

May8, 2022

Dear Friends,

“I think it’s time!” Have you ever said those words to someone, someone that you love? Usually it means that it is time to go down for the operation. Or, it could mean that it is time to go for that last farewell before we move. Sometimes it is the thing we say to those we love when their time to die draws near. We say it to the loved one or we say it to another loved one about the one whose death draws near. “I think it’s time!” It signals the approach of a specific moment that can no longer be put off or postponed. It is time to face the particular reality. It is a moment when we pray that God’s grace will be very near and God’s strength will sustain us.

Like many of us, I loved my mother, I still love my mother. I place her prayer card on my prayer desk each morning and give her a kiss and pray for her and pray to her. I believe she is with the Lord. My relationship with her went through a variety of iterations as many of our relationships do, depending on my age and so forth. But I came to understand my mom and what her own life was like growing up and the many experiences and influences that affected her and formed her in her early years and beyond. I grew past the point of blaming her or holding her accountable or criticizing her for the way she raised me or for my own failings as an adult. I also saw her more realistically and judged her less and less.

This is May. The month of Our Blessed Lady. The month for Mother’s Day. What is your relationship with Mary? Do you even have a relationship with her? Would you like to have one but find yourself in the position of not even knowing where to begin? Before we turn to Mary let me ask you a question. Was your mother everything you needed her to be for you? Is there need for any sort of reconciliation? Do you sometimes feel like you are stuck back somewhere in the past where something happened or the wheels fell off the relationship or you just couldn’t take it anymore? Have you stopped thinking that there is anything that can be done to restore the relationship? And if your mother has gone to God too, does that mean that now there is no hope of any kind of reconciliation or rapprochement? Might Mary, our Blessed Mother, fill the role at this point in your life if only you ask her?

When I was in Medjugorje in 2007, I prayed a very intense prayer one Thursday night in the presence of fifty or so priests from all around the world. I prayed a prayer that I had no consciousness of ever even having thought before. I asked Our Lady if “she would be for me the mother that my own mother wanted to be for me but was not able to be for me.” I believe that prayer was answered on the spot. I was sixty years old at the time. That moment changed me. It was real and somehow it happened but did not depend on my having lived the perfect life as son or man or priest. Something happened in me and there was a kind of purification of me—all of me—including my past. In that moment, by the grace of God and through the intercession of the Blessed Mother, my heart was made pure. Truly pure. My wounds had begun to heal.

Is your heart pure? Do you desire it to be pure? Do not be afraid to ask Our Lady to intercede with her Son to make it so. There are so many powerful sexual impulses that bombard us throughout every waking day. Do you desire to be free of their influence in your life? Put Our Lord there. Ask his Mother to help you get close to her Son. Allow his Sacred Heart to be your own heart. Allow the purity of her own heart to become a purifying conduit of grace from Our Lord to you. Do not be afraid. It’s time. You know it’s time. Do not delay any longer. Open your heart to Mary. Ask her to be the mother for you that you need once upon a time—and that you need still, right now.

Let the child in you emerge. I assure you this is truly childlike. It is Our Lord himself who said that we must change to become like little children. We must learn as sophisticated adults how we are to place our trust in Christ. Mary is so helpful in just this situation. The faith we had as a child must fall to the ground and die before our adult faith can be born. There is no avoiding that the birth of our adult faith can only take place when we step out in full trust to Our Lord. Do not be afraid. Do not be reticent. Do not be cautious. Invite Our Lord and Our Lady into your lives in a new way.

In the Peace of Christ,
Mgr. McHenry