

Divine Mercy Cenacle: Week 3

The Importance and Power of Intercessory Prayer

Opening Prayer: (D#1570)

- 1783 How many souls are saved through our prayer and sacrifices.
872 How important it is to persevere in prayer through difficulties.
1752 Jesus gives Faustina a three-day retreat.
1767 Rescue souls through sacrifice and prayer.
1248 Reparation through various penances.
202 Faustina offers prayer and sacrifice for her youngest sister.
961 Crocheting for conversions.
382 I live for souls.
740 The treasury of the Church for souls.
1184 Consider what you are doing for souls.
- 1777 Pray as much as you can for the dying.
834 Chaplet great help for the dying.
810,11 Say the chaplet which I taught you.
1015 Inspire us to pray for the dying.
1698 A soul illumined by a ray of God's final grace.
1797 Help Me to save souls.
- 1397 The prayer most pleasing to Me – for the conversion of sinners.
975 Pray for souls to go to confession.
908 Transform me into Yourself.
1032 I thirst for the salvation of souls.
20 Guardian Angel takes Faustina to purgatory.
741 Angel leads Faustina to hell.
930 I will not forget about humanity.

Additional Passages on Intercessory Prayer

- 929 Bringing humanity closer to Me through the chaplet.
1501 Visiting various churches through interior prayer.
996 Transformed into prayer for souls.
835 Prayer until peace.
1762 Unite myself to the Passion of Jesus.
880 Come to the aid of the dying.
820 Guardian Angel asks prayer for soul.
971 No sacrifice too insignificant.
985 Praying for a soul's happy death.
1684 Obtaining divine mercy for souls.

- 1525 Praying God's will be done.
873 You have come to know well My mercy.
1185-86 Deceased sister asks for fasting and prayer.
1426 Christ, give me souls.
619 Lenten penance for sinners.
943 Soul of sinners, you have taken the Lord from me.
518 Dear little souls in purgatory.
515 We will be happy in the measure we have fulfilled God's will.
1375 The debt of sin in purgatory.

THE INCREDIBLE POWER WE HAVE TO PRAY FOR OTHERS



“More things are wrought by prayer than this world dreams of” (Alfred Lord Tennyson)

It is truly an amazing thing that God grants us the power to change the course of other people's lives through intercessory prayer. We take this form of prayer for granted, but when you think about it intercessory prayer is one of the greatest powers God has granted to a creature. Literally, within seconds, we can petition God for the good of other human beings. Now that's power, and God allows us to do it all life-long. The very justification (or at least one of them) for cloistered religious communities must be the incredible value of intercessory prayer.

Given the foregoing considerations, the question then arises: – Do we value intercessory prayer? Do we use it for our neighbor's good? Have we taken the time to consider just how important intercessory prayer is? We are commanded to be charitable to our neighbors. Intercessory prayer can help us to fulfill this duty in a wonderful and mysterious way. Saint Paul is adamant that Christians should pray for each other (1 Timothy 2:1). Since God has given us this great gift of intercessory prayer, it follows that He expects us to use it. Sometimes we feel there is very little we can do in the service of Jesus, but all of us can become more devoted to intercessory prayer. To pray for others is an important responsibility. Our prayers have the power to change lives and save souls who are precious to Jesus and Mary.

Devotion to intercessory prayer will, no doubt, increase our good-will towards others, especially those whom we don't care for. It is also an exercise of the theological virtues of faith, hope and love which are of the essence of being Christian. And finally, per Father

Faber, joy is a wonderful effect of this devotion seeing that it involves an unselfish act of seeking the good of others.

Why not make a list of the people you are going to pray for this week? Pray for those who need a job, pray for those who have left the church, pray for those who have hurt you, pray for those undergoing trials, pray for someone who is in mortal sin, pray for someone to grow in holiness and draw closer to the Lord. There are so many good things we can pray for. When you pass a hospital, pray for the person in the hospital who is closest to death. One thing is for sure: people need your prayers. I need your prayers. We should all be, in the power of the Holy Spirit, mighty apostolates of intercessory prayer, for the good of our neighbor and the glory of God.

Now if we who are on the road to salvation have been granted such an immense power to pray for others, imagine then how much more the saints in Heaven (fully and forever united to God) are qualified to pray for us! “We are one body.”

