

## Testimony

I had a pretty traditional upbringing. I practiced Catholicism with regularity as well as with a sense of duty that allowed me to make spiritual progress.

At 32 years old, Isabelle and I married. We have 5 children. We spent a lot of time talking about our Catholic faith and progressed together spiritually.

A few years ago in Nantes, I consecrated myself to the heart of Jesus which greatly impacted my daily life.

As far as the practice of silent prayer is concerned I can offer three suggestions:

1/ In **Preparation**: it is important for me that the setting be beautiful. I like to light a candle, have a pleasing image from a church or a holy picture of the cross or the Pieta in front of me. If possible I kneel. I kneel not only to stay awake but also to offer it up. I read Cardinal Sara after the resignation of Benedict 16th. He said that he was very disappointed by the Pope's resignation but was able to accept it because he felt that the decision had been made on his knees before the Cross;

2/ The **Actual Practice of prayer**: I like to occupy one or two senses while praying, for example, sight by using an image that I have near me or perhaps the touch of the crucifix of a rosary or the material on a scapula; this helps me to be present during prayer;

3/ Intruding **Thoughts**: I like to have a text to read such as a psalm from which I take a single sentence that I either memorize or repeat to myself. I make it my own during my time of prayer and perhaps even throughout the day.

In 2016, during a study on St. Elizabeth of the Trinity, I was struck by a verse of one of her poems: O Lord, I would like to flow in your blood like a little drop of water in an immense sea.

I repeat this simple verse if a distraction of something that happened during the day or the week intrudes during prayer.

I also like the following verse: I proclaim your death and your resurrection and I am waiting for you to return in glory.

Repeating these simple thoughts allows me to come back to prayer and to be looked at by the Lord.

Francois, Bordeaux 2017