

July 10, 1997

- *Importance of passive prayer*
- *Provide rest for body and soul*

We join your souls together in the presence of God.

This is a particularly poignant time in your lives filled with activities, concerns, fatigue, and hope. So it is therefore most fitting that you are gathered at such a time. Each of you has the capacity to serve the other. Each of you is given opportunities for the expression of love through compassion, support, prayer, and sharing. There is an enormous potential for service to one another. This service is not necessarily visible but is very real, vital.

We want to speak with you at this time more about prayer. We often address this subject, but it is essential for your human experience that you achieve a deeper understanding of what prayer affords you. For many, prayer is a sense of active engagement, but we would like to explore for a moment the implications of passive prayer. It is common for all who have a belief in God, whatever the label, to ask God for that which is needed, either for oneself or on behalf of another. This is active prayer.

The passive response to prayer is very different. Both active and passive prayer connect you to the reality of God. But active prayer sees a problem and offers a prayer of resolution. Passive prayer ignores for a moment the problems of life. It ignores the needs of self and the needs of others. When you quiet yourselves in a meditative state, and open your mind to the power of emptiness, the potential of emptiness, you are exercising passive prayer. You are giving yourself the opportunity to listen.

We have spoken about the meaning of service toward another, and its application through just being there, a quiet presence, listening to what another may wish to share. That is a passive presence, but you can also provide a sense of presence with God the same way. You can quiet yourselves and just listen. Take away your concerns, take away your anxieties, ignore for a moment the presence of pain, either physical or emotional. Allow yourselves to be in the presence of a great silence. So doing, you place yourself in a position to hear God. It is precisely this position that is being utilized as you gather in this group. When you are being guided, whether it is experienced in silence or the urge to speak or write, or even to view life in a new way, you are sharing in a sense of passive prayer.

Each of you spends far too much energy speaking, doing, acting out, becoming physically and emotionally involved, but not nearly enough time settling into a quiet presence. The strength that you so often pray for is most readily received when you are quiet. Being in the presence of silence is in itself a great renewal. You can be enormously refreshed by bathing in that great silence, allowing yourself the luxury of just being—not worrying, not trying to do something, not praying for a specific objective, just being. It is in a state of being that you become most receptive to guidance.

July 10, 1997

Each of you has experienced times in your lives when you have been occupied with specific concerns: *how* should something be done, *what* should be done. At those times, you have also experienced the unique feeling of waking up in the morning or in the middle of the night without warning, without disturbance, but with a sudden awareness of an insight you did not have before, that could be brought to bear upon the concerns that occupy you. That insight is a form of guidance, and it comes to you when you are the most quiet. It comes to you at times of rest, not at times of panicked activity. The quiet of the night, the quiet of a peaceful sleep sets the stage for you to receive God's guidance. Much insight is therefore achieved at times of absolute quiet.

Prayer, you see, is a way of being open to God. It is not just a means of approaching God, of speaking to God, of asking or pleading. That is only one type of prayer. Believing in active prayer as the only method of connection with God eliminates that portion of the relationship that receives what is really needed. Sometimes there are issues before you that are not clearly defined. You are not fully aware of the implications of a decision or an action. But somehow, in the quiet of sleep, you are clear what the issues are and where you should proceed.

It is difficult in the daily routine to find such moments of quiet, for much is demanded of you by others and by yourselves. Sometimes the self demands much of itself because of guilt or feeling of obligation or fear. Such feelings are negative. They do not enhance your lives or the lives of anyone else. They do not provide a sense of value to living. They are merely goals or issues to be addressed. Would that people could take time to separate themselves from those obligations, those personal demands, and just be, just exist, relish in the reality of being alive.

Often you find yourselves closer to God in natural settings as opposed to the hubbub of activity in a manmade environment—being in the woods or at the beach, on a mountain top or in a desert. At those times when you no longer are interrupted by the sounds created by humans, you suddenly sense God's presence. Those moments happen in peace, when it is quiet, and when you are diverted from your normal concerns. When you are on vacation, you are separated from the daily activities that provide for your physical well-being. A good vacation results in returning refreshed, but that refreshment is not merely physical refreshment. It is also, and most importantly, an emotional one. That refreshment is fully enhanced when achieved in an environment that is quiet, that is peaceful, that is experienced in a natural as opposed to a manmade environment.

Each of you needs such a change from the routine. For that very same reason, your souls also cry out for the same need. Being alone, empty in thoughts, open to the beauty of being, is as important as any activity you may be involved in. Those who do not know how to relax, to withdraw, even briefly, are never happy, as you would define the term. They are always concerned about what lay around the corner, what still needs to be done, what might happen, what might have happened had one not done a certain

July 10, 1997

deed. The sense of causal relationships—cause and effect—acts like an anchor preventing you from rising and flowing with a spiritual reality, superseding normal mundane physical activity. Your bodies need the rest; your souls also need the rest.

We suggest that part of your prayer be passive. Certainly it is fine to pray on behalf of another, but why not allow yourselves to pray by being quiet, stilling the emotions. Holding on to that state even a few minutes will give great refreshment to the body and you will also, most importantly, sense a closer relationship with God. You will also emerge from such silence with insight, clarity, a sense of focus and purpose that would never be achieved otherwise.

Look for those opportunities to be passively prayerful. Seek a time each day, even for a couple of minutes, to get away from others and allow the silent presence to enter. By eliminating the output, you improve the effectiveness of the input from God. You enhance your abilities to be guided by us and comforted in God's presence.

Life certainly is for living, and that means doing, that means activity. But life is also full of needs for *being*. So seek out opportunities that allow you to relish in the moment with no anxieties for the future or concerns about the past. In so doing, you will be closer to the kind of life we live. For as we have explained, there are no clocks, no sense of time; there's no future, present, or past. All is a smooth continuum. When you allow yourselves to disregard the past and the future and present, you are experiencing truly the timelessness of God's creation. Those moments of focus on this timelessness are so important for each of you. They are important for all people. By allowing yourselves the luxury of silence, you will serve as examples to others of the benefits of passive prayer.

When we pray for your well-being, we activate that prayer by surrounding each of you with a sense of being, not with anxieties or concerns. Allow others an opportunity to withdraw briefly in their lives. Indeed you may even encourage others to pursue such peace. Doing this, you are functioning as God's hands in the world. By your being peaceful, another may learn by example. The great figures of the world who are recalled for their depth and profundity were those who had an ability to step away from the table, to withdraw for a moment, allowing the reality of being to enter their souls. We encourage each of you to develop a lifestyle that will permit you passive prayer.

Our prayers are for your growth and peace. Those can be passive prayers that allow you to be. The result of being is growth and peace. Seek out those moments and make them a part of your daily existence. You will be stronger, more peaceful, and more closely connected to the guidance of God's love.

You are blessed in God's peaceful presence.

Amen.