

## PRAYER WALK

by Jean Glaraton

*"...not as I will, but as You will." Matthew 26:39*

I was going through a bit of a rough spot recently and took myself to a local lake to clear my head. Being springtime in Minnesota, the wooded path encircling the lake was a mix of dry pavement, puddles, and patches of ice. As I walked, my mind did indeed clear, and the walking path became a metaphor for life—external forces determining which parts are clear, which are icy, and which are somewhere in between. I was surrounded by silence periodically broken by the crack of ice, an array of animal sounds, and an occasional hello. There were human and animal companions; headphones I imagined to be filled with music, silence, a lecture, perhaps an audio book; walking sticks, leashes, and water bottles. I was particularly impressed by the steady and determined gait of one walker and realized the sharp sounds coming from her feet were spiked ice grippers. My walk became a reflection on the tools I had in my own “toolbox” to draw on as I yearned to regain my footing and feel sturdy and strong.

Just as Jesus throughout his life modeled the absolute need for silence and solitude, he also modeled the need to be surrounded by those who supported him and believed in him. In Matthew 26:36-46, we hear how Jesus three times in the garden of Gethsemane asked his disciples to stay awake with him as he prayed, “if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I will, but as You will.” Think of how many times in our lives we feel alone, only to learn that when we call on people, they are there for us, whether it’s in prayer or in person, giving of themselves that our burden might be lightened. Reminding us what we are capable of when we use our inner strength and gifts. It is critical that we use those resources, and build ourselves a network of people who share our joy in smooth times, carry us through puddles, and become our spikes when things get icy. We can come out on the other side when we rely on our inner strength and when we rely on our God.

That morning was the first time I’d walked that lake path alone. Usually I’m with friends, some of the very friends I called on to help me, who reminded me of the tools and wisdom I hold within, friends who prayed with me and for me. That morning, my walk became my prayer.

*What tools do you have in your “toolbox”? What inner strength have you learned to rely on?*

*What tools do you want to strengthen?*

*What gifts do you have to offer others?*

**Powerful God, I ask for Your blessing as I navigate my way along this path called life. Thank you for the companions You’ve given me along the way. Keep them safe. Keep them strong. May I be for them as they are for me. And together, may we be faithful servants to Your will. With gratitude and strength, I pray in Your name. Amen.**

