

## Introduction to Prayer

*O Lord, look down from thy holy habitation, and consider us. Incline thy ear, O Lord, and hear. (Bar. 2:16)*

Our personal relationship with God is more important than anything else.

The heart of this relationship is prayer, which is also the primary way that we foster and maintain it.

Prayer, as the Catechism explains is "the raising of one's mind and heart to God or the requesting of good things from God" (CCC 2559).

Whether spoken or unspoken, prayer is that privileged communication which each person shares with his or her Creator.

### Why Pray?

God created us to know, love, and serve him in this life, and to be happy forever with him in the next (see Is 43:7; Mk 8:36; Mk 12:30; Jn 14:2).

The deepest desire of the human heart is for God.

St. Augustine, a bishop of the early Church and himself a convert, put it beautifully when he said, "You have made us for yourself, O God, and our hearts are restless until they rest in you."

## The Art and Gift of Prayer

Prayer is something that we learn and it is also a gift from God.

It is a combination of our own personal effort and the work of God within us.

If we begin by doing what we can and ask him for help, he will help us although sometimes in ways that we may not at first understand.

Developing a prayer life can only happen if one makes time for the Lord each day. Also, the Scriptures are useful in teaching us how to pray.

### Prayer from the Heart

Whether we recite formal written prayers or pray spontaneously, prayer should come from the heart and is a 'journey into Love.

Love is the source of prayer, our response in love to the God who created us out of love.

Praying from the heart also means that we are honest with ourselves and with God.

**Helpful Scriptures for Prayer:** Pss. 27:8-9; 46:10; 62:1; Mt. 6:6; 26:40-41; Jn. 5:14; 15:7; 16:23-24; Phil. 4:6-7; 1 Thess. 5:16-18; 1 Jn. 1:9.

