

Pray More Lenten Retreat - Transcript

Prayer Tips

Fr. Ethan Moore

My name is Father Ethan Moore, and welcome to *ba da ba ba ba*, Prayer Tips. I was recently visiting a small contemplative order outside of Steubenville, Ohio. This order is unique in that it is composed of both brothers, sisters, a priest, and a recluse – an individual who lives in a very monastic way, who enters into the communal life only through prayer. He actually has a small house that is built attached to the church, where they spend 6 hours a day in adoration. And on certain days of the year – Easter, Christmas, and one other day that he picks – he is able to leave the confines of his little monastery and come out and join the community. And it just so happened that the day that I was there he was out.

So I got to meet this man who spends most all of his life in solitude, in prayer. And you'd be surprised to find out that he actually is a major extrovert. Loves to talk, loves to be social, loves to just have a good time. And yet he has chosen this simple life of prayer. He doesn't sleep much, he says he gets about like 8 hours of sleep a week. All he does is pray. And in the midst of that life that he has chosen, that God has chosen him to, he uttered some words to me that were so profound and so striking. I wanted to share those with you.

As I was leaving to return home to my parish, I saw him in the church. He had made me a humongous bag of rosaries to take with me that I just put in my car. And as I returned to the chapel I saw him looking around the pews, seeing where the bag went, and he looked kind of confused. So I went up to him, kind of to say goodbye and let him know that I got the rosaries. And as I gave him an embrace, as we hugged, he glared at me with these fiery eyes and he said 2 words "For souls." That the life that he is choosing to live is for the salvation of souls. The life that I am called to, the life that you are called to is to bring souls to Jesus.

And I think if we enter into our prayer each day knowing that it actually really matters, knowing that it makes a phenomenal difference within the great mystical body of Christ, that our prayers are bringing souls to God. And if we live with that same intention, if we live our prayer life with that in the forefront of our mind – it's not just a routine, it's not just something that we do that's kind of part of our daily life, it is our work here on earth to bring souls to Christ.

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You know, right before St. John Bosco was ordained a priest, the great founder of The Salesians, and the one who ministered to the homeless boys of the streets of Turin and far beyond that. The night before his ordination, his mother said to him “John, now your life is for the saving of souls.” As he entered into the mission of his vocation, he was charged with his own mother’s words to go out and to live 100% for the victory of Christ, and claiming that in the hearts of those who may not know Him.

And we can do that both in an active way, as we journey into our workaday world, as we journey into our family and our relationships, bringing Christ there through intentionally trying to live in union with Him for the sake of others, for the sake of their salvation. But also in a contemplative way, both active and contemplative, reminding ourselves that this life that we have been given is only for a time, only for a short time. And whatever we choose to do here on earth, one of the most important things we are called to is to get to heaven. I mean, that’s the end of what we’re about.

So, living in such a way that we are working for our salvation, and that we are striving to bring others along with us. This is the great communion of saints, and this is what God intended for His church here on earth. So I too charge you with those words, that we might live for souls. That we might pray for souls. And that through the mercy of God, and the intercession of His holy Mother Mary, that many might be brought to Him to live with Him in union with Him forever. May we live for the glory of God, and bring His majesty here on earth through our actions and through our prayers. This is Father Ethan Moore, and you have seen *ba da ba ba ba* Prayer Tips.