

Prayer intentions via Fruitful Harvest

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Hundreds of written prayer intentions were delivered to me around Thanksgiving. All of these 3.5-by-8.5-inch paper slips are now in my chapel. More will arrive over time. I read and pray about a number of them daily. After I review five or six, I have to pause. The realities that they describe are deep and heartfelt, and the authors primarily name other people's needs rather than their own.

I know that I can support these petitions during my prayer time. What I did not expect was how much these would affect me. Most of them put my own worries into perspective, that I am just one of many who go to God with urgent and persistent concerns for souls.

The writers' names are not on these slips, so they remain anonymous. But there are two kinds of petition that reappear, rarely together: prayer that the Church properly handle "the scandal" with courage, and prayer that family members will welcome a closer relation with Jesus, usually by returning to church worship. All of us sense some connection between these two petitions, even though it's not automatic. I wonder if those closest to us know how often we commend them to God's care?

So thanks to everyone who submitted prayer intentions for me to share again with God. Advent is never "the same old, same old" for me. But the unanticipated effects of your requests are beyond what any of us might have imagined. You can be sure that I will attend to what is written on every one of those slips.