

COLUMNISTS

How diocesan parishioners pray

"I am challenged to write to you and share a prayer that I made for myself 36 years ago," writes a Rochester, N.Y., man who wishes to remain anonymous. He was responding to a recent column in which I asked readers to compose prayers for their own profession or occupation.

"I was suddenly given a job as superintendent of a large electrical construction installation," the man explains. "The job was two years in progress at the time and I was asked on one day's notice to take over the job and complete it. The first morning before going to work I prayed as follows.

"Dear Jesus, give to me the graces of wisdom and humility so that I may do all things wisely and humbly for your greater honor and glory, for the salvation of my soul, and for the inspiration and holiness of those around me."

The man explains that he has been saying this prayer daily ever since. "Yes, I do believe my prayer was answered then and many times since," he says.

Another anonymous prayer comes



faith & work

By GREGORY F. AUGUSTINE PIERCE

from a court clerk in a small town outside of Rochester. (Why are people afraid of putting their names to their prayers? Is it true humility, the fear of being labeled pious, or just the desire to keep their relationship with God private?)

"I composed the following prayer for me to say everyday," the woman writes.

"Dear Lord, help me to always be pleasant and patient on the telephone, accurate on the computer, competent in the court room, helpful to my co-workers

and — most of all — give me the grace to be able to learn new things and keep up with all the changes. Amen."

Amalia Pappano Plantone of Rochester describes herself as a full-time housewife. Here is her prayer: "Dear Lord, I call myself your child, and as such you come first in my life. Second is my husband and our children are third. Jesus, I pray for your wisdom and guidance, as to always imitate you and give of myself unselfishly to all I come in contact with. In your precious name, Jesus, I ask for your guidance and blessings upon every family. Father, encircle us in your love and enable us to become one big family. Amen."

I also received favorite prayers from others including Ray Rivet of Waterloo, N.Y.; and Teresita Hanes of Rochester, who writes that she is a 95-year-old resident at St. Ann's Heritage Nursing Home.

Saying he was "not much of a writer," Rivet sent a prayer by Teilhard de Chardin, from the *Oxford Book of Prayers*, for fellow chemical industry workers:

"Blessed be you, harsh matter, barren soul, stubborn rock: You who yield only to violence, you who force us to work if we would eat.

"... Blessed be you, universal matter, unmeasurable time, boundless ether, triple abyss of stars and atoms and generations: You who by overflowing and dissolving our narrow standards of measurement reveal to us the dimension of God."

Hanes sent "My Moment With God": "Dear God, Help me tonight to relax, to rest with an untroubled mind. Let me sleep in the knowledge that thy love enfolds me. let thy healing power renew me for the day to come.

"... Fill the empty places of my heart with love, the dark room where none but thee can enter. Teach me this truth, that no heart can be lonely when it tries to help one lonelier still.

"... Through the day to come, let show my joy in thy love by sharing it with others. And every day let me show thy teaching; that our acts tomorrow are far better prayers than our words tonight."

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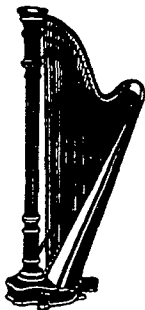
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