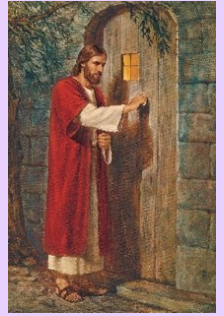


Scripture says:

***“Do not be troubled if you do not immediately receive from God what you ask him; for he desires to do something even greater for you, while you cling to him in prayer”***



Think about that for a few minutes. There are often times in our lives when God **doesn't seem** to be answering our prayers. We pray **repeatedly** for certain people or intentions, sometimes for days, months—and even years—but our prayers seem to go **unanswered**. When nothing seems to be happening, it is easy to feel discouraged and disheartened.

At these times, it is good to remember **Jesus' words** to his disciples,

“Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; **knock** and the door will be opened to you” Sometimes we have to just **“keep knocking”**.

Whether or not we **think** God has answered our prayers does not change the fact that **God is a good Father who knows what we need**. Prayer should **not** spring solely from the fact that we **need** something, but from our **desire to strengthen our relationship** with God and to be **transformed** and conformed to his will in the process.

Occasionally, we might **not** receive an answer to prayer **immediately** because the **repeated action of prayer** will make us **grow** in some way: in **charity**, in **perseverance**, in **faith**. Our Father **knows** what we need **before** we ask him, but he awaits our petition because the dignity of his children lies in their **freedom**. We must pray, then, with his Spirit of freedom, to be able truly to know what he wants.

Perhaps we are praying for something that is **not** good for us or, even more likely, for something that is **not best** for us. Our prayers may be well-intentioned, and holy, but may only **partially** supply what we, or the people we are praying for really need. **Often we can only see part of the whole picture**. Our ways may not be God's ways.

An example of **perseverance in prayer** can be found in the story of **St. Monica, who prayed for her son, Augustine, for 17 years** before he was baptized and entered into the Catholic Church. **St. Monica is the patron saint of patience and perseverance**.

**Keep knocking**