

HOW TO PRAY?

METHOD OF PRAYER ACCORDING ST. TERESA OF JESUS

“Represent the Lord Himself as close to you and behold how lovingly and humbly He is teaching you. Believe me you should remain with so good friend as long as you can. If you grow accustomed to having Him present at your side, and He sees that you do so with love and you go about striving to please Him, you will not be able to get away from Him.

He will never fail you; He will help you in all your trials; you will find Him everywhere. Do you think it's some small matter to have a friend like this at your side? I'm not asking you now that you think about Him or that you draw out a lot of concepts, or make long and subtle reflections with your intellect.

I'm not asking you to do anything than to look at Him. For who can keep from turning the eyes of your soul toward this Lord, even if you do so just for a moment if you can't do more?”

Teresa of Jesus (Way of Perfection, 26.1-5)

WHAT IS PRAYER ?

“In my opinion, Prayer is taking time frequently to be alone with Him Who we know loves us”.

I invite you to do something as simple as to make friendship with Jesus and cultivating it in silence, in personal encounter... in prayer. True friendship requires certain conditions in order to become lasting and stronger. To be prayerful requires from you to be aware of:

- Your relationship with others: respect, love, solidarity, forgiveness
- The relationship with yourself
- Your relationship with Jesus You need something else: “A determined determination”. You will get the imperishable fruits of the friendship with Jesus, only if you start with decision, enthusiasm and perseverance, taking no account of the difficulties that certainly will come.

JUST BEFORE STARTING

We come to the concrete moment of prayer. If you wish to begin anyhow, you will find many difficulties. These simple guide lines can help you at this important moment:

- Search for an appropriate and silent environment
- Find out a Gospel passage or may be a symbol, a song or some image. It will help you to fix your attention on Jesus
- Take a comfortable posture to help you to concentrate and to be aware of your inner world.
- Slowly become aware of your breath, of your body, of your inner self in order to avoid all the distractions.
- Now, fix your attention on Jesus, on his loving presence within you and in the happenings around.

ENTERING IN TO PRAYER

Now, you have to discover your own way how to pray depending on your temperament, your sensitiveness and your present situation.

What really matters is to turn toward Jesus, to contemplate Him and to penetrate in his Mystery by the help of the Holy Spirit. The following suggestions may help you:

- Try to represent Him as He is: alive within you
 - Look at Him and image yourself being present in some passage of the Gospel
 - Contemplate an image of Jesus or repeat a short phrase to express what you want to tell Him
 - Slowly, recite the Our Father, His Prayer, relishing it It is helpful to spend some time in reflection, to deepen, to understand...
- But this is not the core of prayer. Friendship is something that comes from the heart.

"TO LIFT UP OUR THOUGHTS TO GOD, THIS
IS PRAYER"

