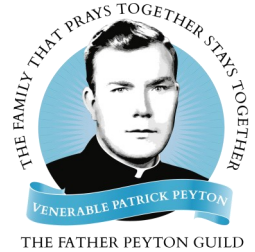


# For Members of the Worldwide Father Peyton Prayer Guild

*United in Prayer for a Spiritual Cause*



### Feast Days:

- St. Teresa of Calcutta, Sept. 5
- The Most Holy Name of Mary, Sept. 12
- The Exaltation of the Cross, Sept. 14
- St. Matthew, Sept. 21
- St. Vincent de Paul, Sept. 27
- The Archangels, Sept. 29

### Sharing the Faith:

- What distracts you and your family from giving each other your undivided attention?
- Have you experienced greater peace and hope through family prayer?

### From the Vice Postulator/Guild Director

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Early in his priestly ministry, Father Peyton spoke of the challenges of family life. He was prophetic in recognizing the effects of war, secularism, divorce, addiction, and other challenges that we face today. **As members of the Father Peyton Prayer Guild, we are united in asking God, Our Blessed Mother, and Father Peyton to assist us in finding peace and love beginning with our families.**

Recently, we've been receiving an increased number of prayer requests asking for healing of mental illness of teenage and adult children, and grandchildren of Father Peyton Guild members. With this in mind, I invited Father Jilson Tom, C.S.C., to speak to our local chapter about his studies in the field of psychology at Divine Mercy University and **how we might help family members and friends who suffer from chronic or short-term mental illness.**

Father Jilson began by discussing the different stages of life with its normal phases of maturation and also the tensions that can arise. He gave examples from his own family and also those from his pastoral ministry in India which included social work, high school administration, seminary formation, and parish priestly work as a parochial vicar and pastor.

He used observable behaviors rather than clinical diagnoses to help us form a picture of what would be considered normal challenges during our lives vs. those that require some form of medical assistance. Additionally, he suggested that we consider the intensity, frequency, and duration of these behaviors.

For example, he mentioned a child who when frustrated, punches a wall at home. Is this a rare and short-term reaction or something that is happening regularly and even increasing in intensity, etc.? Father Jilson went on to explain that **mental disorders interfere with a person's flourishing so that they are unable to live life to the fullest.**

*Continued on back*

**My hope in the darkness,  
my light in the day.**

**My constant protector,  
my God clears the way.**

*"From my earliest memories, I saw my father with the Rosary beads in his hands and my mother holding hers. My older brothers and sisters and I knelt around them praying." - Venerable Patrick Peyton*



Father Jilson Tom, C.S.C.

Father Jilson's studies have centered on a relatively new approach called Positive Psychology, which asks the question: "What is and what could be?" This program seeks not only to repair but also build upon the positive qualities of a person.

In terms of how we, as family members can be of help, **Father Jilson recommended that we strive to be empathic listeners, speakers, and also foster a safe and comfortable home environment.** Empathic listening and speaking occur when we give our undivided attention, observe the emotional state of the person, allow time after a person has spoken in case there is more for them to say, and lastly ask clarifying questions to confirm our understanding.

Father Jilson's program of study builds upon Positive Psychology by incorporating a vocational model that includes a call to be good--a call to holiness, a call to committed relationships, and a call to commit oneself to society through our daily works. Father Jilson spoke of the importance of parents and grandparents offering their unique gifts and roles within a family. He encouraged fathers not only to be present to their families but also to lead them in rituals such as family prayer

that model a father's care and concern for the spiritual well-being of his family. He also spoke about a mother's role, which is a source of nurturing through listening, advising, and fostering a loving home environment which welcomes family and friends, and cares for those in need.

The Catholic vision of the human person forms the basis of this program. The Bible, Tradition and the teachings of the Church present three stages of salvation history as the context for all human life: Creation, the Fall and Redemption. **This vision tells us that all men and women have a special dignity in virtue of their creation in the image and likeness of God.** Since sin entered human history at the fall and continues to affect us individually and communally, we see its effects in the stresses of daily life. These sins manifest themselves in the form of anxiety, depression, loneliness, suicide and many other psychological maladies.

But, sin does not have the last word. **Our faith gives all of us reason to hope, especially in times of trouble. Healing is offered us through the Lord Jesus.** He redeems us through his Passion, Death and Resurrection; the Holy Spirit is at work sanctifying us, and the Father thirsts for a loving and joyful union with all his children.

Let us pray for the grace of God to be instruments of healing, encouragement, and peace for those in our families who are challenged by mental illness. May they know of God's love for them through our words and deeds.

May God Bless You,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Father David S. Marcham". The ink is dark and the signature is fluid and legible.

Father David S. Marcham,  
Vice Postulator/ Guild Director