

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

You may well wonder why I did not address last week's reading last week. You certainly have a right to wonder. I am wondering as well. Be that as it may, please allow me some kind of literary license, misguided though it may be.

As usual, St. Paul gives us pause to think. In last weekend's second reading he the Christians at Rome and he also tells us "that we do not know how to pray as we ought." For some people that statement may be shocking information, for others it may unfortunately confirm what they have thought for a long period of time.

Fortunately, the apostle tells us, the Holy Spirit "intercedes with inexpressible groanings." So even though we ourselves may be confused about how to pray and for what we should pray, the Holy Spirit is there praying with us.

Often Catholics can be praying for some specific need. There is surely nothing wrong with that approach to prayer, but there is another one. That approach means that prayer involves "be" rather than "do." It is not so much an activity as it is simply a coming before God and resting in God's presence.

After all, all of us need rest. Our society is one that constantly calls us to do this and do that. It is a society of activity. Our time of prayer can be a time of resting in God's presence, not doing anything or trying to accomplish anything in particular. In the long run, God knows—and we also know if we are quiet enough to let that knowledge sink in—that God is the one who accomplishes the good in our lives.

Summer is a time when people often seek "time off." We can try quietly spending the time off with God. God is with us, always ready to touch our lives if we are willing to allow God to be God.

In our Lord,
Donald A. Hawkins, S.J.
Pastor