

Homily
Memorial of Saint Augustine, bishop and doctor of the Church
Monday of the 21st Week in OT
August 28, 2023

Who needs our prayers? I'll be the first to admit that I need your prayers. My life is full of challenges that need God's providential care. Please pray for me. I'm sure that there are many of you who have wants, needs and desires that are beyond our human understanding and in need of some of that divine providential care. I am always praying for you.

Today, we remember St. Augustine, bishop in the fourth and fifth centuries and doctor of the Church. He needed God's providential care. He lived a very hedonistic lifestyle before he became the saint we know today. Yesterday was his mother's memorial, St. Monica, if not for it being Sunday. She prayed for Augustine's conversion for 33 years before he turned his life around – in a big way.

We all need to pray for one another. This is one way we love God and love one another, as John reminds us in our first reading. God is love; God is of love; we are made in God's love. It is with, in and through Jesus that love is made manifest in our lives, in this world. Love God; love one another. Pray unceasingly; pray for ourselves; pray for one another.

How do we pray for one another? The simplest way is to remember those in need in our thoughts. Like right now – I'm talking about praying for you and I'm thinking about your needs, whatever they are, so that God is aware. God knows my thoughts. I only wish what is best for you. And I hope you only want what is best for me, even if I may not like what is best for me.

Another great way to pray for one another is to offer our efforts, whatever those efforts are. Today, I'm fasting for my wife. Today, I'm offering this effort, my assisting/ministering at this Mass/liturgy to my mother who passed away some time ago. Everything we do, we can offer it in prayer for someone we love, someone we know who needs our prayers.

Why? Why do we pray unceasingly? Why do we offer all our efforts to those in need? It keeps us in constant communication with God, with our Father in heaven, with Jesus, our Lord and Savior, with the Holy Spirit, our advocate, and with the entire Body of Christ, all our brothers and sisters, who have passed away, awaiting the eternal banquet, and who have attained eternal bliss, and those who are with us now; the Church Militant, Suffering and Triumphant. We are all one, big happy family in God, in His love.

Jesus gives us this directive, to not be called Teacher, to call no one Father, to not be called Master. We have only one Teacher, Father and Master, and we are not them. Instead, He directs us to be humble, not exalted. He says, "The greatest among you must be your servant." How better to serve one another than to want what is best for the other. Pray for each other. Pray unceasingly. Pray fervently. Pray!