

## Pastoral Reflection

Twenty-ninth Sunday in Ordinary Time

“Be faithful to what you have learned and believed,” writes Paul to Timothy.

I remember what I learned from my Mom and Dad. My Dad believed in the power of prayer. He carried a prayer list as he worked as a letter carrier. As he delivered mail he prayed a rosary for each person on his prayer list. When he retired, he continued this contemplative practice of “praying always without becoming weary.” By his life, he showed that he believed the truth of today’s readings, “My help is from God who made heaven and earth. He believed in embodied prayer as well. He was a letter carrier who would sing "Happy Birthday" to his constituents on their birthday and help senior citizens when they asked. He cared for the widows and orphans. He came to our piano and dance recitals in an era when he was one of the few dads present.

My Mom believed in the power of prayer as well. My parents first date was going together to the Our Lady of Perpetual Help Devotion. Twenty years later when I was born our whole family continued to pray together to Our Lady of Perpetual Help. For years, her icon hung over the mantle in our living room. As my Dad was dying, my Mom gathered us around him to pray in his name “The Prayers at My Death.” As we prayed, I felt like we were mid-wives, birthing him to the heart of the Holy Mystery.

When our family is “standing in the need of prayer” I usually request prayers from our beloved Cronan community. At those times, I feel like Moses needing the support of Aaron and Hur to hold his hands steady in prayer. I may carry my Mom and Dad’s spiritual DNA in turning to prayer, but I also need the support of the community to join me in prayer. I appreciate having the Cronan community to hold my hands steady. Sometimes that embodied prayer support comes as a prayer shawl, a ride, a meal, a card, a phone call, an email, a follow up question, a presence at a memorial. I am thankful to belong to a prayerful community. Supporting one another in prayer is a charism of our community that I hope we preserve.

Madonna Kuciejczyk-Kernan

Meister Eckhart “If the only prayer you said was thank-you, that would be enough.”