

When people ask us to pray

I received a text the other day from a friend and fellow St. Leo parishioner, who asked me to pray for her 2-year-old granddaughter, regrettably diagnosed with neuroblastoma, cancer of the adrenal glands.

My group of nine high school girlfriends and I have a text chain for communicating simultaneously, usually when one of us needs to ask for prayers for someone we love. This week it was for my friend's newborn grandson, who is back in the hospital with complications.

On Facebook we often read posts of friends and acquaintances asking for various prayers.

When people specifically ask me to pray, I am honored they recognize my spiritual wellbeing enough to know I will indeed pray for their need. And when I ask people to pray, I do not ask just *anyone* ... I solicit specific friends and family members, those who I know are devout and will assist in the prayer chain - those who take praying seriously.

When I post a prayer flare on Facebook, I begin by saying, "Hey prayer warriors ..." or "For those of you who pray ..." and then describe the plea. Again - my target audience is those who take praying seriously. I suppose anyone can reply with a praying hand emoji without actually meaning it. Guess I'll never know who really prays on an explicit request. I can be responsible for only my own prayer promises.

I do not take it lightly when I ask prayer of others ... and I do not take it nonchalantly when others ask prayers from me. I will stop reading that post or text and shoot up a prayer flare *immediately*. Then later in the evening or in my next morning's prayers, I will add in the request again. In the case of my friends' grandkids mentioned earlier, I have been praying *often* for those tiny helpless beings.

The next time someone asks you to pray for something or someone specifically, it is because that suggestion is significant to him or her. Let's really *hear* the petition ... *pray* it ... and *mean* it.

Because when people ask us to pray, they are serious.