



24.1 Picture - Praying to God

Prayer is a dialogue that carries the needs of the people to God and that helps man to understand the will of God. We can build a deep relationship with God through prayer. There are three types of prayer in the Christian tradition.

## 1. VOCAL PRAYER

Vocal prayer is prayer using words either loud or silently. E.g. Prayer of St. Francis of Assisi and Our Father

Whether or not our prayer is heard depends not on the number of words, but on the fervour of our souls. Vocal prayer is an essential element of the Christian life. To his disciples, drawn by their Master's silent prayer, Jesus teaches a vocal prayer, the Our Father. Vocal prayer is the form of prayer most readily accessible to groups.

(CCC 2700-2704)

## 2. MEDITATION

Meditation is above all a quest. In that quest, the mind seeks to understand two things:

1. the purpose of Christian life
2. How the Christian life has to be lived

In meditation, we do these two things in order to adhere and respond to what God is expecting from us.

To meditate on what we read helps us to make it our own by confronting it with ourselves. To the extent that we are humble and faithful, we discover in meditation the movements that stir the heart and we are able to discern them. Meditation is only a guide; the important thing is to advance, with the Holy Spirit, along the one way of prayer: Christ Jesus. Christian prayer tries above all to meditate on the mysteries of Christ, as in the Prayer of the Church or the rosary.

(CCC 2705-2708)

## 3. CONTEMPLATIVE PRAYER

Contemplative prayer is possible for those who have reached the higher levels of prayer. Vocal prayer is the first stem of contemplative prayer.

Thus says St. Teresa about contemplative prayer: "Contemplative prayer in my opinion is nothing else than a close sharing between friends; it means taking time frequently to be alone with him who we know loves us."

Entering into contemplative prayer is like entering into the Eucharistic liturgy. We recollect our whole being under the prompting of the Holy Spirit, abide in the dwelling place of the Lord which we are, awaken our faith in order to enter into the presence of Him who awaits us.

Contemplation is a gaze of faith, fixed on Jesus. Contemplative prayer is hearing the Word of God. Contemplative prayer is a silent love. Contemplative prayer is a union with the prayer of Christ insofar as it makes us participate in his mystery.

(CCC 2709-2719)

These types of prayer are useful for us to grow in our Christian spiritual life. We should pay attention to that. We must take part in all the prayer services, organized in the parish.

## Prayer of Saint Francis of Assisi



24.2 Picture - Saint Francis of Assisi

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace.  
Where there is hatred, let me bring love.  
Where there is offense, let me bring pardon.  
Where there is discord, let me bring union.  
Where there is error, let me bring truth.  
Where there is doubt, let me bring faith.  
Where there is despair, let me bring hope.  
Where there is darkness, let me bring your light.  
Where there is sadness, let me bring joy.  
O Master, let me not seek as much  
to be consoled as to console,  
to be understood as to understand,  
to be loved as to love,  
for it is in giving, that one receives,  
it is in self-forgetting that one finds,  
it is in pardoning, that one is pardoned,  
it is in dying, that one is raised to eternal life.

### Activity



1. Name two types of prayer in the Christian tradition.
2. What is insisted by vocal prayer?
3. Write two functions of meditation.
4. Explain how the various types of prayer help to grow in spiritual life.



### For Life

Participate in all the prayer services, conducted in your parish.