

Testimonies:

- Personal testimonies of our prayer experiences are very important in the school of prayer because Teresa doesn't have a concrete method of prayer with point 1, point 2 etc.
- Teresa simply shares her prayer experience with her sisters and with us, the Baptized, what she lived in prayer;
- It is important to let go of the notion that this School of Prayer will teach you a method of prayer because Teresa doesn't teach us to pray, she simply lays out what happened to her in prayer and tells us that it could happen to us too;
- Teresa is a great motivator for us to practice silent prayer.

Importance of Faith:

- Teresa defines prayer as a heart to heart with Christ, a friendly dialogue with Our Lord; to experience this exchange with Christ, **faith** is necessary; St. Paul tells us that there is no pleasing God without faith.
- we make acts of faith during prayer; through the practice of prayer we are encouraged to grow in faith, in other words, to grow in the trust & the love of Christ.
- several Bible passages illustrate the importance of faith eg. The Canaanite woman (& her demon-possessed daughter) Mt. 15: 21-28, had great faith or great love for Christ and received a miracle; other passages indicate that where there was little faith (or little trust, acceptance & love) in a town, only a few miracles took place there.
- Faith is made up of trust, acceptance and love. These same elements are necessary in human relationships. It is not possible to have a relationship without them. In their absence there is only fear, rejection, control and manipulation of the other.
- Faith (trust, acceptance, love) is an essential element and attitude in prayer.

Christ in His Humanity:

- The New Testament presents Christ as a person. The Father invites us to listen to his Son, fully God and fully man, express the Father's love for us.
- Teresa had a relationship with Christ in his humanity. She discovered Christ in his humanity in silent prayer. This encounter allowed her to grow in the faith and love of Christ and to enter into a relationship with him.
- The definition of prayer given us by Teresa describes a friendly and loving dialogue that we engage in often with the One who loves us; we open our hearts, we talk simply about our life and we listen like a friend in this simple exchange

Recollection:

- to engage in this friendly exchange with Christ that Teresa speaks of, recollection is necessary. It is difficult to achieve recollection.
- Active** recollection: we put ourselves in a situation where we are not disturbed; we seek silence to achieve recollection;
- Internal** recollection, the second part of recollection, involves our thoughts and imagination. There is a certain amount of work on self that needs to take place to channel, harness our inner world of thoughts and emotions.

Teresa's advice to achieve Recollection:

- Teresa advises that we begin by simply putting ourselves in Christ's presence- I am here and I am waiting for you.
- We know that Christ is there and that he has been waiting for us. He is there because He is the Creator of all things; He is there because we are the Baptized who received the Holy Trinity at Baptism.
- Teresa invites us through recollection to reconnect with the Holy Trinity received at Baptism;

-she wants us to taste this real presence always available to us through recollection.

Teresa's way (her little 'method'):

-She felt recollection was very important;

-She invites us to become recollected in one of **two ways**:

a/ **Using an Image** to contemplate the Christ and become recollected:

-For Teresa the image wasn't necessarily created by the imagination but given her in prayer and usually related to the life of Jesus.

-The Holy Spirit guides our prayer...Allow yourself to be guided by the Holy Spirit.

- If you are happy place yourself on the road to Emmaus with Christ and his disciples. Share your joy with the Resurrected Christ. Can you imagine their joy at discovering the resurrected Jesus;

-If you are sad, keep Jesus company in the Garden of Gethsemane.

- Using an image, St. Teresa's **interior way (method)** allows us to enter into a relationship with Christ; to become recollected and to not only enter into a dialogue with the Lord, but to taste His real presence.

-In the *Life*, Teresa writes of visions of Christ next to her while in prayer; these visions brought her great comfort.

b/ Using the **Words of the Gospel**, the Words of Holy Scripture to become recollected:

-The Lord says...I take my delight in being among my creatures.

- It pleases God to be with us, to be amongst us.

- Thoughts like these can help us to become recollected.

In sum on recollection:

On this path to an inner life, recollection is a very important part of being able to enter into a relationship with Christ, to follow him and to engage in a rich and fruitful dialogue with him.