

I read often that when two or more are present when praying the rosary, or just saying prayers, that He is there with us. Is He there when we pray alone?

Jesus tells us: “Whoever loves me will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our dwelling with him.” (John 14:23) Jesus dwells with us always when we keep His commandments. So, yes, Jesus is present when we pray alone. But Jesus is present with us in a special way when we gather together as a community; when we more completely reflect the Church which is His Body.

The question refers to the passage: “I say to you, if two of you agree on earth about anything for which they are to pray, it shall be granted to them by my heavenly Father. For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.” (Mat. 18:19-20) And in the First Letter of John we are told “if we love one another, God remains in us.” (1 Jn. 4:12) To love one another means that more than one must be present. At Holy Mass, Jesus is physically present in the Eucharist, present as the Word of Scripture, present in the person of the minister, but also present when the congregation prays and sings together. We come to Mass each Sunday, instead of praying alone at home, so that we can be closer to Jesus and feel His love more warmly.

It is said that our faith is always personal, but never private. We need to develop a personal relationship with Christ, but also to be part of the Christian community. When we cannot come to church to pray as a community we can pray with Mary and the other saints in heaven, and ask for their intercession. In this way we can still gather spiritually with our fellow members of the Communion of Saints.

Deacon Joe