

Community Prayer Spaces...

Society of the Divine Savior – Salvatorians

Though the Society of the Divine Savior – Salvatorians is primarily an apostolic religious order (action-oriented) as opposed to a contemplative religious order (prayer-oriented), our Founder Fr. Francis Jordan always stressed the fundamental importance of integrating prayer and mission in our lives as apostles of the Divine Savior. He said, **“Be a true apostle of Jesus Christ to all peoples... a flaming torch...you will only find this fire in prayer.”**



USA Salvatorian Provincial House Chapel located in Milwaukee, WI

The reality is that we can pray anywhere and at any time, and since we are specifically a religious order, prayer is central to our vocation and ministry. Just as we have a kitchen and dining area to help sustain our bodies, we have a prayer space to help sustain our souls. Ultimately, we are trying to live lives that are whole and well.

“The root and foundation of prayer is relationship: our relationship with God and with each other,” said Fr. Peter Schuessler SDS Vicar and Director of Formation for the Order. **“Prayer is a natural expression and participation in this relationship.”**

God is everywhere and so we can pray everywhere. However, within each of our houses – the USA Provincial House, the Novitiate house and our Holy Apostles Formation House – we have designated sacred spaces for prayer and liturgy. Each space is unique. The choice of colors, images, symbols, lighting and furniture all assist in creating a space conducive to prayer, reflection and meditation. On special feast days or occasions, our Provincial house community has also invited benefactors and friends to come pray with us in these intimate spaces.

“We sometimes speak of ‘having a prayer life.’ The truth of the matter is that we ARE our prayer life. The Holy Spirit dwells within us and leads us into the experience of prayer. Prayer is both personal and communal and both ways are an integral part of religious life as well as the life of all believers. There is no one ‘correct’ way to pray,” said Fr. Schuessler. **“It is as personal as our DNA.”**

“In our discernment of what God is asking of us at the beginning of our vocation and then throughout our lives, we understand contemplative prayer practice incorporates some degree of solitude, silence and stillness,” says Fr. Joe Rodrigues SDS, Salvatorian Provincial and National Vocations Director. **“Mother Teresa said, ‘Listen in silence because if your heart is full of other things you cannot hear the voice of God.’ It is important to have a posture of openness and zeal, a kind of spiritual hunger.**

Something in us knows we need something deeper... essentially to be open to genuine transformation."

When we pray we trust that grace will lead us into our fears, loneliness, and emptiness and that grace will ultimately fill us, if we are willing to stay in that void, that silence. We need to refrain from pushing answers too quickly. It calls for a discipline to remain in God's embrace, to trust in Divine Providence. "It means that to a certain degree I have to stop holding on to self-reliant willfulness driven by ego and vanity," said Fr. Rodrigues. "Prayer lives in a spacious place. Learning to be comfortable with who I really am - strengths and limitations alike. It is a place of simplicity and humility. What we are trying to do is ultimately seek union with God in everything. We do not do it by chasing the butterfly we do it by sitting still and allowing the butterfly to freely land on our shoulder."

"Prayer leads us to acts which help build up God's Kingdom," said Fr. Schuessler. "Charity flows from prayer which helps to open our eyes to the presence of Jesus in others."

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Our Holy Apostles Formation House located in Milwaukee is home to our candidates, professed members in formation and their mentors.