



Current Issues in Prayer

June 2016

Welcome! The Pope invites people of different faiths to come together and pray:

That the aged, marginalized, and those who have no one may find – even within the huge cities of the world – opportunities for encounter and solidarity.



Getting started:

I find a quiet place ... enter into God's presence ... and pray that He would take over all my thoughts throughout this time ... I now have a look at the following true example of opportunities of encounter and solidarity that take place on any ordinary day.



Short story:

Lindsay was happier in Kabul. There were bombs going off outside the compound where she worked for a development agency, but she preferred life in the Afghan capital to her home city in the so called West. In Kabul she was not lonely.

"For the first time in my adult life, I didn't feel isolated," she says. "I felt socially connected. I was with like-minded people. We were all doing something important and hoping to better the world."

When the situation in Afghanistan became too dangerous, Lindsay moved back home where she works as a communications manager for the local government. Lindsay yearns for a simple connection: to meet a friend regularly for coffee or a movie, yet there is no one. Work is her one source of satisfaction. She often wonders how life would be if her job was not there, even though, at 44 years of age, her loneliness has brought on a general sense of fatigue, distraction and often an inability to concentrate.

Lindsay's mind turned to the many who have no friends and no work, and how even more terrible their situation must be.



Time to reflect:

Did you ever take time to observe how many people prefer to stay tapping quietly on their mobiles or laptops even when they are in public spaces with other people who are incidentally doing the same? How do you explain such behaviour?

Is work having a negative impact on my personal development? Is it keeping me from developing a sense of solidarity with others?



Let us pray:

Dear Lord, while being grateful to you for those persons in my life who wish me well, I ask you to remind me about those whom I might be forgetting, just because I think I do not need them. I ask you to accompany the lonely and lead them through ways that reveal the greatness of your sweet love.



Inspiration:

"I now understand that my welfare is only possible if I acknowledge my unity with all the people of the world - without exception." - Leo Tolstoy



Hands on:

Find some time during the day when you switch off your mobile device and other gadgets so as to be able to talk with your loved ones, without letting anyone or anything distract you from real communication.

Check your mobile contacts. See if there is anyone who might be suffering, alone or marginalized. Surprise him or her. Find an excuse to call and let him or her know you care.

If you happen to visit a hospital or retirement home, check with the staff if there is someone who never receives visitors. Maybe the next time round you could spend a few minutes with this person.