

Tidings of St Mary's



Parish of Saint Mary's York

November 2016

This Month at St. Mary's

Ever wonder what is your ministry might be? The following article from recent edition of the Christian Science Monitor reminds us of the most important thing that we can do in every situation: pray. And it also reminds us that many people will be very receptive to our offer of prayer in their challenging moments.

Why the tweet #prayfor has staying power

A popular hashtag on Twitter these days starts with #prayfor, followed by the place of a major tragedy, such as #prayforNice or #prayforOrlando... [M]eanwhile, major media have begun to take note of the high number of prayer services held in religious institutions, especially after such tragedies.

At a time of a decline in church attendance, why is prayer still so prominent in the public square?

One reason, suggests a nationwide survey by the nonpartisan Barna Group, is that a majority of American adults – 66 percent – believe that God can heal. Even more people (68 percent) have prayed for God to heal someone. And more than a quarter of American adults have experienced healing through prayer.

Both the practice and belief about prayer vary widely by region, gender, race, education, age, and religious affiliation. Blacks, for example, are twice as likely as whites to say they have experienced spiritual healing. Still, the role of prayer in daily life has remained a powerful presence, as witnessed after recent tragedies, on social media, and in surveys. According to N.T. Wright, a famous Anglican theologian, the purpose of prayer for Christians, based on Jesus's instructions in the Lord's Prayer, is "to seek God's power in furthering its ultimate fulfillment."



Barna's editor in chief, Roxanne Stone, explains the results of the recent survey on prayer this way: "In a post-religious, scientifically-driven culture, these high levels of belief in the miraculous may come as a surprise to many. But being sick personally, or having someone you love face a serious illness, is one of the most vulnerable and devastating experiences of a person's life. It's a moment that drives many – even those who do not believe in God – to their knees in desperation. Many people seek God in that space when they may not otherwise. This is an opportunity for church leadership to come alongside people and guide them in these spiritual experiences."

... A recent study by Baylor University in Texas found nearly 9 of 10 Americans have relied upon healing prayer at some point in their lives. "Outside of belief in God, there may be no more ubiquitous religious expression in the US than use of healing prayer," says Jeff Levin, director of the program on religion and population health at Baylor.

In an age of skepticism about religion, such news about prayer is something to tweet about.

Do you find prayer is the one thing that slips away when life gets busy? It's essential to set aside time to be alone with God and pray specifically for things that are on our hearts. Part of my prayer laziness had been a lack of a good system; a system that was simple, but that would allow me to purposefully pray for those I love. It was out of a need for a better system, that I developed my own Index Card Prayer System. It is a simple, easy system that helps me remember to pray for the things that are essential. I hope you find this system as easy to use as I have and that it draws you closer to the Lord, as it has for me. -Blessings, Kandice Cann

Things you will need:

- * Index Cards (either 3x5 or 4x6, your choice)
- * Index Card box to fit your cards
- * Index Card dividers to fit your cards/box
- * A nice pen that you enjoy using (I know, stupid, but important to me.) :)

HOW TO USE YOUR PRAYER BOX

Step One:

Label the dividers as follows and place them in the box in this order:

- * 1 divider - Daily
- * 7 dividers - Days of the Week
- * 31 dividers - Numbered 1-31
- * 1 divider – People to pray for
- * 1 divider – Favourite prayers

Step Two:

Fill out your Index cards with your prayer requests. The following is my system. You can tailor it to your needs.

Daily:

- * Thankfulness to God (salvation, protection, new day, hearing my prayer)
- * Confess sin (known and unknown)
- * I pray for my spouse, family, my marriage, children and pets
- * Any other person or event that is on your heart to pray for

Weekly Cards:

* **Monday** – behind the divider index card marked Monday place an index card with the following people to pray for

1. pray for Immediate family
2. siblings
3. grandparents
4. nieces and nephews, etc.

*** Tuesday**

1. Pray for Ministry Leaders
2. Pray for your Rector and his family
3. Pray for Missionaries (especially Canon Paul Jeffries and BMC)
4. Pray for World Church Leaders

*** Wednesday**

1. Pray for close friends and their families
2. Pray for your church family

*** Thursday**

1. Pray for World Issues and Issues close to home
2. Pray for peace on earth
3. Pray for the economy
4. Pray for our schools and workplaces
5. Pray for your town, province and country

*** Friday**

1. Pray for those in need of salvation
2. Pray for the homeless, the unemployed
3. Pray for sick and the handicapped

*** Saturday**

1. Pray for people in nursing homes and hospitals
2. Pray for doctors, nurses and other health care professionals

*** Sunday**

1. Pray for the whole church of Christ
2. Pray for you Parish and Diocese
3. Pray for your congregation and church family

The next section of the prayer box is the divider cards labelled 1 through 31. Behind each of the dividers you can put people's birthdays, if someone has a surgery scheduled or other event on a certain day that you can pray for them.

Following the numbered divider cards I have a card labeled: * People to pray for – behind this card you list those who have asked you to keep them in their prayers. Those people who are listed on your **parish prayer list**.

* Favourite prayers – behind this divider card I have my favorite prayers and pieces of scripture