



My Dear Parishioners,

Praised be Jesus Christ! Several years ago, Deacon Jim Elliot shared the following: ***“God always answers our prayers. His answer will be ‘Yes, No (because I have something better), or not Yet.’”*** Of all Jim’s words those always stuck with me. For they are true: God ALWAYS answers prayer, He fulfills all our desires, in ways that we don’t realize, expect or anticipate. How wise it is to lean on that Truth!

Over the past many months, our prayers for Anne Marie McCarthy have certainly been answered. As of this writing, she’s home recuperating well from her surgery; grateful for our prayers. As pastor, I know of real miracles in our midst: at least one physical miracle, a cure of pancreatic cancer! But even more miracles of conversion! Our confession lines are getting longer which means God’s Mercy is being desired and is finding deeper and deeper homes in the hearts of His People. This is such Good News!

With our Fall Activities now in place – PREP, BIBLE STUDY, SMALL GROUPS, Oktoberfest – let us continue to press on in Faith, in Prayer and with Confidence in God who always hears us and who loves us!

Peace,

Fr. Rogers

For Monday’s Feast of St. Padre Pio, I share this article by Margaret Rose Realy entitled:

When we’re depressed or feeling blue, pray this prayer from Padre Pio

If you find yourself in a state of darkness, the key is “to reach” in prayer.

The small framed unsigned print reads “Reach up as high as you can today, and God will reach down the rest of the way.” It’s my go-to quote for those times when I feel an emotional darkness—depression—coming on. For many of us this darkness is a familiar not-so-good old friend, the Black Dog mentioned by Sir Winston Churchill—or [seasonal affective disorder](#). The DSM (Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders) has [clinical definitions](#) for depression, and there is as well the spiritual darkness that St. John of the Cross writes about in [Dark Night of the Soul](#). However you’ve come to a depressive state, and for whatever history brought you there, the key in both of those dark times is *to reach*.

The state of darkness and depression is not a void. It is a space filled with insights that we are momentarily blinded to. When we try to go it alone, we are often too wearied to keep from going under, instead succumbing to the waves of hopelessness. To reach is not an intuitive movement when psychologically and/or spiritually sinking into depression. Even though we’ve been taught that to despair is to turn our backs to God—which is a sin—there is another element to despairing that is sometimes overlooked. It comes from the Rule of St. Benedict, “In all things may God be glorified.”

In a recent confession, when I was in a season of depression, the priest gave me a very specific penance. I was to read about Jesus walking on stormy seas, and Peter’s fear in Matthew 14:30-31. Then reflect, specifically, on that moment when Peter is desperately reaching out to Our Lord—that second just before Jesus takes his hand.

It was a dark and doubt-filled moment for Peter, whose faith had faltered. It was also an intuitive response to a person physically drowning -- reaching out, trying to grasp at anything to save his life.

Father gave me imagery by meditating on and fulfilling that penance; a metaphor to psychologically and spiritually reach for the hand of Christ. I was surprised by how quickly the instinct to survive spiritually soon matched the desire to live physically when exhausted and in deep waters.

Assured that the Lord had taken my hand so I will not drown, **I often read this prayer from Padre Pio, sometimes three times through!**

Stay with me, Lord, for it is necessary to have you present so that I do not forget you. You know how easily I abandon you.

Stay with me, Lord, because I am weak, and I need your strength, so that I may not fall so often.

Stay with me, Lord, for you are my life, and without you, I am without fervor.

Stay with me, Lord, for you are my light, and without you, I am in darkness.

Stay with me, Lord, to show me your will.

Stay with me, Lord, so that I hear your voice and follow you.

Stay with me, Lord, for I desire to love you very much, and always be in your company.

Stay with me, Lord, if you wish me to be faithful to you.

Stay with me, Lord, for as poor as my soul is, I want it to be a place of consolation for you, a nest of love. Amen.

St. Pio of Pietrelcina, Prayer After Communion

Depression is a battle, and for some of us a lifelong cross to bear. In bearing it as best we can while reaching up and out for help, we are led in to a deeper maturity of faith—which like most virtues, is not easily won.