

**Faith and Prayer**    Seventh Week in Ordinary Time    Monday, February 25, 2019    Sir  
1:1-10;    **Mk 9:14-29**    (Well, if you don't have any faith and you don't know God and you  
don't pray, well, being negative about yourself is actually an easy trap to fall into.)

**“Jesus said to him, ‘If you can!’ Everything is possible for one who has faith.”**

This particular story is a story about Jesus being provoked by arguing and unbelief. So this  
lad is afflicted with something or other. It sounds a lot like epilepsy, but that wouldn't be a very  
good explanation of the story, because it says that the spirit came out and Jesus said, “This kind can  
only come out through prayer.” **There are afflictions that require a lot of prayer; they are of a  
spiritual nature**, but they do yield to prayer. That's why we shouldn't associate all such stories  
with just a form of mental illness or some sort of phenomenon that we are familiar with, because  
**we are not familiar with a lot of phenomena.** There are a lot of people out there in the world  
today who are very afflicted in ways no one can understand. The mental health industry itself is not  
too good at understanding many of the problems of the mind. They have made a little bit of  
progress here and there, but **here the key is prayer.**

**And prayer is lifting the heart and mind to God.** The source of so many problems is that  
**people don't pray**, and they don't pray for a long time. Much of their life is spent without prayer,  
and then the consequences are dire because by then they have **formed many habits that are  
negative habits, bad habits**, for example thinking about themselves in a negative way. **Well, if  
you don't have any faith and you don't know God and you don't pray, well, being negative  
about yourself is actually an easy trap to fall into.**

Now when people focus on themselves without God and with no idea of God's love or their  
ultimate place in God's plan of creation and redemption and they **think about their past, they  
become depressed**; they **think about the future, they become anxious** because they are all  
alone. It's the aloneness that is really the cause of the affliction. Now that aloneness is really an

illusion, and **an illusion can become a delusion**. And people can become delusional sinking deeply into darkness. None of this is fate. It's not destiny. It doesn't have to happen. But it's a result actually of the way we are; **we are very prone to habits. Our brains become used to certain pathways**. And if we develop bad habits, our brains become lazy and they just follow this pathway. **It's hard for anyone else to change that. It almost is in the realm of a miracle**. That is something we cannot understand it all, but is marvelous. We don't understand how it can come about, but it comes about, if it comes about at all, **through asking. Why? Because everything is possible to one who has faith**.