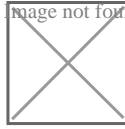


The Caress of Prayer (Katherine Johnson)

[Ξένες γλώσσες](#) / [In English](#)

Image not found or type unknown



There's nothing more humbling than being a parent, because what makes for good children is the life you're living. And it's a parent's love of God, the faith of a father and a mother, that sparks flame and ignites the heart of a child. It's when a parent sees the face of a child and beholds the face of God, that's when divine love spreads warmth and hearts speak words unspoken.



The radiance of a life lived in Christ, it's the beacon that guides a child aright.

Providing for the body matters little when the soul's left bare. And there's no greater way to embrace the entire child, body and soul, than through the gentle caress of prayer. The prayer of a mother. She's the one who's learning how to make another person the content of her heart. A child mystically embraced while arms are raised to God.

It's the greatest work of a parent. Prayer. The only labor worthy of the name.

And you learn it daily. That above all other things, prayer is required first. It's the foremost work of any parent and that's because the noise of our words only reaches the ears. Only God knows the heart of another and words voice the will more clearly than God's grace. Embrace a child in your prayer and offer him to God.

Words only skim surfaces. It's prayer that penetrates the heart.

No one's heart was ever made whole by words, no matter how well spoken. Hearts are only healed by God's grace, the Word who was made flesh and dwells among us. Whisper quiet to God and let Him do the talking.

Raising up a child is the holiest of all works and that's because it's the work of the heart. And the home can be the holiest of places. After all, it's the place where the holy and righteous learned to speak the language of heaven, the silence of prayer.

Silence isn't a language meant only for the monk. God-pleasing silence is the watch set upon a mouth that would tend toward words harsh and grating. The breaking of a will and a gate of enclosure, quieting the lips. Less words spoken in the light of day and more words breathed into the silence of the night.

Dark hours illumined by a candle, beds full and the contents of a heart emptied. Each child's name woven through the woolen knots of a rope that began in the stillness of a monastery. A monk once tying each knot in the silence of his prayer, and a mother now sealing it with her quiet. The quiet way of learning to seek Christ in all things, clinging to Him alone.

This article was originally posted on Evlogia on May 9, 2011 and is posted here with permission.

Katherine Johnson is an Orthodox Christian wife and mother of seven. She is the author of the popular website evlogia, a writer for Orthodox Christian Network, and the developer of the Orthodox homeschool curriculum, Ages of Grace. Her work can be found at evlogia.