FRANCISCO PALAU Y QUER, OCD

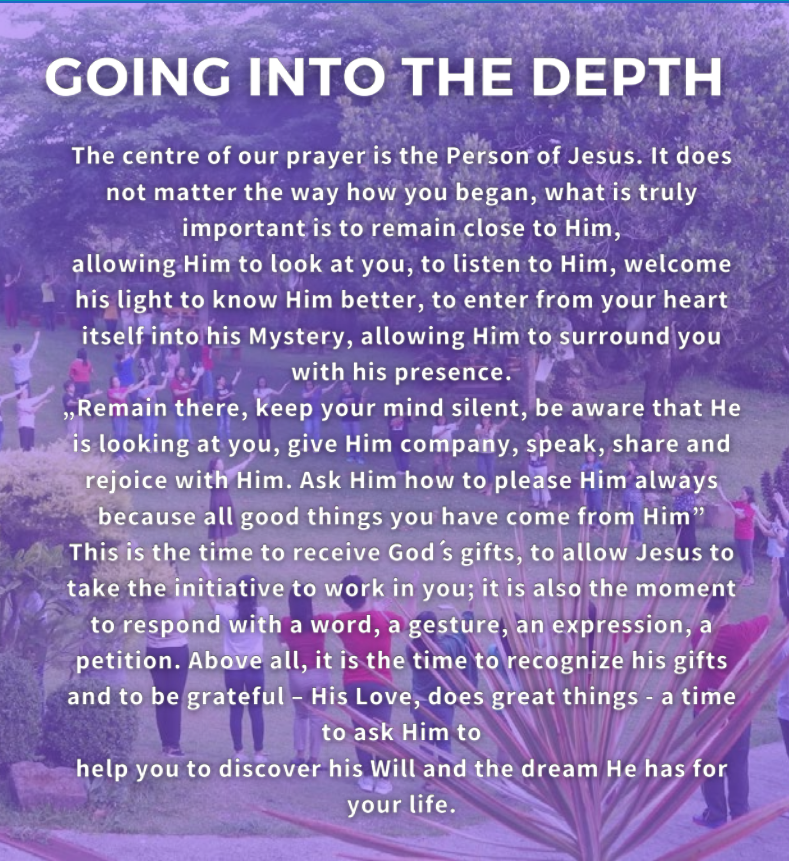


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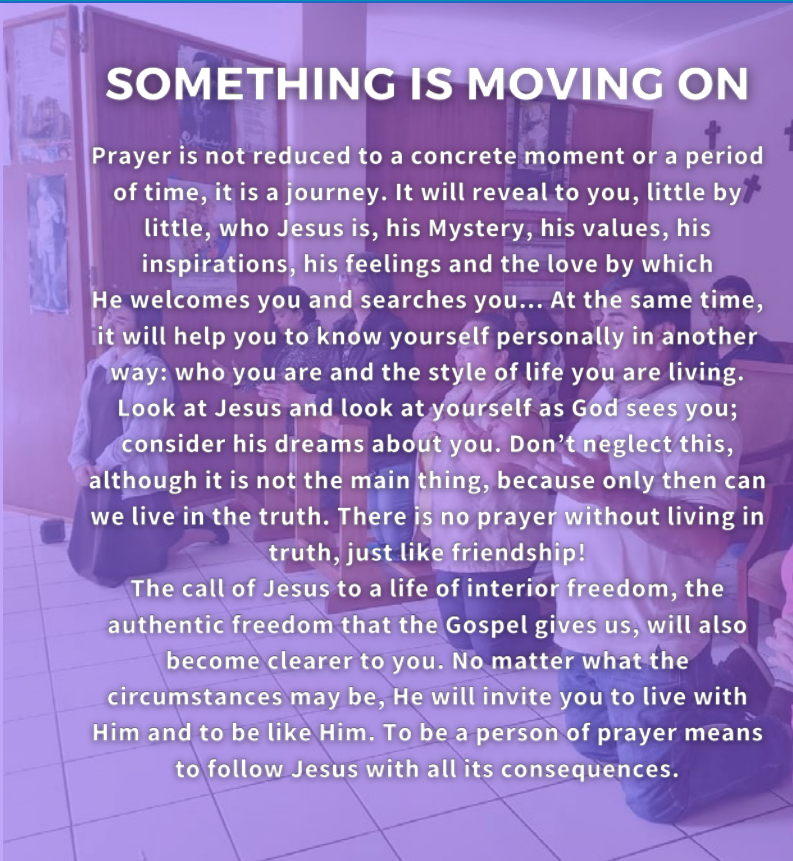
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GOING INTO THE DEPTH

The centre of our prayer is the Person of Jesus. It does not matter the way how you began, what is truly important is to remain close to Him, allowing Him to look at you, to listen to Him, welcome his light to know Him better, to enter from your heart itself into his Mystery, allowing Him to surround you with his presence.

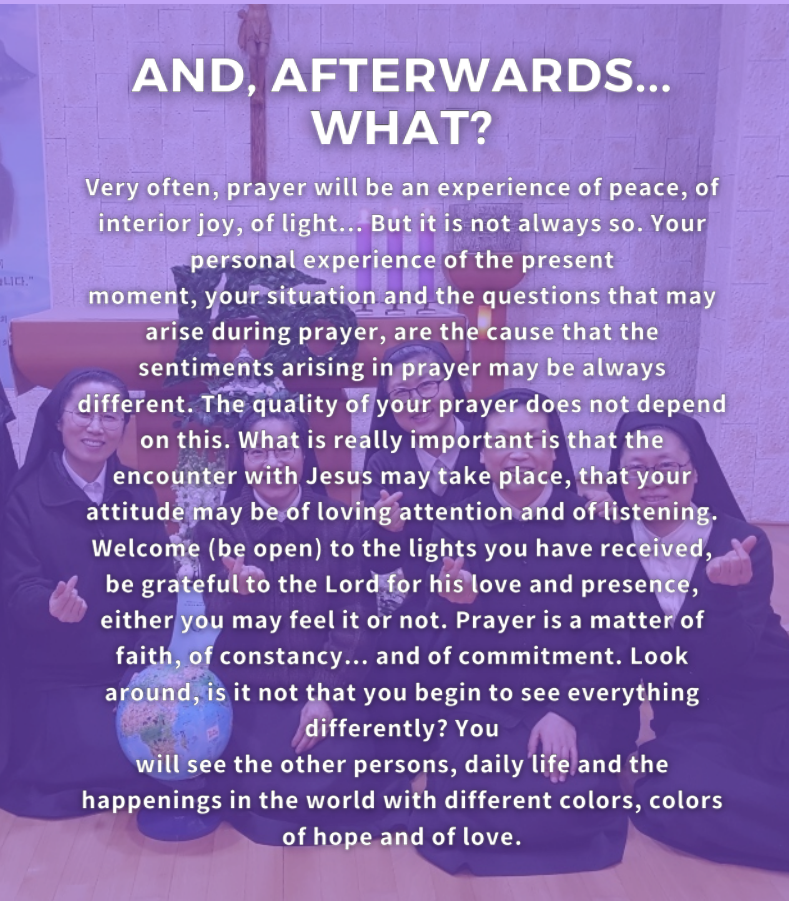
„Remain there, keep your mind silent, be aware that He is looking at you, give Him company, speak, share and rejoice with Him. Ask Him how to please Him always because all good things you have come from Him” This is the time to receive God’s gifts, to allow Jesus to take the initiative to work in you; it is also the moment to respond with a word, a gesture, an expression, a petition. Above all, it is the time to recognize his gifts and to be grateful – His Love, does great things - a time to ask Him to help you to discover his Will and the dream He has for your life.



