

Let's  
Pray

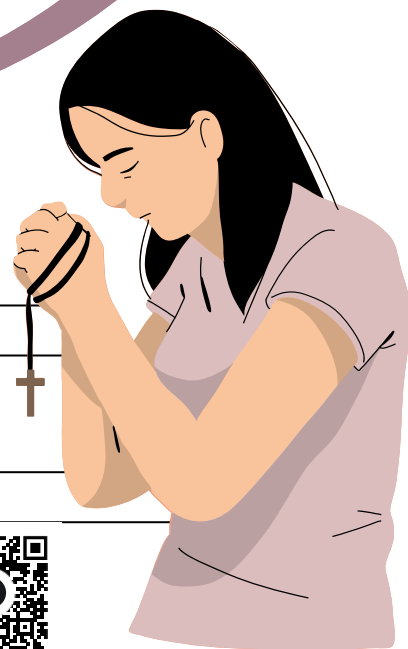
# IS GOD A GENIE OR A GOOD FATHER?



HAVE YOU EVER PRAYED REALLY HARD FOR SOMETHING AND DIDN'T GET IT?  
WHAT WAS THAT EXPERIENCE LIKE? DID IT CHALLENGE YOUR FAITH?

DO YOU THINK GOD SHOULD GIVE US EVERYTHING WE WANT? EXPLAIN

WATCH THIS VIDEO FROM FR MIKE SCHMITZ "WHEN GOD DOESN'T ANSWER  
YOUR PRAYERS" AND REFLECT ON THE QUESTIONS THAT FOLLOW



Fr Mike states that often we are hesitant to pray for ourselves and our own needs.  
But how can praying for ourselves actually help our relationship with God?

DRAW A LINE BETWEEN THE TERM AND ITS MATCHING DEFINITION

**PETITIONARY PRAYER**

- being effective in producing a desired result or outcome

**EFFICACIOUS**

- praying to God on behalf of other people, groups, or situations rather than focusing on your own personal needs

**INTERCESSORY PRAYER**

- praying to God asking God for your own personal need

What broken-hearted experience does Fr Mike think we have all had at some point?

The Catechism of the Catholic Church acknowledges that heart-break but asks an even deeper question:

**Can you explain the following quote from the Catechism of the Catholic Church in your own words?**

*"In the first place, we ought to be astonished by this fact: when we praise God or give him thanks for his benefits in general, we are not particularly concerned whether or not our prayer is acceptable to him. On the other hand, we demand to see the results of our petitions."*



# IS GOD A GENIE OR A GOOD FATHER?

The Catechism goes on to ask: *"What is the image of God that motivates our prayer: an instrument to be used? or the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ?"*

What kind of response do we expect from God if these are our images of him?

Genie:

Divine ATM:

24 Hour Therapist:

Rescue Chopper:



READ: MATTHEW 15:21-28

Have you every felt like God isn't listening? Have you ever prayed desperately for something and not received the answer you were looking for? It's so hard, and it can prove to be a serious challenge to our faith in a loving God.

But God is a loving Father, He hears all of our prayers, He sees our tears, He hears our sighs, our groans, even the times when we can't put words on our thoughts but just offer our hearts. What is our image of God? Do we see Him as a genie, or a Divine ATM? Do we convince ourselves that if we just say the right prayers and do the right things, He'll dispense the graces we or others we pray for need? That's not a real relationship - as Fr Mike says in his video, that can be a "manipulationship".

God is Father - and as father He knows the deepest needs of our hearts and loves us, and those we pray for even more than we ever could. So when we pray, we can pray with confidence, that God hears us and loves us.

The Canaanite woman confidently presented her request to Jesus, and her faith was strong. Let's pray to have a strong faith, one that does not waver based on instant results, but relies on trust and confidence in a loving Father who sees all, knows all and wants the maximum of our happiness.



MISSION!

HAVE YOU EVER SET UP A PRAYER WALL, OR INTENTIONS JAR OR KEPT A PRAYER JOURNAL?

- IN ONE SPACE, LEAVE ROOM FOR PRAYERS OF PETITION FOR YOURSELF, OR INTERCESSION FOR OTHERS, AS A REMINDER TO BRING YOUR PRAYERS TO THE HEART OF GOD.
- IN A SEPARATE SPACE, OR EVEN ANOTHER JAR, KEEP THE PRAYERS THAT GOD HAS ANSWERED FOR YOU, AS A REMINDER OF HIS FATHER'S HEART!



PRAYER TIME!

*God, you are a good Father. You know me, You love me, You care more deeply about me and those I pray for than I even do myself.*

*Help me to trust in that love! Amen*



## CREATE A PLAYLIST TO LISTEN TO AS YOU REFLECT ON GOD'S FATHERLY HEART

- Chris Tomlin: Good Good Father
- Matt Redman: The Father's Song
- Jonathan Helser: Father of Jesus
- Cody Carnes: Run to the Father



- Phil Wickham: How Deep the Father's Love
- Mountain Top Worship: Our Father Still
- Hillsong Worship: Our Father
- Sarah Kroger: Belovedness



Where is God when you're suffering?  
Fr Patrick Cahill



The Reason God Hasn't Answered Your Prayer Yet  
(Fr Mike Schmitz)