



Create in me a clean heart,
O God

Prayer:

There is a beautiful book that we offered a study on over the summer called the *Arm Chair Mystic* by Mark Thibodeaux. In there, the author compares our prayer life with a relationship with “Aunt Sally.” When we are young and Aunt Sally comes to visit we are told how to act or talk to Aunt Sally by our parents—“tell Aunt Sally hello,” “give Aunt Sally a hug,” —so it is with our relationship with God too. We begin with rote prayers where we are taught what to say and how to say it. Because this is what we are taught as children it is easy and comfortable.

I know that for me it ‘s also where I go in times of great suffering and struggle in life. The rosary is never far from my hands, and I reach for it when life is hard.

Rote prayers are beautiful and important. They are an important piece of our growing relationship with God.

Fasting:

I’ve noticed a pattern for me during Lent, especially when it comes to fasting. I can give something up—short-term, no problem. So that first week or two goes pretty easy. But this third week gets harder, there’s more temptation to give up. We start to find excuses and it gets easier to find excuses. This is where I really have to focus more on why I am doing this rather than on what I am doing. If my purpose of fasting is to grow closer to God—what am I doing to aid in that relationship when I want to break my fast? In my hunger I am reminded to pray...for those who are hungry, for the one I am praying for today and for myself.

CLEARING OUT OUR HEARTS



Almsgiving:

Remember our 50/50 donation this Lent is for *Ankeny Love Lunches* program and *Bread for the World* which helps people all over the world. Place your alms in the heart shaped donation box on the table in the gathering space—every donation makes a difference! And make sure you take part in our *Bread the World* letter writing campaign this weekend.

Did you know that we host Family Promise four times a year here at OLIH? Not sure what Family Promise is or what you can do to help? Come to the educational meeting on Monday, **March 5** at 6:30pm in the Green Room to learn more about what this program does to help those who are in need! Many volunteers are needed each host week—come see how you can be a part of this great ministry in our parish!

