

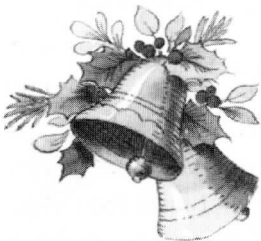
is to work on our private and personal prayer life. Prayer alone, genuine prayer, is alone able to make any contact at all with the immensity of God. When the winds blow, and the floods wash us up, and loss of jobs and income come crashing into our lives, when actual hunger begins to gnaw at us, prayer - genuine prayer - alone will make the difference. God is our strength. God is our only strength. St. Peter actually walked on water. He walked on water, however, only as long as he kept his eye on Jesus Christ. The instant he looked away, thinking himself able enough to continue his walk alone, he began to sink. As for us, so long as we look for our strength as coming from our DIVINE GOD, so long will we be able to move about in our troubles without fear.

In times of abundance, souls forget God and are lost. In times of distress, souls turn to God and save themselves. This is, indeed, the way it goes. Persecution! Epidemic! Loss of job and income! Flood! War! Fire! Earthquake! Death! and all the rest, will not destroy us, so long as God's Hand is there for us to hold on to! FEAR NOT! We have always said that! God will not forsake those who truly and consistently and with firm determination love Him! Do not become distraught if you find suffering to be such a big part of your love!

Therefore, Beloved Ones, enjoy your Christmas, even if the customary pretty boxes and the shiny tinsel things are missing. Christmas resides in love and PRAYER - not in THINGS! To the degree we love God to that degree will we all be surrounded with the real beauty of the Christmas Celebration. We must be strong. We must keep the Faith. We must pray much. We must not be afraid! We must pray with all the love and strength in our hearts, we must remain calm, and we must trust God and thank Him that we are still around to make the difference.

GOD BLESS YOU. Please do not forget to pray for us.

In the love of the Infant Jesus,



+ *Ronald Grankina, O.S.B.*  
Abbot