became a member of the Legion of Mary Auxiliary that I committed to praying the Rosary every day. Then, somewhere along the line, a speaker asked the audience about praying first thing in the morning. What! We need to pray then too? So, I started saying “Good Morning” to God in one way or another every day. Now I find myself talking to God at various times throughout the day and try to remember to offer up the various tasks of the day.

I am sure that over the years we all have accumulated many prayer cards from funeral homes. I have a friend who puts them in chronological order according to when the people died and keeps the stack of cards in a box near her bed. When she says her prayers at night, she checks her prayer cards and prays for whomever died on that date.

Here is another suggestion. Are you as tired as I am of singing Happy Birthday twice whenever I wash my hands? Well my friend Annette suggests that people say an Our Father while they do their hand washing. According to the Rosary app on my phone, it takes 21 seconds to pray the Lord's Prayer, so the timing is just about perfect. If you want a little variety, a Hail Mary is 15 seconds and if you add "Oh Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to thee" after a Hail Mary, that is another approximately 20 second time span. The Glory Be is about 10 seconds long and so is the Fatima Prayer, so two of either or one of each is yet another 20 second time span.

These are just some of the ways to pray but there are many "right" ways to pray. We all must figure out the way that is right for us and our prayer life will change over time, sometimes waxing and sometimes waning. We can pray on our own or in a group. We can say formal prayers or just sit in the presence of the Lord as we do at Adoration. We can pray while walking or driving or in church or any other place that feels comfortable. We pray for family and friends and our country and we are told to pray for our enemies too. We pray when things go wrong and give thanks when things go right. Some prayers are brief and other times we devote much longer to prayer. Just remember, it is not how you pray or how long you pray; however, it is important to pray.

When we pray, we remember that God is always with us and always has our best interests at heart even when things seem to be at their worst. So, keep the faith and keep praying.



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