



**N° 169**  
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Dear Friends,

It is with tremendous sadness that we write to tell you of death this past night of our very dear friend Paco, who with his wife Olga was the responsible couple for the Intercessors in the EurAfrica Zone.

Paco was a wonderful person and we are sure that the Lord will welcome him warmly into his embrace. It was a true honour and a great joy to have met him. Paco will always remain for us an example of Faith, totally surrendered to Divine Providence and joy. The Holy Spirit moved and inspired him! His most recent messages were, "I am full of confidence. Everything is fine. The Lord is with me." He lived right up to the end with energy, passion, humour and love. He gave his all! And we are going to miss him terribly. But we feel that he is still alive! An passionate intercessor for the Church and the world who is now in Heaven. With Olga, his wife, David his son and Alice his wife, we give thanks for this beautiful soul and we join with them in their deep heartache. May the prayer of all of us, in communion with the saints, fill them with Peace and comfort them in their great grief.

**Christ be our light!** (The song from the Teams Gathering in Fatima in 2018)

### THE SPIRITUAL LETTER OF FATHER PAUL-DOMINIQUE MARCOVITS, O.P.

#### Five questions on Intercession

##### *To whom is the Prayer of Intercession addressed?*



All prayer is addressed to the Father. He is the source of every perfect gift. To Him alone the glory, through the Son and in the Spirit. All prayer fits into the

prayer of the Son, who offers it to the Father, in the unity of the Holy Spirit. The great Intercessor is the Son with the Holy Spirit, the Consoler, who ceaselessly identifies us with the Son. To intercede is to enter into this dialogue of love between the Father, the Son and the Spirit, this dialogue where the Holy Trinity watches over us.

##### *Is the Son the only Intercessor?*

Yes, because he is the only path that leads to the Father and through him, the Father gives us everything. But, through his incarnation, the Son took on our likeness and in particular our prayers, our requests, our thanksgiving... We become one with him, as he associates us with his intercession for the world. That is true for us and, *a fortiori*, for the saints. "Say Mary, she will answer Jesus," Saint Louis-Marie Grignon de Montfort said. This is why we can turn to such and such a saint, who with love will reorient our call towards Christ. It is important to have those kinds of friends, those particular intercessors.

##### *What can we ask for?*

When we love someone, we talk to them about everything, about the big things as well as the little ones. There is no limit to our intercession and what we ask for. We are intercessors because we love these people and because, if we love giving good things to those we love, how much more God will give us the Holy Spirit. (Lk 11:13)

##### *Are our prayers answered?*

Always! But not always as we would like. And this is often an ordeal for us. Yet, God does answer our prayers in the sense that he always gives us the Holy Spirit, who does not absolve anyone from knowing the dark side of life. The Spirit helps us get through ordeals. Essentially, the Spirit helps us to better understand what other people need. Intercede without becoming discouraged! Faith is required above all. Waiting for the outcome of another person's problem induces our faith, a faith that is more and more profound: God will know what to do for him/her, the person for whom we are praying. He is love.

##### *Are there bad requests?*

Yes and no! Asking for your neighbour's death, now that is a request that smacks of revenge! Yet, it could be an understandable request. The Psalmists often do it. Why? Because telling God about our anger, our humours, our revolts (the Psalmist often complain) helps us to gradually calm our anger; slowly peace and truth emerge in us. The calm that emerges enables us to look at things truthfully. We begin to intercede for that difficult brother/sister... The intercessor before God can become a source of life for many. Father Caffarel used to like to repeat these words of the Lord to Saint Catherine of Sienna, "Become the vessel, and I will be the river." **Father P. Marcovits, o.p.**

**POPE FRANCIS**  
**GENERAL AUDIENCE, WEDNESDAY, 13 FEBRUARY 2019**  
***WE MUST PRAY AS JESUS TAUGHT US TO PRAY...***

(...) Although the disciple's prayer may be completely confidential, it is never lacking in intimacy. In the secret of the conscience, a Christian does not leave the world outside the door of his room, but carries people and situations, the problems, many things in his heart; I bring them all to prayer.

There is a striking absence in the text of the 'Lord's Prayer'. Were I to ask you what the striking absence in the text of the 'Lord's Prayer' is, it would not be easy to answer. A word is missing. Everyone thinks: what is missing from the 'Lord's Prayer'? Think, what is missing? One word. One word which in our times — perhaps always — everyone holds in great consideration. What is the missing word in the 'Lord's Prayer' that we pray every day? To save time, I will tell you: the word 'I' is missing. 'I' is never said. Jesus teaches us to pray with 'You' on our lips, because Christian prayer is a dialogue: 'blessed be *your* name, *your* kingdom come, *your* will be done'. Not *my* name, *my* kingdom, *my* will. Not *I*, it is no good. And then it moves on to 'we'. The entire second part of the 'Our Father' uses the first person plural: '*give us our daily bread, forgive us our sins, lead us not into temptation, deliver us from evil*'. Even the most basic of man's requests — such as that of having food to satisfy hunger — are all in the plural. In Christian prayer, no one asks for bread for themselves: *give me* bread today — no, *give us*, it is asked for all, for all the world's poor. We must not forget this. The word 'I' is missing. We pray by using 'you' and 'we'. It is a good lesson from Jesus. Do not forget this.

