

Fr. Perozich comments —

Enough for a moment of the chaos in the church over which lowly priests and faithful have no power to stop or to control with a word, a vote, or a command.

Surrendering to God is within the power of each Christian.

Jesus, the Real Presence of God, Jesus the Eucharist, the perfect thanksgiving to God, invites me and anyone else, to unite my imperfect life to His life of perfect thanksgiving to the Father by surrendering plans, goals, and earthly ways.

In this way, I not only receive Eucharist, I become part of the Eucharist and enter into the Real Presence of Jesus.

Letting Go of Tyrannical Planning

“Let go of your plans. The first hour of your morning belongs to God. Tackle the day’s work that he charges you with, and he will give you the power to accomplish it” (St. Teresa Benedicta).



Editor's note: Read more about our Lent 2024 theme, "Not My Will, but Yours': Surrendering to the Father During Lent," [here](#).

I love planners. I find so much tranquility in writing out my week, listing off my goals—and, yes, I have a weakness for those adorable motivational planner stickers.

There is a sense of accomplishment—turning chaos into order—when I have a planner in hand. Without one, the number of meetings, calls, and important deadlines I would miss is endless.

While organization and creating clear goals are good things, however, sometimes these tools cease being helpful and morph into merciless tyrants.

Planning Gone Wrong

A few months after my daughter was born, I began to miss the days when I could easily run off to evening [Adoration](#). I missed the now-almost unbelievable flexibility I had prior to motherhood. **Prayer was a lot easier when I wasn't tending to a crying infant, navigating the nuanced world of nursing and postpartum, and running on barely any sleep.**

My interior life was deteriorating into a wasteland. I brought my concerns up to my husband: "I really miss going to Adoration."

He agreed to try to come home a little earlier the next night so I could have the evening to spend in front of the Blessed Sacrament.

Needless to say, into my planner it went. I was thrilled; scheduled into the chaos of new motherhood was an hour of rebuilding my prayer life. I would be rejuvenated. Everything would be better.

That night, I got dressed, had everything prepared for my husband, and waited for his return home. Impatiently waited.

Then, he texted me: “Stuck on a call. Be home as soon as possible.”

What? Anger bubbled up inside me. This was not right. This was my night to heal my soul; he couldn’t be stuck on a call. When he got home, I made sure he knew I was peeved as I rushed off to Adoration.

As I sat before the Blessed Sacrament, peace didn’t come. Instead, as I faced my Lord and King, I realized I was choosing me over Christ. I was choosing my plans on my terms, rather than being receptive to this new chapter in my vocation.

I wanted Adoration to be a quick fix, and scheduling it into my planner seemed to legitimize this desire. But God was sending me a huge gift by permitting my husband’s last call to go on longer than anticipated. **He was challenging me to understand my vocation isn’t about control; it’s about surrender.**

My prayer life was deteriorating because I was clinging to my old life, when I had fewer responsibilities. **I was grasping an image of what I wanted my prayer life to look like, rather than cultivating what it could be.**

We all experience different seasons in life. Some offer abundance, some involve scarcity, some are challenging—the list goes on. I discovered that when I found myself in a challenging season, I filled it with plans, believing that doing everything I could to control my environment would bring me peace. Instead, it always brought me disappointment, self-criticism, and a feeling of enslavement to my plans-gone-wrong.

As I sat before Our Lord, I realized that if I had offered up those moments of waiting, and greeted my husband in love and gratitude, not only would I have been surrendering my desire, but I would have actually nourished my interior life and cultivated peace.

Peace in my heart and peace in my home.

It's when we refuse to surrender our will, our frustrations, and our disappointments to Christ that we find ourselves more and more agitated.

Peace flows freely from a receptive heart.

Let Go of Your Plans

This is not to say we need to throw out our planners. Rather, we need to understand that planners are tools, not tyrants.

Our life is always going to be filled with interruptions. The key is surrendering **those unexpected moments** over to God rather than viewing them as cataclysmic moments of failure.

When we choose to surrender our desires to God, we open ourselves up to grace. Then, God's work can take root within us.

Surrendering the Daily Moments

That fateful night crystallized for me the supreme importance of surrendering the daily moments.

Imaginary sanctity isn't sanctity, and planning to "get holy later" is problematic thinking. God calls us to holiness now. **While we might think our prayer life will improve "when life is less chaotic," God is realistic.**

He sees the worries in your heart, and He cares about them. He loves you. He doesn't want the "imaginary" version of you. He wants you—the real you, right now.

Offer up the mess, the chaos, the frustrations in your primary vocation and in your job. We can begin each odious task—be it scrubbing the toilet, decluttering your inbox, tackling difficult projects, or staying up all night with a crying baby—with a simple, **"Jesus, I do this for love of you."** In this

way, we can turn those moments of difficulty into moments of surrender and love for Christ.

Each Morning Is for God

Lastly, don't let a morning pass without offering the day first to God. When we give God the first moments of our day, we begin each day renewed in His love.

After all, while we have our routines and schedules, God is the one in control. And when things do not go according to our plan, there's tremendous peace in knowing He is with us. We are in His presence.

Ann Burns is the founder of [The Feminine Project](#), an organization dedicated to restoring the joy of womanhood. She is a writer and speaker, and strives to uphold what is truly good and beautiful. Most of all, she is a wife and mother, and loves to share the joy in living each day well.