

## Intentional Intercessory Prayer

by Kim Padan

Hi everyone, it's Kim again! As you can tell I'm in a different space but I am still here in my home in Illinois. This is probably the messiest room in my house! It is my home-office and craft room, just a place where I do a lot of stuff. I'm often very very busy in here.

You are probably wondering, "Why in the world are you in there when we're having a conference about prayer?". Well, In addition to praying the Psalms, something you know I love to do, another thing I enjoy doing is intercessory prayer by keeping a prayer journal.

Now, prayer journaling is something that is fairly new to me. I've been journaling for about a year and I've even started some new types of journaling just in the last couple of months. So, I'm going to share a few things with you today. There will just be one video on this because once you hear it I think you'll get the idea and you'll either jump for it or decide that it's not for you.

As Catholics we know very much the importance of intercessory prayer. Scripture tells us about this over and over again. But we also have a great cloud of witnesses, the saints who are in heaven already who are interceding on our behalf. So, we know how important it is to pray for others.

But let's face it, a lot of times people will say, "Will you pray for me? I have a job interview coming up". Or, "My husband's having surgery he really could use some prayers". And though we will quickly say, "I'll keep you in prayer". And then, do you actually do it?

What I've found in my own life is that I would say, "I'll pray for you". And then I would forget about it and maybe later I would think, "Oh! I was supposed to pray for someone. Someone's got some health issues. I don't know what it is". And so I would say a very generic prayer, "Lord please bless the person. You know who it is. You know the situation. Please heal them!" and that would be it!

Now, that prayer doesn't go wasted. It's not lost between here and heaven but it's not a very intentional prayer. And so I really wanted to figure out a way to do that better. And so I started keeping track in a notebook.

But then, I saw a friend (okay, someone I met through Facebook) another Catholic writer and speaker. And she would put on Facebook, “I’m going to adoration. Can I pray for you?”. I thought, “Wow! What a beautiful thing to do!”.

And so, I would let her know when I had prayer requests and then I started posting that on my own Facebook page and people started contacting me. Usually via private message because they didn’t want to put everything out there in the open but I knew that I needed a way to keep track of these things. So that in my absentminded nature I wouldn’t forget. So, I started keeping a journal with those prayer intentions as well.

Now for the purposes today, I’m going to show you the outside of my prayer journal and then I’m going to show you some makeshift pages that have other things in them so that you don’t actually read the private prayers of the people I’ve been keeping track of.

As I said, this is my craft room so I’m going to show you that you can keep track of prayer in any kind of journal. Or if you like keeping notes on your tablet or phone you can certainly do it electronically but I like good old-fashioned pen and paper. I’m still a very tangible, write-things-out kind of person.

But I also like pretty things. So I... [lifts up notebook with floral print and an image of Mary and baby Jesus in the middle with the word “grace” written below] It looks backwards. I guess I could switch the camera. But it actually says, “grace” under there. I like putting things on my notebooks and I’ll even use a ribbon to keep track of where I am in my notebook and I just like taking this with me.

I keep it in my briefcase that I bring with me when I go to adoration. Which, I don’t do as much in the winter. Hard for me to get around. But I also use it when I’m traveling and I also bring this book to my prayer chair in the other room when I’m praying Evening Prayer. So, this is what I use!

You might say, “How do you keep track of it? What do you write down? Because it could be a lot of information” and it often is.

So, I’m going to show you a sample page of how I like to keep track of these things. Now, I use some real names, my husband Bruce and my Mom and the others are people like Disney characters. So, I just write stuff down with a date and someone’s prayer needs.

Okay, now what I'm going to describe to you are a few things that I like to keep track of. I'll put a date at the top of the page when I'm writing things down. So, even though some prayers are ongoing, when I grab this a couple of times a week I want to put the date so that I can keep track of maybe when a prayer concern first came up. I write down the person's name and if they need, you know, if they have a job interview or if they have surgery coming up, maybe their son is going overseas to serve in the military. I want to be able to write those things down.

Sometimes I put a group down. And what I mean by that is, I follow a group on Facebook called, "Catholic Mommies of Angels in Heaven" or something like that. It is a forum, a closed forum, for women like myself who have lost children through miscarriage or stillbirth or infant death. And we want to pray for each other and support each other. Some of us lost our children a long time ago and we want to help those who have just recently experienced that loss.

Now, this forum is very very active. There are a lot of things that get posted every single day and there is no way that I could keep up with it, writing every name down. And I don't know these people on a personal level but I certainly want to pray for them.

So, what I will do in my notebook is I write down,

"Little Saints Forum. 3 miscarriages. 2 hopeful pregnancies. 4 upcoming due dates."

A lot of times women will say, "My baby should have been born next week. I'm really sad because he's not here". And so I want to pray for those people. I'll do it as a fairly general prayer, but yet it's very specific to that group.

