



The Epiphany of the Lord January 8, 2017 A

- ◆ What does a healthy spiritual life look like?
- ◆ Prayers for the journey

The following piece is by Julianne Stanz who is leading our parish Mission.

What does a healthy spiritual life look like? The following fable is a good metaphor for what God does for us as we grow in faith. *Once upon a time, there was a prince who had many riches but suffered from a crooked back that forced him to walk hunched over. His father, saddened to see his son depressed over his condition, arranged to have a sculptor erect a statue of his son. The sculpture was an exact replica of the son except for one feature: the figure in the statue had a straight back. Every day, the prince studied the statue, gazing at it for endless hours. People started to notice that, little by little, the prince was walking with a more erect gait. After a long time, the king looked out his window one day and saw the prince gazing at the statue as usual. However, as the prince began to walk away from the statue, the king and all those in the square noticed in amazement that the prince's back was no longer bent and he was no longer walking hunched over.*

Walking with God closely day by day, helps us straighten us out! In the book the "Seven Keys to Spiritual Wellness" Joe Paprocki outlines what a healthy spiritual diet looks like for us as Catholics. One of the characteristics that he outlines is "seeing yourself as you really are." In essence, unless we have a clear perception of who we are, warts and all, we run the risk of falling prey to the deadly sin of pride. We need to be authentic and true to who we are made for. We are made by God, for God. Catholic spirituality is designed to help us to be real and authentic. We begin the Mass with the penitential rite during which we admit our sinfulness not only to God but also to one another. This is an act of humility, which is not a beating up of oneself but an exercise in recognizing that God is God and we are not.

The Seven Keys to Spiritual Wellness

Here are the Seven Keys to Spiritual Wellness that Julianne Stanz uses to help people to grow in faith:

- Key 1-** Keep Christ at the Heart of Your Life
- Key 2-** Cultivate an Attitude of Gratitude
- Key 3-** Look for the Lost/Mission
- Key 4-** Keep It Simple Sweetie! (KISS)
- Key 5-** Be Merciful
- Key 6-** Be Joyful
- Key 7-** A Strong Prayer Life

Throughout our lives, let us pray for the grace we need to love and follow Jesus so that we may become the people we are created to be, people who walk straighter and taller because of his love!

Prayers for the Journey

The following are from *The Treasury of Prayers* booklet on our website.

Three Morning Prayers

(1)

*I thank you, Lord,
for the wonder of my being, for giving me
another day to love and serve you,
and enjoy the awesome beauty of your creation.
May I often think of you during this day.
Inspire everything that I say and do.
May it all begin from you
and with your unfailing help,
be carried through for your glory,
through Christ our Lord.
Amen.*

(2)

*Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
I come into your loving presence
with gratitude for another day.
I thank you for the blessings in life
that I tend to take for granted:
food, shelter, health, family, work and faith in you.*

*May I live this day in a manner that pleases you,
and helps me to become the person
you created me to be.
Help me to recognize and respond generously
to the promptings of the Holy Spirit
in the events and encounters of this day.
May I live this day with the dispositions of heart that
reflect the values of Jesus: love, truth, compassion,
mercy, justice and kindness.
When decisions need to be made,
help me to choose well.
When asked to walk the extra mile,
grant me generosity of heart.
Protect me from the false ways of the Evil One
and help me to live in your truth.
Expand my capacity for love and joy.
In all things, may I give you honor and glory.
Amen.*

(3)

*God of my life, I welcome this new day.
It is your gift to me, a new creation,
a promise of resurrection.
I thank you for the grace of being alive this morning.
I thank you for the sleep that has refreshed me.
I thank you for this chance to make
a new beginning.
This day, Lord, is full of promise and opportunity;
let me waste none of it.
This day is full of mystery and the unknown;
help me to face it without fear or anxiety.
This day is blessed with beauty and adventure;
make me fully alive to it.
During this day keep me thoughtful,
prayerful and kind.
May I be courteous and helpful to others,
and not turned in on myself.
Keep me from any word or deed
that would hurt or belittle another.
And may the thoughts of my mind
be pleasing in your sight.
When night comes again, may I look back on this day
with no grievance or bitterness in my heart.
And may nobody be unhappy because of anything
I have done, or anything I have failed to do.
Lord, bless this day for me and everyone.
Make it a day in which we grow
to have the mind of Christ, your Son.
Amen.*

Evening Prayer

*Blessed are you, God, almighty Lord,
who made the sun to give light to the day
and brightened the night with shining stars.
You have brought us through another day
and led us to the threshold of night.
Hear our prayer and the prayers of your people.
Forgive us all the sins we have committed
deliberately or in weakness.
Receive our evening prayers
and pour out upon your adopted children
the riches of your goodness and mercy.
Set your holy angels round about us,
clothe us with justice, strengthen us with your truth
and defend us with your power.
Deliver us from every attack of the devil
who seeks to ensnare us.
Grant that this evening, and the night to come, and all
the days of our life may pass in holiness and peace.
Amen.*

Prayer for Family Unity

*Lord Jesus, with Mary and Joseph,
you lived in a family.
Teach me to appreciate the gift of being
part of a family.
Show me ever new ways of protecting and
comforting those closest to me;
and, each day, let me do something that will say
'I love you' without speaking those words.
Let me never part from any of my family in anger.
Prompt me always to turn back without delay
to forgive and to be forgiven.
Let me see your image in my family, in each of them,
and in my larger family too, knowing that
in your kingdom, we will be truly one family,
united by your sacrifice on the Cross.
Amen.*

Prayer of Spouses for Each Other

*Lord Jesus, grant that my spouse and I may have
a true and understanding love for each other.
Grant that we may both be filled with faith and trust.
Give us the grace to live with each other
in peace and harmony.*

*May we always bear with one another's weaknesses
and grow from each other's strengths.
Help us to forgive one another's failings
and grant us patience, kindness, cheerfulness,
and the spirit of placing the well-being
of one another ahead of self.
May the love that brought us together grow
and mature with each passing year.
Bring us both closer to you through
our love for each other.
Let our love grow to perfection.
Amen.*

If you like these prayers, please share with your friends.

Have a blessed week,

Le Sarah

