

THE PRAYER

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It increases God's protection. Peter's release from prison was a dramatic instance of God's protection. Usually it is more subtle: a safe journey, a medical test that turns out fine, an attitude change in a teenager—events like these give us a felt experience of 1 Jn 4:4: "The one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world." In other words, we need not fear the power that is in this world; God's power is even stronger. The prayers of the Body of Christ help bring divine protection into our lives and the lives of those for whom we pray

It removes feelings of aloneness. People sometimes say they can feel the prayers of others. What is that experience like? It may be a peace that comes from an awareness that others are praying. Once, after major surgery, I felt that I was being rocked in a hammock of prayer, surrounded by the gentle prayers of friends, family and members of my faith community. It strengthens us to do what God is calling us to do. Whether it's in our role as family members, as Christians engaged in ministry, as wage earners,

or simply as members of society, we need a strength that exceeds our own power. Intercessory prayer opens the gate to God's power. It builds our relationship with God and increases our faith. When the sun is shining and life is rolling along, the need for God can seem dim, and it's easy for our relationship with the Lord to slip into the background. When hanging from a cliff by our fingernails, however, our eyes suddenly become riveted on the One with the power to save us. Over time, what starts as "Help!" can grow into "I love you, my Lord and my God."



Faith can dig you out
of all situations...

