

## Our Hearts are Always Surging for God

I live in an old house, a Manor House, built in 1880. Occasionally, I walk around the house, especially the first floor, imagining what it must have been like to live here back “in the day.” I try to imagine the residents and those who visited. In my imagination, I picture dinners and parties that must have filled this house with conversation, laughter, and friendship. It must have been wonderful! But then I remind myself that this house had no electricity or running water at the time. For this 21<sup>st</sup> century person, that is much harder to imagine! How can you possibly manage without electricity?



All these thoughts remind me of a time when I was cleaning and needed to use the vacuum. As I began, the vacuum wouldn’t work. I tried everything. I turned it upside down. I opened it to see if something was clogging it. I took the bag out and emptied it. Still, nothing happened! Another sister came along and asked if I was having a problem. I told her that the vacuum didn’t work. She looked at it and then looked at me and said, “It might help if you plug it in.” Ah! The beauty of electricity!

Sometimes we tend to take things for granted. Electricity is only one of the many things in my life that I assume will be there when I need them. Flick a switch and lights come on. Turn the faucet on in a sink and water appears. Stretching the point a bit, God is one of those “things” I take for granted sometimes. Of course, God is always there, waiting for me to “plug in” to God’s presence. And I often have to be reminded to do just that. Like the puzzle with the vacuum, I look for all kinds of solutions to problems or help with plans, turning in all directions for an answer, often unsuccessfully. Prayer is likely the answer!

In prayer we find a God who will take us above the problems – the little or big things that don’t “work.” We find a God who, as one author says, “is dangerously close.” We will find that all our joys and sorrows are wrapped up with God’s. God’s presence abounds in this crazy, anxious, broken world of ours. The truth is that it is right in this world, in our world, that God lives. St. Therese’s description of prayer is “a surge of the heart.” James Martin remarks that to Therese, prayer is something we cannot avoid, with our hearts always *surging* for God. It’s a lot like an electrical surge we get when the vacuum is plugged in to the source of needed energy!

A friend gave me a little wooden plaque for Christmas. On it were the words, “*Have you prayed about it?*” I think my friend knows me well! It was as if she was telling me not to waste time beating around the bush. Go to the source of our strength and grace. God is waiting; just plug in!