

## “I Want What You Want, Lord.”

I am Annemarie Brimmer, a cradle Catholic born and raised in an Irish-Catholic family of seven and educated in Catholic schools from third grade through college. I consider myself a ‘revert’ to Catholicism. I was away from the church for a while and this is the abridged version of how I was transformed and brought home.

Looking back on the culture of my family, the Church and the world in the 60’s and 70’s when I grew up, I realize I was not well evangelized in my faith. I didn’t know what I didn’t know, mainly because I was enamored with the trinity of me, myself and I, and also with things of this world. So at that time my eyes, ears, mind and heart were not open to the beauty, truth and goodness of Catholicism. As a result, I lost my way and became Catholic in name only.

I kept going through all the motions, though: my husband Brad and I got married in the Church, we Baptized and raised our three children in the Church, and so on. I went to Mass every week because my husband was so devout and to keep up appearances. But the painful truth is, for many of my 33 years as a parishioner of St. Mary’s, I was present in body only, not in mind or spirit.

All along though, I felt deep down inside that there was something missing in my life. There was a hole in me that things of the world could not fill. So about 10 years ago I began seeking. And through a series of events, experiences and people, I came to realize that what I was really longing for was a personal relationship with my Creator.

Inspired by some very holy people whom God had placed in my path, I made a conscious decision to be open to the presence of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit in my life. My prayer was, “I want what You want, Lord”, and by His grace I began to see, hear and feel Him in my life. I’d like to share one pretty amazing story of how I experienced this:

Around six years ago I worked with a young teacher who had just been diagnosed with multiple sclerosis. One of her symptoms was numbness in her arm, from her shoulder down to her fingers, which she had had for about a year. Her doctors told her that if her arm was still numb in two months, then it would likely become a permanent condition. I asked if I could pray for her and she said yes because she believed in the power of prayer.

So for the next couple of months I prayed, “I want what You want Lord” in terms of her overall health. But I prayed specifically for her arm because she was young, had a two year old daughter and was an Art teacher - she so needed that arm! I also put her name in the petition basket for prayers at the monthly Healing Masses at St. Thomas Seminary.

When the doctor’s deadline approached, I went to the Art room to see how she was doing. I was stunned when she told me that over the past couple of months, the numbness had slowly begun to disappear from her shoulder down to her hand, with just a little tingling left in her fingers. I told her about my prayers and the Healing Masses. She said she got goosebumps and repeated that she believed in the power of prayer.

Then, just after she told me that the feeling in her arm had come back, I experienced a powerful presence. It was hard to explain in words, at the time, but I felt like I was in a cloud, or in a fishbowl seeing light coming through the water.

I have since learned a term which beautifully describes what I experienced in the Art room that day. There is an old Celtic saying that heaven and earth are only three feet apart, but in a 'Thin Place' that distance is even smaller. A 'Thin Place' is where the veil that separates heaven and earth is lifted and one is able to receive a glimpse of the magnificence and glory of God.

The power of that simple prayer, "I want what You want, Lord" led not only to a physical healing but to a spiritual one as well - for me! A spiritual healing that put this lost sheep back into the loving arms of Jesus where the relationship I was seeking became a reality.

And before you start thinking that I must be holy or special to have something like this happen to me, please don't. St. Theresa of Avila said God may give these experiences to some souls because they are much weaker than those who have great faith. And I read in the Catechism of the Catholic Church in section 208 that "Faced with God's fascinating and mysterious presence, man discovers his own insignificance." I actually believe that God reveals Himself to ALL of us in many ways that we don't always recognize.

I think praying for what God wants has given me the grace to be open to the presence of the Holy Spirit because now I find He reveals himself to me in so many ways:

~My Lord speaks to me in every moment of the Mass, where I love to be because He is truly present.

~He speaks to me In Holy Scripture, Old and New Testament passages that are as applicable to life today as they were in ancient times.

~He speaks to me in the words of spiritual books like "The Fulfillment of All Desire" by Ralph Martin that teaches, through the writings of the Saints, how to come closer to God by following His will.

~ He speaks to me in the lyrics of inspirational songs I hear on K-LOVE Radio like the song "You Say" by Lauren Daigle.

~He speaks to me in the beautiful smiles and amazing accomplishments of the special needs children I work with.

~He speaks to me through EWTN Radio Shows like the 'Son Rise Morning Show' or "Kresta in the Afternoon" which look at life, news and world events through a Catholic lens. I stumbled upon Catholic radio a few years ago and it feeds my soul and mind with truth and wisdom.

~ He speaks to me in the Catechism of the Catholic Church, an incredible resource to understand Jesus' teaching and His Church's teaching on faith and morals.

~He speaks to me in prayer, especially before His holy presence in Eucharistic Adoration.

~He speaks to me in the suffering of my life that brings me to my knees and closer to Him on the Cross.

~He speaks to me in the words of one of those holy people He put in my path - our shepherd and teacher, Father Matera.

By the grace that came from the simple prayer, "I want what You want, Lord.", this fallen away Catholic who was not open to the beauty, truth and goodness of 2000 years of Catholic teaching, practices and tradition has, over time, come to believe all of it:

I believe in every single word I profess in the Creed. I believe that Jesus is truly present in the Holy Eucharist, Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity. I believe that the Holy Bible is the actual authoritative Word of God. I believe I was filled with the Holy Spirit at my Baptism on July 7, 1957. I believe that marriage is a Sacrament between a man and a woman. I believe God created men and women in His image, different from each other but equal in dignity. I believe that at the moment of conception, an early developing human being is created and should be valued from then until natural death. I believe in Heaven, Hell, and Purgatory, and I believe in the existence of the devil and his demons. I believe in obeying the laws of God contained in our Catholic faith. I believe sin is sin as Jesus taught. I believe in the power of the Sacrament of Reconciliation. I believe I was created to partake in His divine nature here on earth and to be with Him forever in Heaven...and I want that more than anything else because that's what He wants!

Following Jesus' command to love God with all my heart, strength and mind and love all of you as myself, I would like to close with a prayer for you:

"Almighty Father, Son and Holy Spirit, I lift everyone here (or reading this) and pray that no matter where they are on their spiritual journey, they ask to be graced with a stronger desire to 'Want what You want'. Open their eyes, ears, minds and hearts to seek You with fervor, humility and ardor so that they may experience the joy of Your presence in this world as a glimpse of what's to come with You in the next. Amen."