Tom Mulcahy, M.A.

Reference: I am relying entirely on Chapter Four of *All for Jesus* by the great F.W. Faber, and this note is merely a paraphrase or a summary or a condensing of parts of that chapter.

Called To The Mystery Of Intercessory Prayer

BY BERNICE G. DUMITRU

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One night I awoke and felt a deep sadness. As I reflected on where this was coming from, I realized it was from the news items I had read the day before on the number of abortions that have been committed in the past 25 years around the world and the campaign at the U.N. to make abortion on demand a human right. I grieved for the innocent lives in danger and those that have been taken, but as I did so, it was as if the Lord was telling me "The little ones are safe within My embrace, grieve and pray for all those involved in this grave evil. They are in danger of losing more than their life." **I felt again the call to intercessory prayer, a call that grows stronger every day.**

I venture to say that intercessory prayer is a mystery. We know that Jesus is our great Intercessor before the Father. Hebrews (7:25) tells us that he lives now in glory to make intercession for us. We know that in our Lady we have a great intercessor who takes our petitions to Her Son on the throne of mercy. We know that one role of the saints in heaven is to intercede for those of us on earth who turn to them for help. St. Therese, the Little Flower, said that she would spend her heaven doing good on earth. And finally we know that we can intercede for others in prayer before God. We can probably define intercession and explain how to do it but what **we don't know is how it becomes a transforming moment of grace in another's life and why God wants us involved in this process. That is the Mystery!**

Without understanding it, I believe deeply in the power of intercessory prayer. I have placed before God the needs of my family, my friends and everyone that my life has ever touched in the last 75 years, asking for them the grace of conversion so that I may see them again and share the joys of heaven. I have come to realize that by doing this, I have accepted responsibility in part for their salvation. I am charged now by God to pray and sacrifice for them. It's as if God is saying to me, "If you want me to intervene with my Divine Providence in the life of all these people and arrange things so that they come to full conversion, what are you willing to do for them?" **My prayers, fasting, suffering and sacrifices are not too much to offer for them and are the greatest gifts that I can give them.** God the Father revealed to one mystic that He places in each family an intercessor for the other members of the family to help Him bring them to salvation.

It is not just for the living that I am interceding. Many of my family, friends and people from the past are now dead. **My prayers which go into the realm of God, the realm of eternity can be retroactive.** My prayer today can help my Uncle Louie who struggled alone in Washington D.C. battling the demons of alcohol and loneliness that eventually led to his death alone somewhere in the street. They can help my grandfather's sister who hid in a chicken coop to evade the Nazis ravaging the farms in Poland during W.W. II and was later found dead. It is my certain faith that God's grace intervened in these situations because of my prayer today, helping them face the darkness. One day, I will know when we meet heaven. And most certainly **my intercessory prayer for the souls in purgatory can help those of my family still waiting in the vestibule of heaven, being fitted for their wedding garment before joining the heavenly banquet.**

I dare say we have a greater scope for our intercessory prayer than many saints of the past who had limited knowledge of the suffering around the world. In this age of worldwide instant communication, we are confronted with the needs and suffering of the people's of the world. Just as I became aware of the grave abortion situation in the world, I can know of the young boys who live in the sewers of a South American city trying to survive, of the children dying of malnutrition in Africa, of the Christians being beheaded by Islamic terrorists in the Middle East, of the millions of refugees of wars and conflicts around the world. **Without grace we can't hold all these in our hearts.**

Plumbing the mystery of intercessory prayer led me to an even wilder consideration. Because the knowledge of the past is readily available on the internet, I can know of the millions who have died in the wars of history, the genocides that have occurred throughout history, the suffering of people during the invasions of barbarians, the plagues, the Islamic Wars, the Crusades, the Inquisition, and the immense injustices of the world that caused suffering for indigenous people by invaders and colonization. **In the realm of eternity, we can offer prayer and help for the suffering of the people long past, when the Spirit moves us to do so.** As I watched a movie about World War II, I found myself praying for the soldiers dying in the battles. I trust my prayer was not wasted.

