

Sunday Q&A

Your Faith in Focus



GOD'S COWORKERS MUST PRAY

Does prayer change God?

Prayer is an essential part of every Christian's life, but sometimes we are challenged about the reasons why we do it. What is it good for? This week, Fr. Mike Schmitz offers a light about the importance of praying always, regardless of the challenges.

Pray Always

We pray because Jesus told us to do it, and when Jesus tells us to do something, it's good for us to do as he asks because he only wants what is good for us. He tells us to pray always. Jesus tells us to go before the Father and ask, ask, ask. He tells us to be persistent in prayer.

Prayer doesn't change God, but it does something. Prayer changes things. Well, God changes things. So why does he need us to pray? For an answer, let's turn to Blaise Pascal of France, a Catholic, philosopher, mathematician, and physicist who lived in the 1600s. "In calling us to pray for one another, God has extended to us the dignity of becoming causes," Pascal said.

God could just do it—whatever "it" is. But he wants us to work with him. More than that, he is *calling* us to participate in his work. This calling, this invitation, is something we need to respond to in a positive way. C. S. Lewis reminds us that God needs us to act. For instance,



"In calling us to pray, God allows us to become causes."

if we want to eat, we can't sit and expect the food to magically appear. God needs us to do what needs doing: shop, cook, eat.

We are actors who get to choose. We are agents who act on the world. We make decisions that mean something in the physical world and spiritually. Our prayers are united to God's goodness, and that makes a difference. God extends to us the dignity of being causes. So, prayer doesn't change God, but it does change things. And one thing it surely changes is us.

Ponder and Pray

- How often do you pray, and what are examples of some of your prayers?
- Do you think lighting a candle in church helps your prayer get noticed? Why or why not?

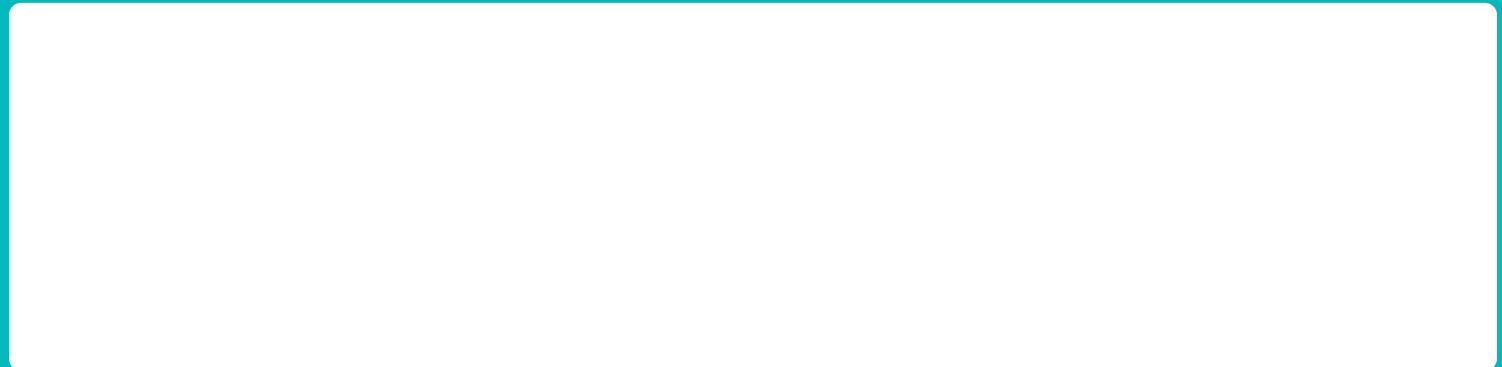
Make It Your Own

Write down your definition of “the dignity of becoming causes.”



The Agony in the Garden by Girolamo da Santacroce

Write down the ways prayer has changed you.



Tip of the Week

Every day, make a habit of praying to God for whatever is genuinely in your heart. Prepare a place in your home, make a sacred space, and commit to a specific time to make it sacred too. Start this week!

Dive Deeper

Scan this code to listen more:

Or go to: <https://media.ascensionpress.com/2023/08/30/the-ultimate-guide-to-prayer-from-fr-mike-schmitz/>



Fr. Mike Schmitz serves as director of youth and young adult ministry for the Diocese of Duluth, hosted the podcast *The Bible in a Year*, and contributes with *Ascension Articles*, from which this reflection was adapted.