*“Lord, soften my heart, so that I may understand and take on all the problems and all the suffering of others.”*

Why? Why is there no room for individualism in the dialogue with God. There is no display of our own problems as if we were the only ones suffering in the world. There is no prayer raised to God that is not the prayer of a *community of brothers and sisters*. 'We': we are a community; we are brothers and sisters; we are a people who pray: 'we'. Once, a prison chaplain asked me a question: "Tell me Father, what is the opposite of 'I'?" And naively, I said 'you'. "This is the start of war. The opposite of 'I' is 'us', where there



is peace, all are together". I received a beautiful lesson from that priest.

In prayer, a Christian bears all the difficulties of the people who live beside him: when night falls, he tells God about the suffering he has come across that day; he sets before Him many faces, friends and even those who are hostile; he does not shoo them away as dangerous distractions. If you do not realize that there are many people suffering around you, if you are not moved by the tears of the poor, if you are accustomed to everything, then it means your heart ... what is it like? Withered? No, worse: it is made of stone. In this case it is good to implore the Lord to touch us with his Spirit and soften our heart: 'Soften my heart, Lord'. It is a beautiful prayer: 'Lord, soften my heart, so that I may understand and take on all the problems and all the suffering of others'. Christ did not pass unscathed beside the miseries of the world: each time he perceived loneliness, physical or spiritual pain, he felt a strong sense of compassion, like a mother's womb. This 'feeling compassion' — let us not forget this word that is so Christian: 'feeling compassion' — is one of the key words of the Gospel: it is what inspires the Good Samaritan to approach the wounded man by the roadside, unlike others who are hard of heart.

We can ask ourselves: when I pray, am I open to the cries of many people near and far? Or do I think of prayer as a type of anaesthesia, in order to be more at peace? I am just tossing the question out there, each of you can answer to yourself. In such case I would be the victim of a terrible misunderstanding. Of course mine would no longer be a Christian prayer. Because that 'we' that Jesus taught us prevents me from being at peace by myself, and makes me feel responsible for my brothers and sisters. (...)

[http://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/audiences/2019/documents/papa-francesco\\_20190213\\_udienza-generale.html](http://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/audiences/2019/documents/papa-francesco_20190213_udienza-generale.html)

## “ASK AND YOU WILL RECEIVE”

‘CAHIERS SÉRIE INITIATION’ (IN FRENCH) – 1966-1967

THE SAINTS TAKE ON THE DISTRESS AND POVERTY OF THE WORLD: THEIR PRAYER BECOMES A UNIVERSAL INTERCESSION.



“Let us not think that prayers of asking are reserved only for mediocre, sickly and sinful Christians. We also find them with the saints. More humbly even than with the others, they (the saints) beg for the help and grace of their God for the others. But their prayer does not stop with their personal needs. Since they have reached spiritual maturity, they are aware of their solidarity with all mankind, they assume the distress and poverty of the world: *their prayer becomes a universal intercession*. This prayer of intercession is admirably

evoked in one of Puvis de Chavannes’ frescoes in the Pantheon in Paris. Genevieve, the former little shepherdess, has become an old woman. She watches out for, no longer her father’s few sheep, but instead the inhabitants of Lutetia. The artist shows her here to the right, at night time, at the door of her cell where a light shines, and she is watching the sleepy town at her feet, like a mother watches over the children she protects. Genevieve watching over Paris... a vibrant symbol of this prayer of intercession that, throughout the history of mankind, secured for the sinful world that the fire of the heavens did not destroy it.”

[https://henri-caffarel.org/sites/default/files/FR/pensee/oraison/demandez\\_et\\_vous\\_recevrez.pdf](https://henri-caffarel.org/sites/default/files/FR/pensee/oraison/demandez_et_vous_recevrez.pdf)

## LET US PRAY FOR THE NEEDS OF OTHERS ...



I am very happy to share my experience of intercession by recalling what I have experienced since Father Caffarel’s prophetic initiative in 1960, that was founded on the invaluable strength of prayer in all of its apostolic dimension. Mine is a multifaceted experience throughout the almost

50 years that I have been joyfully and gratefully accompanying so many Teams as a spiritual counsellor. For me, I believe that the three fundamental dimensions of prayer that Jesus taught us are always present:

**The powerful strength of prayer:** all you have to do is to remember the disciples’ weakness and clumsiness, before they assumed the strength of the consoling Spirit that Jesus promised them. The Lord told his disciples when they were frightened by the demands of the Kingdom, “*With man this is impossible, but not with God; all things are possible with God.*” (Mk 10:27) Little Saint Therese of Lisieux, cloistered within the walls of her convent, is she not the Patroness of the Missions, along with Saint Francis Xavier?

