

Pray this chaplet before Lent ends



My fiancé and I recently began marriage preparation, which is what we have been most looking forward to since even before we were engaged. Part of the program at our parish is meeting with a mentor couple, so we chose a couple we knew through friends. We also chose them because they have eight kids, so we figured we would be in good hands.

During our first meeting, which was a simple get-to-know-you dinner at their home, the husband asked Dominic and me how our Lent was going. Only days before, the same question came up at my women's group. And while I answered that it was fine, I admitted to wanting more. I wanted something deeper.

As an adult, my approach to Lent looks different. Now that I have a prayer life – as compared to the younger me, where adding an Our Father every evening took my prayer life from zero to a hundred – adding extra prayers can often turn this time with God into a checklist. Instead of cluttering my prayer life with extra prayers just because it's Lent, I wanted to focus on intentionality this season. My hope had been to be more focussed with my Rosary, more intentional with reviewing my day with a nightly examination of conscience, and I wanted to be less preoccupied with finishing spiritual books for the sake of finishing them. But in all honesty, between all the other areas of my life that require me to juggle many tasks, this desire for intentionality has slipped through the cracks.

About halfway through Lent, I read an article at Aleteia addressing the Swedish secret to being happy at work. While it shared the tradition of daily coffee breaks that are also

social gatherings, called *fikas*, it put a question in my mind: What Catholic traditions do I have throughout my day to help me refocus? My days are bookended with prayer, but the middle of the day is a free-for-all, if prayer happens at all.

Throughout the day, this thought of an intentional break kept coming back to me. And then I remembered a Catholic tradition that is almost too easy to weave into your daily routine: the Divine Mercy Chaplet prayed during the hour of mercy (3 p.m.).

A handful of co-workers at OSV pray the Divine Mercy Chaplet at this time every Friday over video. Since many of us are still working remotely, some of the traditions we had in the office – such as daily Mass and monthly adoration hours – have slipped through the cracks in our personal lives. I haven't been very consistent with attending this virtual Divine Mercy Chaplet until recently. And now I'm seeing it as a bigger opportunity to take a step back every day.

While many people argue that the 20 minutes it takes to pray the Rosary is too long (which is probably false if you spend that amount of time or more on your phone), that argument falls flat with the Divine Mercy Chaplet, which only takes about 7 minutes to pray.

So, as we evaluate our Lenten commitments and how they've prepared us – or not – for the holiest week of the year, consider praying the Divine Mercy Chaplet more regularly. I extend the offer to pray it every day (just set an alarm on your phone for 3 p.m. or whatever time works better for you, such as your commute to or from work), and give yourself the opportunity to be reminded about what matters most: that the Lord is always present, and that he wants us not to clutter our lives but rather find ways to turn our gaze to him in our day-to-day activities.

Even if you don't make it a daily habit, I encourage you to pray this beautiful chaplet on Good Friday as a way to

meditate more fully on Our Lord's passion and his mercy on us and our whole world. Please join me.

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