PRAYER'S ROLE IN EXPERIENCING GOD'S GRACE

"IN THE HISTORIC CHRISTIAN understanding, God is not a distant genie whom we call forth with our prayers but rather the creator and sustainer of all that is. Thus when the Pharisees pressed Jesus for some criteria by which they could validate the kingdom of God, Jesus answered, 'The kingdom of God is not coming with things that can be observed ... For, in fact, the kingdom of God is among you.'

'The Lord's Prayer, the model prayer for Christians that I pray every day, does not attempt to control a god who withholds care unless cajoled. Rather, by affirming God's nature and human dependence even for daily bread, it prepares one to receive that which God is already providing. Through prayer, people of faith express their praise and gratitude, confess their wrongdoing, voice their concerns, open themselves to the spirit, and seek the peace and grace to live as God's own people.'

David G. Myers
"Arm-twisting with the Almighty"

SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY TO DEVELOP CURRICULUM FOR RELIGION REPORTING

"THE CARNEGIE CORP. recently awarded $250,000 to Syracuse University, half of which will be used to create a religion reporting curriculum.

"The two-year grant reflects interest in the media's role in covering religion, said David Rubin, dean of SU's S.I. Newhouse School of Public Communications.

"This is not covering sermons anymore," he said. 'Religion seems to be at the heart of practically every dispute in the world.'

"In January 2006, SU hired former religion reporter Gustav Niebuhr to teach in the Religion & Society Program, which he now directs.

"The Carnegie grant will allow Niebuhr to create a curriculum for a religion reporting program, which could develop into a minor, Rubin said. The other half of the grant will be used for curriculum development in journalism and legal affairs. Rubin said Newhouse [School of Public Communications] plans to offer an introductory course in spring 2007.

"SU's role in religion and media dates to the 1950s, when the late Roland E. Wolseley initiated programs in religious journalism, said Debra Mason, executive director of Religion Newswriters Association, a professional organization for journalists who cover religion.

"'SU was the official base for a lot of these programs,' Mason said. 'He really tracked the history of the beat.' She said many universities offer courses in religion and media, but she's not aware of a curriculum dedicated to the specialty. 'A minor would be pretty unusual,' she said."

Renee K. Gadoua
"SU plans religion reporting program"
The Post-Standard (Syracuse, New York). May 6, 2006