Columns
Spirituality



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by Nancy Watenga

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What a God!

I have seen God's hand too many times to doubt His presence. Sometimes, I find myself overcome with tears of joy, speaking to God as if He were standing right before me. One of those moments happened years ago, when I was a newly professed sister — young, full of zeal and ready to offer up every challenge for the salvation of souls.

One Sunday evening remains vivid in my memory. I had just left the parish where I offered pastoral assistance on weekends. As darkness enveloped the air, I sensed a problem with the back left wheel of the car. I knew instantly it was a puncture. Wisdom told me to stop right away and address it.

Before I began, I whispered a brief prayer: "Jesus, you know very well I am coming from serving your people. Take care of me." Little did I know that I had stopped at a flyover known as a den for gangs who terrorized the area.

Without hesitation, I brought out the toolkit and bent down to change the tire. In the blink of an eye, three men appeared. One remarked, "We cannot leave a mother in trouble — for they gave birth to us." Even as he spoke, he was already changing the wheel. Within minutes, he was done.

The others took on supporting roles: One directed the heavy traffic, and the other stood watch, ready in case of an attack.

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When they finished, I said, "This is not to pay you, but to appreciate your kindness," as I handed a small amount of cash to the man who had changed the wheel. No sooner had he taken it than he bolted, vanishing completely.

I have never felt such mixed emotions as I did that day: Grateful. Shocked. Amazed.

Back in the car, I couldn't bring myself to play music again. I sang all the way home, praising God for His protection. That moment cleared any doubt in my mind that God

sees, God hears and God is near. This is the bedrock of my faith and trust in the one, true, living God.

That experience is just one of many in which I have seen prayer open doors, shield me from harm and deepen my relationship with God. The story of Hannah in the Bible often comes to mind when I reflect on how desperate prayer can transform impossible circumstances.

Hannah, mocked by her co-wife for being barren, poured out her anguish before God and promised that if He gave her a child, she would dedicate that child to the Lord. No one else knew of her vow — it was a secret between her and her God.

And yet, when God answered, she kept her word. She weaned her son and brought him to the temple. Her prayer turned into a song of praise. Hannah's story reminds me that prayer doesn't always change things instantly — but it always changes us.

I have had my own "Hannah moments" — times of desperate prayer with nothing to lean on but God.

Like Hannah, I have prayed in desperation with nothing to lean on but God alone.

I recall quite clearly when I was about to join Form One in high school back in 1981. I had done my part by producing good grades and my mother had saved enough for school fees. But I had another challenge to overcome: I had no school uniform and my mother had no extra money for it.

I turned to God, pleading in prayer, asking Him to help me find someone who could provide the uniform. In return, I promised to attend morning Mass every Saturday and Sunday in thanksgiving. I kept that promise, except when school activities interfered. Later, when I joined religious life, I had the joy of attending Mass daily.

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Just a week before school opened, a cousin stopped by and told me to get ready to travel with her on Monday — her mother, my aunt, had bought me a pair of uniforms. I was stunned. I even thought, "Seriously, God?"

That moment changed my prayer life completely. Since then, no matter how deep my helplessness, I've believed that somehow, in some way, God will intervene. Even

now, as I write these lines, I am in tears — why does God favor me so, despite my flaws?

This experience of God's tenderness has shaped me deeply. Whatever kindness I do, whatever pain I endure, I offer it in thanksgiving to the God who has never let me down. So why should I let Him down?

This thought fills me with gratitude and a desire to remain faithful to a very faithful Father. And when I fail — and I often do — I feel challenged to reciprocate God's humility, tolerance and love. Nothing breaks my heart like feeling that I've disappointed my God again.

Thankfully, I've met others in religious life whose journeys have shown me I am not alone. Some initially hesitated to respond to their calling, trying to follow other paths. One water engineer told me, "I'm young, intelligent, handsome, full of life and dreams — I never thought I'd be a religious." But the more he resisted, the stronger the call became. He only found peace when he answered God's call.

He is just one example. Many have tried to dodge God's call, but where can we run from God?

So, I say again: Prayer may not always change our circumstances immediately, but it changes us.
If you feel unheard, if you feel God has delayed — keep praying. God is listening.