



RELATIONAL PRAYER: How is Christ Calling Out to Me?

By Jacob Rosenmeyer, Pre-Theology I — Sioux City

In a letter to her community, St. Teresa of Kolkata once said: *“Jesus longs for you. He misses you when you don’t come close. He thirsts for you. He loves you always, even when you don’t feel worthy. When not accepted by others, even by yourself, He is the one who always accepts you.”* Through reading St. Teresa’s letter, most importantly this quote, and through a weekly prayer class, the phrase, *“Jake, I thirst for you”* began to enter my prayer life. At first this was troubling. How could I be so important that Christ was thirsting for me? How could I put my guard down enough to accept this truth? Through continued prayer, I began to realize that Jesus Christ is calling me to Himself, inviting me to more deeply consider the love he has for me. Not only do we thirst for Christ, but Christ thirsts for us and for our love. It was Christ’s personal call that invited me to become close to Him.

WEEKLY PRAYER STUDY

For me, this call became the overall theme of Pre-Theology I’s weekly prayer class led by Fr. James Mason, President-Rector. The class, which has been lovingly dubbed “story time with Fr. Mason,” provides many opportunities to deepen my prayer life. The curriculum is designed to introduce seminarians to a variety of ways to pray and also to St. Ignatius’ Rules for Discernment of Spirits. The class discussions, weekly readings

and reflections, and various pastoral tips from Fr. Mason, have encouraged us to deepen our prayer lives and our faith.

THRISTING FOR CHRIST

One of the key aspects of an active prayer life is spending time in silence with God. Having always been a talkative and social person, this was a great struggle for me at first. Slowing down to listen to God’s calling out to me was one of the most impactful lessons I learned through the semester-long prayer class. Many of the reflections and questions that enter my prayer life stem from this silence. I think they are valuable questions for all people to consider, such as: What weak points in our life allow for the enemy to engage us in battle during prayer? How can we “de-junk” or refocus our prayer life? Is humility a key value in our life? And most notably, how can we more concretely “thirst” for Christ?

While these questions require prayer and consideration during the coming semesters, they provide me with great graces through prayer. I am now far more comfortable spending time in silence to listen for Christ, who calls out to me. I am also more willing to ask God directly for guidance with particular issues or struggles. Most importantly, when no other guidance comes to me in prayer, I simply repeat, *“Jesus, I thirst for you. Jesus, I thirst for you. Jesus, I thirst for you.”*✚