

What is Prayer?

-To pray is to meet God. If you don't want to remain in the dark when you begin to pray, put yourself immediately in God's presence by a solid act of faith (St Teresa of the Little Flower): "Lord, you are there." "Oh, you who is at home in the depths of my heart."

-To pray is to speak & to listen to God. We talk to God about what interests us and what interests Him. To do this we use a Gospel passage. God speaks to us to, we listen to Him. We are attentive, thus the importance of silence within. However, even silent, we are active. To pray is not to dream.

-To pray is to join the Holy Spirit who prays within us. 'Holy Spirit, come to the aid of our weakness, because we don't know how to pray. (Rm. 8:26). At the beginning of all prayer ask the Holy Spirit to help us pray.

-To pray is to be completely available. 'I want what you want.' It is mainly to love.

'In my opinion, mental prayer is an exchange of friendship in which we speak often, one on one, with the One we know loves us. St. Teresa d'Avila. (L 8,5)

Interior Prayer, a Time for God

-Jesus is our prayer model, He prayed often and for a longtime. His life was woven through with prayer.

-We can pray either using prayers written by others or talking to God using our own words in a personal prayer time.

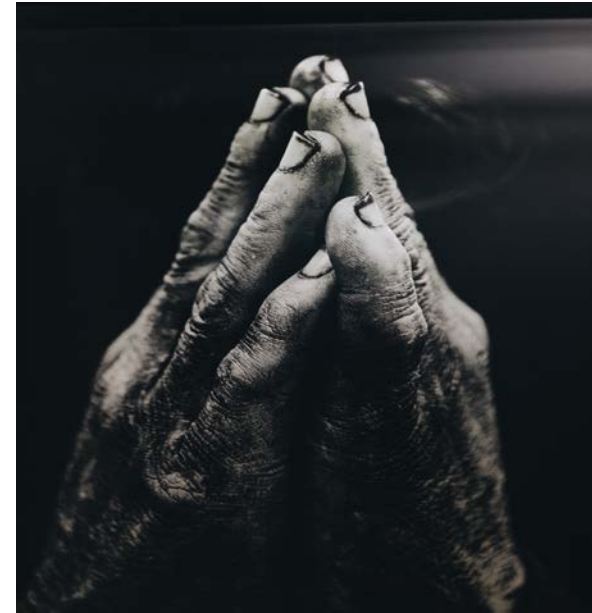
-Prolonged personal prayer, or interior prayer, isn't reserved for priests and nuns, a lot of secular people practice interior prayer.

- Interior prayer is free time given to God, when we believe that God is more important than anything else, we find time.

- Our prayer, like Jesus' prayer, has dry spells and suffering. But in spite of this, we need to continue giving the same time to prayer.

-Our body participates in prayer, either by a gesture like the sign of the Cross, hands raised, bowed down or by a stable and immobile position.

-When we pray something always happens. In faith, we feel certain that Christ is acting in us and that He is saving the world.



How to Practice Interior Prayer

'Ask for the Grace to persevere in Interior Prayer' Benoit XV1

A School of Prayer

A few lay people and a priest can create a school of prayer open to all. It can consist of 5-6 meetings of three hours each and conclude with a full day.

Each meeting is composed of: a teaching; a time of communal prayer (initially guided for 20 mns then silent for 30 mns); small group discussion.

Principle topics taught:

- Interior prayer
- Christ prays in me-speak and listen
- Meet God
- The Holy Spirit, our Master of Prayer
- Want what God wants
- The difficulties
- The Progression
- Pray without ceasing
- Testimonies

It is a good idea, though not essential, to start each meeting with light refreshments or a potluck.

How to Practice

-I put myself in God's presence: 'You are in me and I am in You. God is three persons- the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. I am happy to talk to them. I take my time.

-I ask the Holy Spirit to enlighten me.

-I read a passage from the God's word very slowly, the one proposed for the day by the Church or another one.

-I focus on a word or a line that I like. I speak directly to God. I talk to Him about my life or an event. I talk to Him about Jesus. I praise Him, I thank Him, I ask for His grace.

-I listen to what the Lord says to me. I try and remain in silence with Him looking at me. When this passage no longer speaks to me, I continue to read another line from the Gospel.

Interior Prayer?

-If I am distracted, it isn't important, as soon as I realize it I return to God, as often as necessary.

-I pray for the intentions that I hold in my heart, for the Church and especially for my suffering brothers.

-I seek how to do God's will today.

-I thank God for all He has done for me during this prayer time, even if I didn't feel anything. I offer Him this time of prayer without judging it.

Where should I pray? A quiet spot such as a prayer corner, a chapel, with an icon, a crucifix, a candle.

How long should I pray? That is up to you, for example 10 minutes. Later you can pray up to 30 minutes. Try and pray like this every day at the same time.

