

## **We Can Develop a Friendship with God through Prayer**

*"To you I lift up my soul O Lord, my God. In you I trust"*

(Ps. 25:1)

### **Preparation:**

Hymn (Vs 1-2)

First Reading: Mt. 6:5-15

Response: Psalm 139

**Proclamation:** Prayer is a living relationship with the Persons of the Blessed Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

### **Explanation:**

1. Prayer is an encounter of God with us. (CCC 2700):
  - In our journey of faith – prayer is the way we enter into communion with God.
  - Our relationship or friendship with God
  - In prayer, we come to know God and grow in our love for Him.
2. Prayer as God's gift:
  - God tirelessly calls each person to this encounter with Himself
  - Prayer is raising our mind and heart to God
  - Prayer is requesting good things from God
  - Prayer is both Gift/Grace – a determined response on our part presupposes effort
3. God thirsts that we may thirst for Him:
  - *John 4:4-42* – The woman at the well – we come seeking water/God's love. It is Jesus who first seeks us – asks for a drink. His thirst – arises from the depth of God's desire for us. Our prayer of petition is a response to the plea of the living God. Prayer is an encounter of God's thirst that we may thirst for him.
4. We are created to pray:
  - "In Him we live and move and have our being." (*Acts 17:28*)
  - As image of God – we live in relation, so we have the desire to be in relation with the Creator – Our God – who has given us everything and continues to provide for us. Sometimes no feelings, no desire, dryness – prayer shows the commitment/love.
  - Pray without ceasing (CCC 2742-2745)
  - In everyday situations (CCC 2660)
  - In the Tradition of the Church (CCC 2697-2698)

5. Preparing to pray:

- a) *Begin by collecting one's thoughts* and asking the Holy spirit to help you to pray. He will teach you to pray better.
- b) *We must have the will to pray:* Like any relationship, be faithful. Pray for the grace – it is a battle against ourselves – against the wiles of the tempter who does all he can to turn us away from prayer, from union with God.
- c) *We must learn how to pray-* the Holy Spirit teaches the children of God how to pray:  
The Holy Spirit is the interior Master of Christian prayer-
  - quiet down
  - let go of distractions
  - be aware of the presence of God
  - pray

6. Prayer must come from our heart (CCC, 2562-2563):

- a) *Humility is the foundation of prayer:* We come before God realizing who God is, and who we are not.

\* Psalms remind us “ Be still and know that I am God.”

\* In the evening come with a contrite heart – think back over the day and realize the greatness of God's love.

- There are three Persons in God – we can pray to the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.
  - Our communion with God begins with Jesus. We share in the life of God by living in His grace.
- b) beginning with a contrite heart (CCC, 1428, 1432)
  - c) heart is the altar of prayer (CCC, 2655)

7. We cultivate the life of grace with prayer:

- a) *There are many forms of prayer:* Adoration – first attitude of man acknowledging that I am a creature in the presence of God, Creator of Heaven and Earth, almighty power of the Savior who sets us free from evil, almighty – all-powerful eternal. Praise, Thanksgiving, Petition. (CCC, 2625-2643).
- b) The Our Father: the perfect prayer.

8. Kinds of Prayer:

- a) Public – Celebrations of the Church are called liturgy. Liturgy means worship – presided over by one of the ministers of the Church.
- b) Private-
  - quiet place apart from the normal cares of life
  - time: pray at a specific time (consciously willing it)

pray a committed amount of time.

9. Sources of Prayer (CCC 2650, 2651)
  - the Holy Spirit, Master of Prayer (CCC 2670, 2672)
  - source and goal of the liturgy (CCC 1071, 1073, 1140, 2655)
  - in the name of Jesus (CCC 2616, 2666)
  - in communion with Mary
10. Battle of Prayer (CCC 2725-2734)
  - humble vigilance of heart (CCC 2729-2733)

**Application to Life Questions:**

- 1) What is Prayer?
- 2) Is it possible to have a friendship with another person if we don't have conversation with them? What might you do to improve your relationship with God in prayer?
- 3) Why is prayer so important? How is it different to know about someone and to know someone personally? What does it mean to "make time" for prayer? Will we ever get around to prayer if we wait till we "have time"?
- 4) How do we know that prayer works? Does God answer every prayer?
- 5) What are the different ways in which you can pray and encounter God in your life?
- 6) The Holy Spirit teaches us how to pray. What significance does this make in the way in which you pray?
- 7) What exactly is the *Battle of Prayer*, and what does it mean to be vigilant?
- 8) What part does faith play in your prayer life?
- 9) Why is the Our Father the perfect prayer?
- 10) In what way do you put into practice the *Our Father* in your everyday life?

***"I love to talk with Jesus about everything I am experiencing and feeling."***

***"Find God and you will find the meaning of your life."***

Words of St. Carlo Acutis - the first Millennial Saint