



This was the topic of our workshop the weekend of November 29-30 at Saint Mary's Monastery in Petersham, MA. Brothers in formation (from the newly professed to the newly ordained brothers) and the territorial Formation committee members got together to talk about their experience of prayer. In fact, our Rule of Life reminds us that "Prayer is difficult for everyone" (RL #51). Recognizing this difficulty should be a reminder for each of us, sons of Fr d'Alzon, to take prayer seriously at the community level as well as at the personal level, putting in the time and the effort it needs.

In a context and an environment where so many things compete for attention in our life, prayer could become an endangered species. We all acknowledged the fact that it is very easy for us to put prayer on the back burner when we are busy with our academic assignments, our apostolic activities, and even entertainment. And yet, we all recognize that our prayer should "challenge our life in the light of the gospel. We must ask ourselves to what extent our life enters

into our prayer and to what extent our prayer affects our life and that of the community” (RL #50).

When it comes to prayer, we should always be aware that we are on a journey. And this journey, like other journeys, comes complete with detours and potholes, narrow turns, missing signs, and even deceptive billboards along the way. We make a lot of stops, requiring new starts if we are going to get back on this important journey.

At the center, therefore, is the desire for God. Keeping this desire (thirst) strong is the main task for each of us. In the words of St Augustine, “the desire is your prayers; and if your desire is without ceasing, your prayer will also be without ceasing. The continuance of your longing is the continuance of your prayer.” To pray is to desire, to long for, but to desire what God would desire. At the end of the workshop, we were all invited to do everything we can possibly do to keep that desire/ fire burning within our hearts.

As disciples of Fr d’Alzon, we are called to turn our life into prayer. Prayer should not be something out there; we should breathe into it: it should be the oxygen of our consecrated life. What role has prayer played in your life?