SOMETHING IS MOVING ON

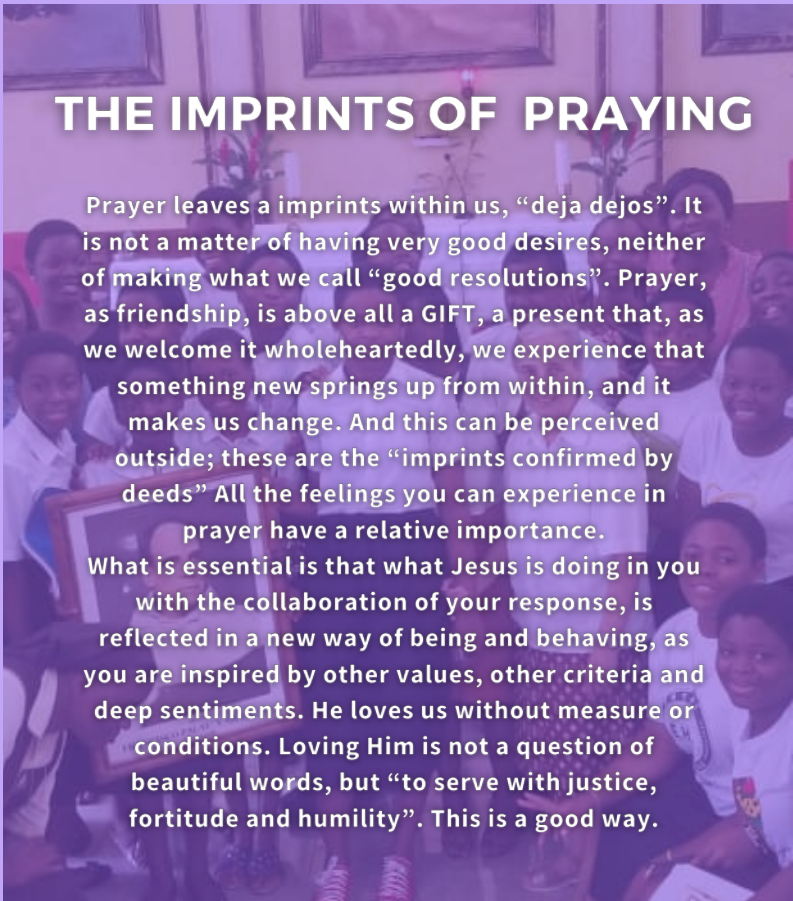
Prayer is not reduced to a concrete moment or a period of time, it is a journey. It will reveal to you, little by little, who Jesus is, his Mystery, his values, his inspirations, his feelings and the love by which He welcomes you and searches you... At the same time, it will help you to know yourself personally in another way: who you are and the style of life you are living. Look at Jesus and look at yourself as God sees you; consider his dreams about you. Don’t neglect this, although it is not the main thing, because only then can we live in the truth. There is no prayer without living in truth, just like friendship!

The call of Jesus to a life of interior freedom, the authentic freedom that the Gospel gives us, will also become clearer to you. No matter what the circumstances may be, He will invite you to live with Him and to be like Him. To be a person of prayer means to follow Jesus with all its consequences.



AND, AFTERWARDS... WHAT?

