

Seismic Shifts for a Better Prayer Life

Taken from "33 Days to Eucharistic Glory" by Matthew Kelly

First Shift: *Just Begin the Conversation*

Matthew states: "This first shift requires us to make the journey from the head to the heart, to turn from a *thinking* type of prayer to a *relational* style of prayer. It is about learning to pray from your heart."

- How many of you find it difficult to have a conversation with God?
 - Why do you think this is?
 - What are the blocks/challenges?
- What are ways we can begin the conversation with God?
 - Acknowledge God's work during your day (blessings)
 - Tell Him how beautiful that rainbow is that He put in the sky
 - Ask for His help figuring out a difficult assignment

Second Shift: *Ask God What HE Wants*

Matthew states: "The second shift occurs within the conversation when we stop asking God for what we want and start asking what *He* wants."

Fr. John uses this question a lot in his homilies: "God, what do You think I should do?"

- How different would your prayer life be if instead of asking God for what you desire, you ask Him for advice, direction, inspiration and guidance?
- If you begin to ask God for advice instead of just asking for your own desires, does that transform your view of who God is in your life? How?

Third Shift: *Give Yourself to Prayer*

Matthew states: "Giving yourself to prayer means showing up and letting God do what He wants to do with you during that time of prayer. It means letting go of expectations and agendas for our time with God."

- How many of you have rituals/agendas with how you pray each day?
 - What are some examples?
 - How much closer do you feel to God at the end of your prayer time?
- Can you pray with "carefree timelessness"?
 - Time together without an agenda
 - Think of the first time a couple falls in love

Fourth Shift: *Transform Everything into Prayer*

Matthew states: "Prayer awakens our spiritual senses and we become aware of God at our side throughout the day. Not that He is in *our* presence, but that we are continually in *His* presence."

- Do you believe that every activity can be transformed into prayer by offering it to God?
 - Is there a situation where this can't be done?
- How do we transform daily activities into prayer?
 - Offer the next hour of your work for a friend who is sick
 - Offer the task you are least looking forward to do to God as a prayer for a person who is suffering most today, and do that task with great love

Fifth Shift: *Make Yourself Available*

Matthew states: "The fifth shift...is about surrendering ourselves, our plan, and our lives to God. It is through this surrender that we make ourselves 100% available to God, allowing Him to transform us and our lives."

- How available are you to God?
 - What gets in the way of you giving full availability to Him?
 - Do you desire to be able to make yourself more available to Him?
 - Does this spark any fear in you?
- What are ways you can make yourself more available to Him?
 - Do you believe more availability for God would help your relationship with Him?
 - Would anything suffer as a result?

Sixth Shift: *Just Keep Showing Up*

Matthew states: "...it's enough to be mindful that it's not about what we are doing. It's about what God is doing in us, through us, and with us – when we show up."

- Keep showing up...
 - to prayer
 - to Mass
 - for your spiritual routines and rituals
- If God is the one doing all the heavy lifting in the relationship, why is it hard to keep showing up? What stops us?
- What can we do to keep showing up?