

# Cultivate Quiet Moments

BY SUSIE LLOYD

As a busy mom, my default setting is work; it goes everywhere with me. But last week I blew it. I got unexpectedly stuck in a waiting room for four hours with nothing to do except file my nails. For five full minutes, I wallowed in the activity. After that I sat, like everyone else, taking solace in my phone. I texted a few people: “Help, I’m trapped!” Called others: “Call me back. Please, please, please.” And tried to answer email: “As soon as home, will answer your question. Right now typing with one finger.” Not much work got done, but I did a good job of faking myself out.

Three hours in, I spied my rosary in my purse. Praying the Rosary is on my daily to-do list. I admit that my first thought was *Yes! I can check it off!* As I prayed, however, a different feeling took over. The Rosary, with its meditation and repetition, has a way of slowing you down, quieting your mind, and reminding you that you’re not as in charge as you think you are. I exited the noisy waiting room into the quiet hallway beyond to be with Jesus and Mary.

Are you too busy to pray? You don’t have to wait for the next dental appointment, flight layover, or “please hold for roadside assistance” to spend time with God. You can schedule it. I like to get up before my family is awake and have a coffee date with Jesus, just the two of us. Sometimes I use

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a prayer book. Sometimes I just gaze at a picture of his holy face (from the Shroud of Turin). In fair weather I go outside and listen to the birds and think of how God is holding us in the palm of his hand. “How much more important are you than birds!” (Luke 12:24). When I practice those

moments of silence, they stay with me for the rest of my busy day. They help make prayer my default setting, even as I work. “Who can prevent you from speaking to him in the depths of your heart?”

(St. Francis deSales).

Unfortunately most people these days select noise as their default setting. They feel lost without it. It is not

uncommon to see people taking a walk or eating dinner “together” while glued to their phones. People even use their phones in church. Face-to-face with someone they love, they act as though they’re in a waiting room.

If that describes you, there is good news. You can easily disconnect from noise and reconnect with those you love.

Car rides with your family are golden opportunities. Turn off the radio, lock the phone in the glove box, have the earbuds surgically removed. Talk to each other. Find out what’s on your kids’ minds (besides Pokémon Go). Discuss moral issues they might be battling—like what to do about the kid in school nobody is nice to, or the friend who dumped them, or that needy, codependent friend. Share news and a few laughs. As the mother of four grown children, I can tell you that these everyday opportunities will one day stop. Enjoy them now while you’ve got them.

One thing it’s not too late for is to reconnect with the Lord. Make him your first priority every day. Ask him to help you manage your to-do list. He will; he promised. “Your Father knows that you need [these things]” (Luke 12:30). You can take solace in that.



Find Susie Lloyd’s books, articles, and speaking schedule at [SusieLloyd.com](http://SusieLloyd.com).

