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Praying on your knees

Renée Schafer Horton | Mar. 18, 2011 NCR Today

Stuck to my kitchen window is a small wind chime given to me by my best friend, a wonderful person who has made only one bad choice in her life -- to live two states away from me.

The chime has a tiny poem inscribed on it, reminding the reader that ?someone remembers you in prayer.? Normally, when someone says, ?I?ll be praying for you,? I take it with a grain of salt, knowing that people get busy and, frankly, there is so much to pray for and about in the world that whatever might be happening with me would naturally move down the to-pray-for list of anyone.

Except for Kathy. She?s one of those great pray-ers in the world who talk to God like he was her next door neighbor and frequently hits the prayer waves in supplication for her many and varied friends.

So, when I see that little wind chime, it makes me smile that someone is remembering me and it also quietly chastens me to stop a minute and pray for the people I?ve said (with best intentions) that I?d pray for.

During Lent, I?ve been trying to be more intentional about everything I do in life, including prayer and that means I?ve made a major change in my prayer posture. Normally, you see, I pray on the run or as I lie down to sleep at night.

I multi-task my prayer the way I do talking to relatives while I wash the dishes or checking on my friends while I weed the garden. In other words, I?m really not totally present to either task when I multi-task, and that is never more true than in the case of prayer.

So, in an effort to both settle and focus my mind for prayer, I?ve gone old-school and started to kneel. I still toss prayers at God during the busy-ness and business of my day (ala darts at a heavenly dartboard), but at night, instead of lying down in bed and beginning my prayers as I fall asleep, I kneel next to the bed. I?ve found the posture immediately focuses my mind. My prayers feel more conscious, the people I?m praying for more real, their concerns more concrete.

When we pray, if we do it just like we do everything else in this hasty world, it seems to me we?re less likely to connect to the deeper reality we are trying to reach. For me, at least, my knees have become more helpful in my journey to connect with God, to my fellow pray-ers, and to the many in the world in need of someone holding them up in prayer.

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