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Professor Maret

PMN101: Introduction to Spiritual Formation

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Guyon Response Paper

This assignment brought me to a better understanding of what it means to have uninterrupted time with God. Prior to participating in this assignment, I did not think much about the importance of quality time after reading and what that means for my spiritual health. The past year has been a challenging one for me since I lost my mom to metastatic breast cancer as well as losing my ability to play volleyball after an anterior cruciate ligament (ACL) injury. At that point, I felt as though my relationship with God had stalled. Honestly, I didn't understand why I was going through these things and why they had to be happening at the same time. Of course, God does not do anything without knowing that you are capable of handling it and that there is a reason behind it. I have been searching for answers for about a year now, and I believe that with my weekly eight minutes of stillness after reading, I was able to get them. One of the biggest challenges that I have faced in my life has probably been realizing that everything happens for a reason. The reason is because God wanted it to happen. Since my mom gave me birth, I have loved the Lord, and I have loved him ever since. I was taught from a very young age to love the Lord, and to share his message with others. As I was walking through this stage of my life, it was very challenging for me to do both of those things, but after a long period of listening to God and talking to him, I feel as though I have finally come to the conclusion that I have the answers I need.

It was during the year 2022 that my mom passed away late in February and it was the most difficult thing that I have ever encountered. At the time, I had just hurt my knee. At that time, I did not know what it was, but I knew I would not be playing volleyball for my senior season because of it. However, at this stage of my life, that was the least of my worries. During the first months of 2017, my mother was diagnosed with metastatic breast cancer. According to all the research, she had a 5% chance of living beyond five years. Although my mother beat pancreatic cancer in 2010, I thought that she would also overcome this. In my mind, I assumed she would beat this as well. However, that was not the case. I am about to graduate high school and head off to college in February 2022 without my mother. It was a hard pill to swallow at the time. And honestly, it still is. Through long talks of the Lord and silence, just listening to him, I realized that this was the best timing for all of this to happen. My mother was very controlling. It would have been impossible for me to tell her no to her demands because she wanted my life to be hers. She would make choices for me so that she could live vicariously through me. Nevertheless, now that I am an adult making my own decisions, it would have broken my heart if I had to say no to her. In my heart, I would love for my mother to be here with me. I would love for her to experience all the hardships that I am living through right now. Unfortunately, that is just not the case. As a result of these readings and the words of God spoken to me, I realized that I didn't have as much need for her opinion, and input on my life, as I thought I did. Throughout my whole life, I never made a decision on anything if I didn't speak to my mom first. From something as simple as what ice cream flavor, to something as extreme as where I will go to college or what my major will be. I've finally reached a point where I feel at peace with the fact that she is no longer here. My first thought was that I wouldn't be able to do it. Because she had always told me what was next, I didn't think I would know what it was. It's been a year since I

last saw her and yet I'm still going strong without her. That must mean there is something good going on here.

However, with my knee, it is a completely different story. Valentine's Day, 2022. As a young athlete, I was injured at practice. My anterior cruciate ligament, or ACL, was torn. Probably one of the most devastating injuries you can ever suffer as an athlete. Because of the one-year recovery period as well as the fact that I had to undergo surgery, I was unable to run away to volleyball during a time when I was in need of something to run away to. However, I was still a member of the team, but I had no choice but to sit out and watch. I have always used volleyball as an escape. I love playing volleyball, but I also need to play it. There was one message that I heard at church the day after my eight minutes of reading. The message was about idols. I realized that I was idolizing volleyball more than God. As soon as I heard this message, I realized that the Lord should always be at the top of my priorities. It was God who placed this injury on me because he knew if it had been just a minor injury, I would have stopped putting volleyball first. In the course of returning to playing, I am realizing that I am playing for an audience of one, and that is God. I have no audience other than Him.

Until I took this course, those are the two biggest questions I had about why this happened to me, and I did not know that this course would be the reason for me to answer two of the biggest questions that I had over the past year. In this class, I realized that I needed to have a serious injury that lasted until this class in order for me to understand why I was injured. I do not like to question God about things because I know there is a reason. God wouldn't just do something in our lives on a whim. In my opinion, He has a plan for each and every one of us, and I am thankful for understanding why those things happened. Sometimes you don't get the

answers, and that's fine. However, I am very happy that I understand why this happened to me, and thanks to this assignment, I understand why it happened.