**Do not pray for God to carry out your plans...:** This complaint comes spontaneously to us in our prayer and it is one that is often repeated in the

Psalms: Why? Why me? And we leave all sad, like the two disciples from Emmaus in Luke’s Gospel. But the Lord comes to meet them, he walks with them and explains things to them... And they feel their hearts burning, fear leaves them, they return home and announce the Good News: the Lord had to suffer and thus reign in truth: a Kingdom of Justice, Love and Peace. And the complaining “Why?” is transformed into a luminous “For what”...

**May your will be done...:** God created us to be happy, and He (not me) knows what truly leads us to this real happiness that Jesus announces in the Beatitudes. We often complain, “God doesn’t listen to me.” But God does listen.

**Therefore, let us pray not only for each other, but also, and I would say even more, let us pray for the needs of others!** True love is not concerned by the limits of time nor space, but extends like a wave towards other brothers, other circumstances that we take on as ours.

I will finish with a word of advice: that beyond the necessities of prayers of requesting, may we be committed to teaching how to pray, how to talk to the Lord. May our prayer not become a routine, but may it be constantly renewed, so that our spiritual life continues to grow more and more.

**José Luis Cano Soriano, S.J.,  
Spiritual Counsellor to the Intercessors in Spain.**

## INTERCESSORS

### Contact us:

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### Find us:

intercesseursmobile.org

**Website** : <https://equipenotre-dame.com/en/who-are-the-intercessors/prieres-intercesseurs>

## WATCH AND PRAY

### GENERAL INTENTION

**LORD**, we pray to you so that couples who are expecting a child see their mutual love and their love of You grow during this wonderful time of waiting. We pray to you for couples who are waiting for a child, for couples who have displayed another beautiful kind of fecundity, for couples who are going through the ordeal of conflict, separation or illness. Keep them in your love and in your peace.

## TESTIMONIALS



Our names are **Marciala & Gabriel**, and we are intercessors in Seville, Spain, and have

been for the past 15 years.

When we learnt about the existence of the Intercessors' group as well as the reasons when, how and why it was created, we both thought that we should support it and help it exist, because Intercessory prayer is a means to experience the Mystical Body of Christ.

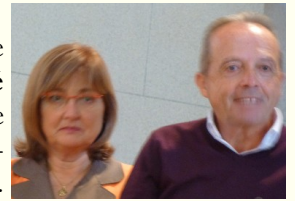
At that moment then, we loved the idea and we knew that being Intercessors would transform our lives: receiving prayer requests for people whom we do not know, and for whom we pray specifically on a fixed day and at a fixed hour, made us feel closer to them, sharing in their pain without knowing them. Our prayer was gradually transformed into a service for our brothers, and made us feel more united with the Church.

Over the years, the deep conviction that private prayer is of vital importance grew. It increased our faith in what Jesus told us, "...whatever you ask in my name the Father will give you." (Jn 15:16).

Our requests to the Father/God have convinced us that they were born for his glory and that helped us always trust Him and be more attentive to "*always seek the Father's truth and wishes.*"

This is what being Intercessors is for us: a service for others, a greater desire to draw closer to the Father: to grow in the Love of God and in the Love of our neighbour.

*Marciala & Gabriel.*



Our names are **Sara & José Manuel** and we have been married for 39 years.

In 2009, we joined a Team, OR 18 based in Ourense, Spain. In 2011, we attended a 'Teams' event in Madrid and heard about the Intercessors.

The call to convert ourselves into "Jesus' collaborators," by interceding for our neighbours before God struck us right from the beginning. Moments of difficulty and suffering experienced within our family came to the fore, and we were aware that many people had been true intercessors for us. Other people's prayers had been a source of the many blessings we have received in our lives.

Our intercession takes the form of offering up an hour of prayer during the night, once a month. We open our hearts to the Holy Spirit. We think that all Christians out to feel called to intercede for people who need our prayers: placing ourselves before God, asking for his mercy for those who need it, the sick, the oppressed...

Intercession is the expression of our brotherly love for our neighbour, and we feel that this prayer opens us up even more to the challenges of today's world.

Belonging to the Intercessors is a blessing from God. It makes us keep a sense of proportion in what worries us. It makes us supportive and brothers to those who suffer. Intercession means stopping, marking a pause in our lives, in order to enter into communion with God.

*Sara et José Manuel, OR 18*

## NEWS FROM THE EIAI (INTERNATIONAL TEAM FOR THE ANIMATION OF THE INTERCESSORS):

In 2020, the Intercessors will celebrate the 60th anniversary of Father Caffarel's call:

### "I AM LOOKING FOR VOLUNTEERS TO PRAY..." => INTERCESSION, GIVE IT A TRY!

*We invite you to specifically celebrate this anniversary close to your home, in your Teams of Our Lady, in your parishes by making known ...the great mission that the Lord asks of us: to collaborate with Christ, imitate Christ, the only mediator between God and mankind, by becoming intercessors like Him. So yes, Intercession, Give it a Try! It is a source of life, graces and Peace.*