

Dear Parishioners,

Now that we're in the "Dog days of summer," which is one of the slower times of the year, I have been struggling to think of what I want to write about. My thoughts keep going back to prayer, which is what I spoke about in my homily last week, and how prayer helps us to cling to that bond of love we have with God. We cling to what we can trust, to what we can see; prayer helps to open the eyes of our souls so that, from an interior point of view we are better able to recognize the presence of God in our midst.

I would like to share a poem written in 1945 by Jessica Powers (Sister Miriam of the Holy Spirit), a Carmelite and a mystic, who lived in Wisconsin. She wrote this poem as a young woman, and I believe the imagery of this poem beautifully describes what prayer can be for us in our quest to know and love God.

THE GARMENTS OF GOD

By Jessica Powers

God sits on a chair of darkness in my soul.
He is God alone, supreme in His majesty.
I sit at His feet, a child in the dark beside Him;
my joy is aware of His glance and my sorrow is tempted
to nest on the thought that His face is turned from me.
He is clothed in the robes of His mercy, voluminous
garments –
not velvet or silk and affable to the touch,
but fabric strong for a frantic hand to clutch,
and I hold to it fast with the fingers of my will.
Here is my cry of faith, my deep avowal
to the Divinity that I am dust.
Here is the loud profession of my trust.
I need not go abroad
to the hills of speech or the hinterlands of music
for a crier to walk in my soul where all is still.
I have this potent prayer through good or ill:
here in the dark I clutch the garments of God.¹

In joyful hope,
Fr. Tim Seigel

¹ Selected Poetry of Jessica Powers, page 21