No wonder there are so many avenues of escape for the mind and heart in our world today. Who can humanly hold all this suffering of the present and the past before their eyes without feeling the need to escape? What is a person of prayer to do in the face of all this darkness? Thank God that He has given us the greatest prayer of all. As participants in the Priesthood of Christ we can offer to God the very sacrifice of His Son in the celebration of the Mass. **When we go to Mass, we go in the name of all humankind interceding with Jesus before the Father for the salvation of all past and present.** We have in our Catholic tradition the great gift of the rosary where we can send up the plaintive cry, "Mother of God...pray for us sinners now and at the hour of our death." Then in this past century so full of suffering, Jesus came to Sister Faustina, a young sister in Poland, and

communicated to her knowledge of His mercy and a way of prayer that can help extend the offering of His sacrifice to the Father. In the Chaplet of Divine Mercy, we have a way of channeling our awareness of suffering in the world into a cry for help "for the sake of His sorrowful passion, have mercy on us and on the whole world.'

When I awake at night and the awareness of some need of my family or some suffering in the world weighs on my mind and banishes sleep, it is the **hopeful and trusting recitation of the Chaplet, the Jesus Prayer or the Rosary that eases my heart and often rocks me to sleep.** Then I remember a psalm that has been running through my heart in recent years: "Lord, my heart is not proud; nor are my eyes haughty. I do not busy myself with great matters, with things too sublime for me; rather, I have stilled and quieted my soul, like a weaned child. Like a weaned child on its mother's lap so is my soul within me. Israel, hope in the Lord both now and forever Psalm 131." To me it is **an invitation from God to trust in Him and to entrust to Him all needs of those close to me and of all peoples.** We are called to rest on the lap of our Father and trust unreservedly in His Divine Mercy. As I respond to my call to the mystery of intercessory prayer, I stumble along trying to do my part, asking our dear Mother how to be an intercessor for others, in love before God.

About the Author

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Bernice G. Dumitru lives in Pittsburgh Pa with her husband. She is a retired Lay Ecclesial Minister of the Pittsburgh Catholic Diocese. She has a Masters in Religious Education, a Masters in Christian Spirituality, a Certificate in Pastoral Counseling and Certification as a Chaplain. She has taught elementary school, served as Director of Religious Education, Directed a House of Prayer, given Ignatian Directed Retreats and spiritual direction, served as a hospital chaplain and as psychotherapist. Her mission now is to spread, first to her family and then others the good news of God's love and mercy who has given us the refuge of the Heart of Mary in these times of great difficulty in our world.

You can find her on Facebook as Bernice Pillart Dumitru and on Catholic365.

The Chaplet of Divine Mercy

“In 1935, St. Faustina received a vision of an angel sent by God to chastise a certain city. She began to pray for mercy but her prayers were powerless. Suddenly she saw the Holy Trinity and felt the power of Jesus’ grace within her. At the same time she found herself pleading with God for mercy with words she heard interiorly: *Eternal Father, I offer You the Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity of your dearly beloved Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, in atonement for our sins and those of the whole world; for the sake of his sorrowful Passion, have mercy on us* (Diary, #475).

As she continued saying this inspired prayer, the angel became helpless and could not carry out the deserved punishment (#474, 475). The next day, as she was entering the chapel, she again heard this interior voice, instructing her how to recite the prayer that Our Lord later called ‘the Chaplet.’ This time, after ‘have mercy on us’ were added the words ‘*and on the whole world.*’ From then on she recited this form of prayer almost constantly, offering it especially for the dying.

In subsequent revelations, the Lord made it clear that the Chaplet was not just for her, but for the whole world. He also attached extraordinary promises to its recitation. Prayed on ordinary rosary beads, the Chaplet of Divine Mercy is an intercessory prayer that extends the offering of the Eucharist, so it is especially appropriate to use it after having received Holy Communion at Holy Mass. It may be said at any time, but our Lord specifically told St. Faustina to recite it during the nine days before the Feast of Mercy. He then added: *By this Novena [of Chaplets] I will grant every possible grace to souls.* (#796) It is likewise appropriate to pray the Chaplet during the ‘Hour of Great Mercy’ – three o’clock each afternoon (recalling the time of Christ’s death on the Cross). In His revelations to St. Faustina, Our Lord asked for a special remembrance of His Passion at that Hour (#1320, 1572). – The Divine Mercy: Message and Devotion, p. 56-7

