

JUNE 4 2025, FATHER JOHN BERTAIO

A couple of reflections to share with you.

When someone asks me to pray for them, I take it as a gesture of trust. I usually say to the person, “Yes,” and in turn, I ask them, “Can you also pray for me, please?” It becomes a relationship of trust going both ways.

Do you recall the late Pope Francis, when he was introduced to the world for the first time on March 18th, 2013? After greeting the crowd, he made a simple, humble, and heartfelt request—one he repeated many, many times over the 12 years of his pontificate, without hesitation:

“Please pray for me.”

And then he bowed.

He, too, needed our prayers. And we need each other’s prayers as well, to fulfill our mission in life.

Let me ask you:

Do you know why God created you?

What purpose or mission has He entrusted to you on this earth?

Jesus’ aim and mission were to glorify His Heavenly Father. Everything He said and did was to glorify the Father. On the eve of His sacrifice on the cross, in the presence of His disciples, Jesus prayed what is often called the high priestly prayer:

>“Holy Father, keep them in Your name that they may be one, as we are one.”

One—as we are one in Him.

Jesus prayed for the unity of His disciples, and for all who believe in Him—such as you and I. His prayer is to unite us to the Father, and to

Himself, through the Holy Spirit. We are to be joined in unity with all who are members of His Body—the Church—with Christ as the head, and we as its members.

Dear friends, whenever we listen to Jesus' prayer, we must take it to heart. Jesus alluded to the fact that division within the Church would occur, unfortunately. As Saint John tells us at the end of his Gospel, there were so many other things Jesus said and did, that if they were written down one by one,

“I do not suppose that the world would contain all the books.”

This means not all of Jesus' warnings or teachings are written down—but they remain true. Division and disunity have appeared in the Church since its earliest days. John's first letter testifies to this. Even the earliest disciples, in their deep devotion and defence of the truth, struggled to bring everyone back into unity—and it didn't always work.

And so, from the second century to the 20th and 21st centuries, the Church has continued in its efforts to understand one another, to identify what we share, and to focus on the good we hold in common—especially our faith in Jesus Christ. These efforts have borne fruit. Hostility has been overcome. And it has become possible for different Christian traditions to learn from one another.

Isn't that a hopeful thing to hear?

We listen twice and speak once—so we can better understand and appreciate the faith of others. Because all of us in this world have a mission. That mission is to take up our cross and follow Jesus wherever He leads us.

It's important for each of us to discern what that cross is. And if you haven't figured it out yet—don't worry. I have a bit of help for you.

Jesus will give us the strength and power, through the Holy Spirit, to live as His faithful disciples.

Let me share a reflection from Saint John Henry Newman. He wrote:

“God has committed some work to me
which He has not committed to another.
I have my mission.
I may never know it in this life,
but I shall be told in the next.
I am a link in a chain,
a bond of connection between persons.
He has not created me for nothing.
I trust Him.
Whatever I am, wherever I am,
I trust Him.
I cannot be thrown away.”

You are a very important link in the human chain. A vital connection to others. You are special. God has not created you for nothing.

So I ask you,
Do you trust in God, and in His call and purpose for your life?
Please say yes.
(And if you don’t—well, give it a try.)

Trust. Love. Because you are special. And He loves you very much.

Let me leave you with this beautiful prayer, which I believe speaks directly to your life today:

Lord Jesus,
take my life,

and make it wholly pleasing to You.
Sanctify me in Your truth,
and guide me by Your Holy Spirit,
that I may follow You faithfully
wherever You lead me—
in faith, love, and trust.
Amen.