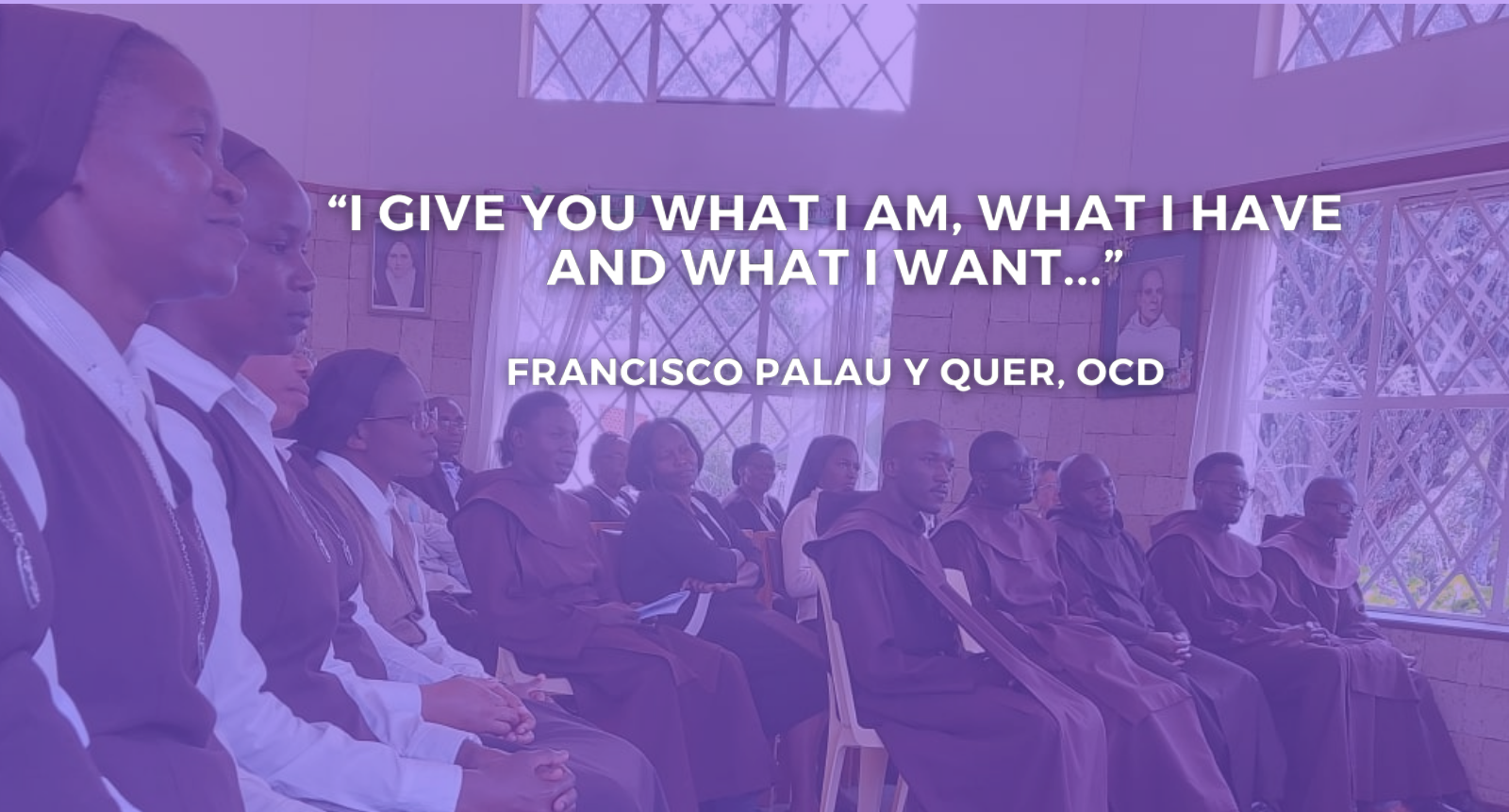
Very often, prayer will be an experience of peace, of interior joy, of light... But it is not always so. Your personal experience of the present moment, your situation and the questions that may arise during prayer, are the cause that the sentiments arising in prayer may be always different. The quality of your prayer does not depend on this. What is really important is that the encounter with Jesus may take place, that your attitude may be of loving attention and of listening. Welcome (be open) to the lights you have received, be grateful to the Lord for his love and presence, either you may feel it or not. Prayer is a matter of faith, of constancy... and of commitment. Look around, is it not that you begin to see everything differently? You will see the other persons, daily life and the happenings in the world with different colors, colors of hope and of love.



THE IMPRINTS OF PRAYING

Prayer leaves a imprints within us, “deja dejos”. It is not a matter of having very good desires, neither of making what we call “good resolutions”. Prayer, as friendship, is above all a GIFT, a present that, as we welcome it wholeheartedly, we experience that something new springs up from within, and it makes us change. And this can be perceived outside; these are the “imprints confirmed by deeds” All the feelings you can experience in prayer have a relative importance.

What is essential is that what Jesus is doing in you with the collaboration of your response, is reflected in a new way of being and behaving, as you are inspired by other values, other criteria and deep sentiments. He loves us without measure or conditions. Loving Him is not a question of beautiful words, but “to serve with justice, fortitude and humility”. This is a good way.



**“I GIVE YOU WHAT I AM, WHAT I HAVE
AND WHAT I WANT...”**

FRANCISCO PALAU Y QUER, OCD