“The words of the chaplet reflect the Council of Trent’s dogmatic definition of the Real Presence in the Eucharist and the text of 1 John 2:2: ‘He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only ours, but also for the sins of the whole world.’ And the doxology concluding the chaplet is one of the most ancient intercessory prayers addressed to the Most Holy Trinity – used most widely in the churches of the Byzantine Rite, and Good Friday in the Roman Rite.” – Fr. George Kosicki, Now Is the Time for Mercy, p. 31

“The Divine Mercy Chaplet is a Eucharistic Prayer, as in it we join Jesus in offering Himself to the Father, in atonement for our sins, in imploring mercy for the whole world. As the Church teaches that Jesus is present, Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity in the Blessed Sacrament, we are offering to the Father His only Son, a gift He cannot refuse. We unite with the sacrifice of Jesus offered up on the Cross, for the salvation of the world.” – Cenacle Formation Manual, p. 57

“In 1936, Father Michael Sopocho had the Cebulski Publishing House in Cracow print [the Chaplet] on the reverse side of a prayer card, a copy of the Divine Mercy Image that Eugene Kazimierowski had painted in Vilnius.” – Sr. Sophia Mickalenko, p. 110

The Chaplet of Divine Mercy

- # 474-6 Origin of the Chaplet (Friday, Sept. 13, 1935)
- # 1319 Optional Opening Prayer used by the National Shrine of The Divine Mercy
"you expired, Jesus, but the source of life gushed forth for souls..." (Oct., 1937)
- # 186-1 "O Blood and Water, which gushed forth from the Heart of Jesus as a fount of mercy for us, I trust in you." (Approaching Lent, 1933)
- # 84 Prayed as intercessory prayer, (1934)
- # 308-9 "Glad Souls. An Act of Oblation." (Holy Thursday, 1934)
- # 950 Optional Concluding Prayer: "Eternal God, in whom mercy is endless..." (1937, at the conclusion of St. Faustina's invocations to the Divine Mercy, composed as a Litany by Fr. Sopocko.)

Pray the Chaplet

- # 687 "Say unceasingly the chaplet..." (Sept, 1936)
- # 754 "The Lord's Promise": embraced by My mercy (Nov, 1936)
- # 796 Chaplet novena (Dec. 1936)
- # 851 Another Chaplet novena in December 1936
- # 934 Saying the Chaplet with arms outstretched (Lent, 1937)

For Sinners

- # 847-8 Turn to mercy before the day of justice. (Christmas, 1936)
- # 929-30 Brings humankind closer to God (Feb. 1937)
- # 1540-41 "Throw itself into the arms of My mercy..." (Jan, 1938)

For The Dying

- # 809-11 The first soul to benefit from The Chaplet (Dec. 12, 1936)
- # 834-5 Interior requests for prayer. (Dec. 19, 1936) cP. # 935, 1015
- # 1035-6 "Oh, how much we should pray for the dying!" (Holy Wk, 1937)
- # 1540-41 "My mercy will shield them in that final battle." (Jan., 1938)
- # 1565 "Help Me to save a certain dying sinner." (Feb, 1938)
- # 1777 "Pray as much as you can for the dying." (June, 1938)
- # 1797-98 "you will obtain for him trust in My mercy." (June, 1938)
- # 1698 Grace & final repentance. (May, 1938)

For Various Intentions

- # 1731 "Through The Chaplet you will obtain everything... compatible with My will." (May, 1938)
- # 1791 "... this prayer was pleasing to God." (June, 1938)
- # 1128 "... everything can be obtained by means of this prayer" (May, 1938)

The Chaplet in Faustina's Congregation

- # 752 Faustina approaches Mother General (Nov, 1936)
- # 1379 Chaplet printed in booklet (Nov, 1937)

Prayer for the Dead

- # 20 Vision of Purgatory (April, 1926)
- # 411-12 Another vision of Purgatory (March, 1935) (cP. 1226)
- # 21 Deceased sister asks for Masses and prayer. (April, 1926) ^{cP} # 58
- # 515-20 Interaction with souls around All Souls Day, 1935
- # 748 Souls soared to heaven on All Souls Day (Nov, 1936)
- # 1185-9 Deceased sister asks Faustina for prayer (July, 1937)
- # 1382 Sister Dominic dies and visits Faustina (Nov, 1937)
- # 1723 Deceased young lady visits Faustina
- # 1738 "Enter into purgatory after because they need you there." (May, 1938)