

Volunteer Formation Series SAINT ANTHONY

NIOMEO



JUNE 8 | PRAYER & HOW WE DO IT

The desire for God: the seed of prayer (CCC 27)

- Not only do we naturally know of God's existence, but we also naturally desire God
- The dignity of man rests above all on the fact that he is called to communion with God. This invitation to convers with God is addressed to man as soon as he comes into being" (CCC 27)
- Humans of all times a cultures have sought after God and so have become religious
 - However, the uniqueness of the Christian claim is the fact that not only do we seek after God, but God seeks after us, not only do we attempt to communicate with God, but He first attempts to communicate with us, no only do we desire God, but God desires us.
 - Connect below with it being His initiative
- The most basic definition of prayer is the **communication** with God – the exercising of a relationship with God (cor munion, dialogue, relationship) [CCC 2565]
- "Prayer is the raising of one's mind and heart to God or the requesting of good things from God." But when we pray, do we speak from the height of our pride and will, or "out of the depths" of a humble and contrite heart? He who humbles himself will be exalted; **humility** is the four dation of prayer, Only when we humbly acknowledge that "we do not know how to pray as we ought," are we ready to receive freely the gift of prayer. "Man is a beggar before God." [CCC 2559]
- CCC 2566: Man is in search of God, but God calls man firs
 - Our prayer is a response to the call that is already sounding from heaven to us. Prayer is a response to th living God: "In prayer, the faithful God's initiative of love always comes first; our own first step is always a response. As God gradually reveals himself and reveal man to himself, prayer appears as a reciprocal call" [CCC 2567]
- Prayer is not something **we** do; it is something into which we enter
 - Our Christian knowledge assures us that prayer is essentially what God does, how God addresses us, looks at us. It is not primarily something we are doing to Go something we are giving to God but what God is doing for us. And what God is doing for us is giving us the

divine Self in love. [Sr. Ruth Burrows, OCD, Essence of	NOTES
Prayer]	
Prayer is not about an experience	
 True prayer means wanting GOD not ego. The great 	
thing is to lay down this ego-drive. This is the `life' we	
must lose, this the 'self' we must abandon if we are to	
have true life and become that self God wants us to be,	
which only God can know and ultimately only God	
can bring into being. We have to recognize that a great	
deal that goes for interest in and longing for prayer is a	
subtle form of self-seeking. To give ourselves seriously	
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to prayer is to recognize this and face up to the choice it	
presents: will we cast aside our egotism, allow God's	
love to purify it more and more whatever the cost,	
or will we camouflage it, give it other, more spiritual	
names, and look around for so-called spiritual guides	
who will offer us ego-satisfying techniques with the	
promise of an `experience'. [Sr. Ruth Burrows, OCD,	
Essence of Prayer]	
Affective prayer	
 Affective movements (thoughts, feelings, desires) are a 	
means by which God communicates his love, but they	
are not the end	
 Desire for experience = egocentric 	
Coming out of ourselves: Prayer as Relationship	
• Luke 11:1-4 "He was praying in a certain place, and when	
he ceased, one of his disciples said to him, "Lord, teach us	
to pray, as John taught his disciples." And he said to them,	
"When you pray, say: "Father, hallowed be thy name"	
 Christ' own disciples asked Him how to pray 	
If we are ever concerned that we really don't know how	
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to pray as we ought, understand that His own disciples	
were ignorant and needed to learn.	
 Christ's response to their questioning doesn't firstly 	
address different types of prayer or methods or mea-	
sures of its quality, but He firstly used a relational term:	
Father. Puts emphasis on a relationship of dialogue.	
• Example: In any human relationship, there are times to	
talk, times for silence, times for activity together, etc. We're	
called to be attentive to our relationship with God in the	
same way we would be attentive to a relationship with	
another person.	
• What if I feel like I don't hear God at all?	
• I remember times when you've asked me, "What do you	
want to do?" and I responded with something like, "I	
just want to rest." Because it's way better to just hang	
out in your presence, even if you're cooking or sitting	
in a chair reading, or playing on your phone because	
I'm in the presence of a dear friend who cares for me. If	
we're having a conversation, I hope that we're paying	

attention to each other. But we don't always have to be **NOTES** having a conversation. Just hanging out in your vicinity is 1,000x better than doing the same at my house alone because you are my friend and I love you. I'm SURE-LY not God, but I think I learned that from Him. Yes, he wants to talk with you sometimes and to enter into more intimate moments sometimes. But I think He's also happy if you go in and do your spiritual reading the whole time. You're there and He's there and that's good. Make yourself available for God Turn to the Scriptures: Praying with Scripture is an excellent way to put the "dialogue" into practice. Scripture is God's word addressed to us that we listen and then respond by internalizing it and making resolutions. Lectio Divina: Mark 10:46-52 Liturgical Life Challenge: Lectio Divina Basics, use on Scripture Passages, 20-30 minutes per day • Day 1: The Nativity | Luke 2:1-20 • Day 2: Psalm 139 • Day 3: The Vine | John 15:1-17 • Day 4: Psalm 121 • Day 5: Jairus' Daughter & Veronica | Luke 8:40-56 Day 6: Psalm 45 Day 7: Preparing to Cross the Red Sea | Exodus 14: Day 8: Sirach 2 Day 9: 1 Peter 2:11-25 • Day 10: 1 Corinthians 9:19-27 Day 11: Job's Friends | Job 2:11-13 Day 12: The Crucifixion | John 19:16-30 Day 13: Isaiah 53 Day 14: The Bride of the Lamb | Revelation 21:1-8

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