

Embracing Holy Spirit's Gift of Inconvenient Intercession

It's 5:09 a.m., and the sun is coming up over the Rockies. I've been awake for an hour talking to God about a student whose progress is concerning to me, as we end the school year. Behind this name trails the name of a friend's kid and another friend's kid who are making bad choices right now. Their faces and souls hook themselves to my prayers like monkeys in a barrel.

Sleep would have been nice.

Except people require emotional work, and I'm starting to come to grips with this. In fact, I think it's a gross oversight that we don't write this more concretely into our contracts.

I will wear skirts or slacks to work.

I will not park in the visitor parking.

I will take attendance every day.

I will attend all staff meetings.

I will commit to 13 hours of sleeplessness in order to pray for and to think of how to help a student who is not doing well.

Signature_____.

Parents should have to sign something like this before leaving the hospital with a new baby:

Show us you know how to properly install a car seat.

Show us you're willing to cry for this child and to labor over him in your thoughts and prayers. Will you agonize on behalf of this person? Sign here.

Seth Godin says:

Emotional labor: That's the labor most of us do now. The work of doing what we don't necessarily feel like doing, the work of being a professional, the work of engaging with others in a way that leads to the best long-term outcome ... Of course it's difficult. That's precisely why it's valuable. Almost no one gets hired to eat chocolate cake.

I think of Jesus in the garden. He was willing to be completely miserable on my behalf. He lost sleep. He prayed and prayed and prayed. He made himself physically ill because of love. He said to his disciples, "My soul is very sorrowful, even to death. Wait here, and keep watch with Me" (Matt. 26:38).

Jesus put himself in a place of emotional misery and did not run from it.

He did this work for me.

He did this work for you.

So I ask—are you willing to do emotional work on behalf of the people God has put in your life? Will you stay awake and pray for them? It is a great internal act of service. {eoa}

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