Another cluster of people I pray for is by name and that is the group of people I know in my life who have left the church and who I hope will come back. They might be related to me, they might be friends from college, they might be people who attended the parish here in Danville. But I just want to pray for them and pray that God will reveal Himself to them in such a way that they come back to the sacramental life of the Catholic faith.

Now, I don't know if you can tell [shows inside of notebook] but I also have a few notes in there in green. And what I do there is I look back at a journal page maybe a week later or two weeks later and if I have any updates. For instance, my Mom, had some surgery last fall and she's recovering very well and she started driving

again. I was so happy when she started driving! Maybe someone got that job after the interview. Or a child had a really successful event, like in a school play. I like to write those things down.

Perhaps there is someone who is still struggling so I'll make a note to say, "Call this person. Contact this person because she needs prayer. Send this person a card". That's what I do most in this room. I actually like to make cards. So, I do that. You don't have to make your own cards! But let me just put a plug in for sending hand-written notes. In our electronic world, people like to get something they can actually open and read. So, whether you buy your cards at a gift shop or you make them like I do, send people notes! It's a great thing to do! It's a great way to let them know that you're praying for them.

Now, in addition to regular writing in my journal, one thing that I started doing more recently is more of an, "art journal" style. A lot of my paper crafting friends keep an art journal and they do it, very much, for art purpose or for art's sake and they do it as a way of relaxing. But I wanted to combine it with my prayer journal.

So, I'm going to show you a couple of samples. Here is a page [shows decorated pages of journal]. And that might be kinda weird and you might be like, "Now, what is that all about Kim?". What I try to do is I have a stamp that says, "I'm praying for you" and I will write down some names. I have a lot of friends, people that maybe are friends of my friends (where I've heard of their situations) who are struggling with cancer. And so I'll have a group of cancer patients and I'll list them by name.

And I have this one stamp that has wavy lines and I'll use it a lot! And literally when I'm stamping it, I'm asking God, "Please wash this person over with Your healing, with Your grace". I pray for cleansing of their mind that they would be at peace, that they would not be stressed out, that the anxiety would be washed away. I use that a lot, literally as I'm stamping.

I've got a flower here and I use that symbolizing life and beauty. I'll say, "Please Lord, even in the midst of their suffering they would find life. That they would find joy. That they would find strength". Things like that. I'm kinda babbling right now. But the idea is literally as I am marking in my journal, I am praying for these people.

I have a heart stamp that I use a lot. Either when I'm praying for my loved ones, people in the family. Or friends that I know who are going through marital

problems. I have a real passion for marriages. I want them to be strengthened. I want people to be able to stay together for better or for worse.

And I've got a butterfly. I use that also for new life, renewal, second chances. So I often pray for my parish. I make sure to pray that my pastor stays healthy and that he has vigorous joy and that he lives out his priestly vocation. Praying for different ministries in the parish: RCIA, the choir, children's ministries, all those different things. So, I will write things with a regular pen and then I add embellishments with my stamps.

This might be totally weird to all of you and I know that. But it's something that I was just introduced to and the reason why I like it and the reason why I decided I would go ahead and show it to you is because God Himself chose to become incarnate in the world. He entered into this space physically emphasizing the beauty and the wonder of our physical beings. Letting us know that our bodies matter. And so it's really, I don't know, I think it's kinda neat to be able to pray and you think about head to toe to pray.

Whether your hands are raised up as you're praying along with scripture verses of the day. Or if you are drawing or stamping into a journal, making hearts around the names of your children; to pray physically and tangibly is a wonderful wonderful thing to do. And it's new to me, very new to me but I thought I might as well share it with you because maybe it's something that you would like to do too.

I'm going to show you the last page just because this is my last entry (and yes I know it's backwards for you). I have some scripture stamps that I put on here, "I thank my God every time I remember You. Philippians 1:3". And guess what, you can't read it, but I have John-Paul and Annie's name right here! I'm so thankful for John-Paul and Annie, the ministry that they have, and their willingness to share so much with all of us around the world. I think it's pretty cool!

And next to this one, "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be upon you". I put the Pray More Novenas community. So I want you to know that I am praying for all of you today. I'm praying for you! I'm going to keep this page. It's in my make-shift journal but I'm going to put it in my real journal.

I'm going to continue to pray for everyone who has been involved in this prayer conference because I know that John-Paul and Annie's vision was not that we would just watch a few videos and be done with it. But rather, we would take these ideas and find something new. Find something that is tangible to you that touches

your heart; that will help improve your prayer life. Whether it's praying with the Psalms, praying with a prayer journal, or any of the other methods of prayer that others have shared with us, I hope that your prayer life will grow and help you be closer to God. To know Him more fully to serve Him, to just be in a right relationship with Him.

It's been a real blessing to share these videos with you! I hope that you've had fun! I know that I have and, as I've mentioned before, I hope someday I actually get to meet you in person. God Bless!