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Our Lady of the Rosary, Fairfield

What's the most common sin? When we don't pray. It's breaking the very first commandment: if God is God in your life, then you pray. If we don't pray daily, then he's not. It some other idol - your family, your job, etc. I'm not sure there is an easier way to have a miserable life. If you don't pray - of course life is sad, burdensome, difficult, too much. As our psalm says: *In the morning, fill us with your love; we shall exult and rejoice all our days. Let the favour of the Lord be upon us: give success to the work of our hands.* To refuse prayer is to refuse joy, success and the only thing which fills us - God's love. It's very easy to fix: go to confession, and book your prayer time in your diary.

Which brings us to the other point of today's readings: *What man indeed can know the intentions of God? Who can divine the will of the Lord?* Certainly if you don't pray you won't have any idea. That's the point of the first reading: God says to us *actually you can know: As for your intention, who could have learnt it, had you not granted Wisdom and sent your holy spirit from above? Thus have the paths of those on earth been straightened and men been taught what pleases you, and saved, by Wisdom.* So how do we discern God's will? Here's some useful points:

1. Live the commandments, daily prayer, Sunday Mass, and monthly confession.
2. If you're going from mortal sin to mortal sin, suggestions of pleasures come from the evil one, but the uncomfortable bite of your conscience is from God.
3. On the other hand, if you're striving to grow in holiness, then all the obstacles and discouragement come from the devil, but the experience of encouragement and inspiration come from God.
4. Are you in consolation or desolation? *Consolation* is where we find our heart enflamed with love of God and faith, hope and charity. *Desolation* is the experience of darkness of soul, attraction to low or earthly things, sadness and discouragement. When discerning, consolation comes from God and desolation from the Devil.
5. If you're in a time of desolation:
 - a. Don't change direction until you're back in a time of consolation.
 - b. It's helpful to even more firmly oppose where desolation leads us and spend even more time in prayer and seeking to serve and love others.
 - c. Remind yourself that God leaves us in this trial to help us grow in strength, and use it to grow in patience (and, so, freedom and love).
6. In consolation, prepare for what you will do next time you're desolate and also humble yourself before God recognising how dependent you are on his help.
7. In times of temptation or desolation remember:
 - a. The devil is a coward who will flee if you firmly oppose him.
 - b. The devil tries to convince you to keep your trouble secret: the moment you share it with a friend or priest, his power is broken.
 - c. The devil attacks you through your weaknesses, so take time to note and strengthen these, and avoid situations where you know you easily sin.