

PRAYER

BLD NEWARK COVENANT COMMUNITY

OUR GLOBAL PRAYER INTERCESSION

Have you noticed lately the spate of prayer requests, coming not only from our local (Newark) members but also from Manila? Some view this as an assault or oppression from the evil one on God's people. Along with the recent calamities of great magnitude that have befallen many people, this way of looking at death, sickness and other misfortune in our community may not be unwarranted. And we turn to God in the face of such evil, seeking protection or patience and strength amid adversity.

Our mission statement states that our worship, instruction and pastoral care are meant to raise an army of disciplined prayer warriors. As part of our early formation for discipleship, we go through a period of serving in the Intercessory ministry, lifting up the petitions and needs of our community and giving thanks for all answered prayers. This attitude of prayer and full trust in the Lord, once acquired, will stay with us as we grow in love for God and our neighbor in need.

We offer our petitions at Mass and our Friday worship. We raise individual intentions or lift a "communal" supplication to God for the written slips collected in our petitions basket. We pray as a community, in our ministries, as families and individually.

The practice of "standing in the gap" keeps us humble, docile and trusting in the Lord. We find it many times in Scripture, as in Abraham's persistence to save Sodom from God's wrath (Gen 18); Moses' pleading with the Lord for mercy on His people (Ex 32); and the church's praying for the imprisoned apostle Peter (Acts 12).

With the advent of technology, the use of email has facilitated and probably enhanced the intercessory practice in our community. Within hours of an accident or sudden serious illness, a petition arrives at our mailbox. An impending surgery is prayed over before or during the procedure. We pray for brethren in need from the West Coast or in a district in the Philippines. A simple message from our ECSL Secretariat in Manila generates pleas to God for the success of a weekend Encounter or LSS.

It is easy to put aside such a message, and despite best intentions forget about it or the immediacy of the need. It is good to address the need right at the moment, closing our eyes and visualizing the petitioner if possible.

An intercessory request often includes its own prayer. In saying it, we truly join in spiritual communion, united in intention and meritorious vocal prayer. Surely, the Lord is pleased with our faithfulness in prayer, especially when accompanied by some mortification. And it is no less praiseworthy when we remember to thank God for all favors granted.

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