



Gutta cavat lapidem, non vi sed saepe cadendo.

“A gap in a stone is made not by force but by a steady drip”

By Deacon Roberto Corpuz

Yvonne and I have been married for 38 years now and have been blessed with two sons, one married (and wife is expecting) and the other, newly engaged. We moved to Australia over a quarter of a century ago and I have been ordained as a permanent Deacon for almost 13 years now.

For many years, Yvonne was based overseas and was on the road most of the time because of her regional or global roles. Caring for our two sons was primarily my role and I considered it a blessing to do so.

Early on in our marriage, we realised that conjugal prayer is an important part of our life. Hence, we agreed that whenever she was away from home, regardless of where each one of us was physically located, we would say a prayer for each other at midday, Sydney time. Such is our deep belief in Jesus’ promise that “when two or three are gathered in My name, there I am in their midst.”

Back on home soil for the past two years, Yvonne still maintained a hectic travel schedule. It was only with the onset of travel restrictions that her overseas trips grinded to a halt. Now, we say our conjugal prayers together.

With the onslaught of the COVID-19 pandemic over a year ago, another burning prayer “issue” challenged us as family. A first cousin who was based in America contracted the disease and was intubated for three weeks. The prospects were grim, and death was at her doorstep. (Thankfully, she is now slowly recovering). My sister, a retired nurse who is based in New York, mobilised our extended family and friends who live in different countries to embark on a rhythm of daily communal prayer to intercede for her and all those affected by the pandemic around the world.

We formed a Zoom “Prayer Warriors” group and agreed on the “best” time for our virtual linkup, given that we are in at least five different time zones across three different continents. On weekdays, we alternate the recitation of the Holy Rosary with the Chaplet of Divine Mercy. On Sundays (USA time), I lead the celebration of the Liturgy of the Word. We are now over 330 consecutive days of prayer, as we started this on 23 March, 2020.

It has been so nourishing for this global family prayer warriors’ group. We have about 20 screens open in Zoom daily. The attendees’ age ranges from 2 months to 96 years old. What has been so heartwarming is the enthusiasm that the children have showed before, during and after prayers. Many of them have not met personally as they are from different countries or other states or cities even if living in the same country. As the months

progressed, they got to know each other better, calling each one by name - not only the other children but also the adults.

A very remarkable story is our grandnephew (Jason), who is nine years old and living in California with his parents and my first cousin (Jason's grandma). Jason has mild autism. Since March 2020, he would join his grandma in prayer a few times. He has since learned how to pray the rosary with the aid of the actual rosary beads and even assists in leading it (with his grandma) and occasionally leads a Marian song. Another grandniece (Ella) is 3 years old and she joins her siblings (6 and 8) in leading the singing of the Chaplet of Divine Mercy.

This family prayer group that Yvonne and I continue to nurture and guide, nourishes us likewise. The constancy of the daily prayer time binds our family and friends together. This prayer time has become part and parcel of our daily life a global community of faith.