

**! TIPS FOR PRAYER !**

In one of the documents from Vatican II, Gaudium et Spes it says: "The greatest dignity of man consists in his vocation to be united to God." (no. 19).

This unity with God is only possible when we pray. We will see this week how prayer meets our deepest needs.

**1**

**Matthew 11:28-30** *"Come to me, all you who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest..."*

How beautiful is the invitation of Jesus today for us to rest in Him! It is so easy for us in our fast-paced and active culture to disregard the value in silent prayer. And even for us Christians who do pray we sometimes ask ourselves, "why pray when I could helping the poor and doing great works of charity for God?" But all of us have a craving for balance in our lives. The big vacuum that sucks all of our enjoyment and peace out of living is the stress and tension we experience in our lives. So a big part of this balance we crave for is to be able to rest from all of this tension - to "de-stress". So Christ offers us His rest in response.

He welcomes all of us to rest in Him as His "yoke is easy" and His "burden is light". For all of us, this invitation is one of being comfortable with the loving presence of Jesus in prayer; to place ourselves as the one who is in need, who needs love and who needs rest. So, in prayer today, we should be encouraged by this invitation to offer in prayer all the things that create stress and tension in our lives. Let us humbly offer Jesus our thoughts and reactions about these things and offer Him our heart, as fragile or as strong as it may be. And hopefully we may find rest for our souls!

**2**

**Revelation 22:17** *"The Spirit and the bride say, "Come." Let the hearer say, "Come." Let the one who thirsts come forward..."*

In this verse from the end of the last book of the Bible, God reminds us of powerful images for our relationship with Him that He gives us earlier in the Word of God: the Spirit in us, crying to God in prayer, "Abba, father"; as brides with Jesus as our passionate beloved in the Song of Songs; and being thirsty for Jesus' water of life like the woman at the well. God calls anyone who has ears to hear to come and listen.

We have the choice as to how we respond to God's invitation. Do we take time to pray in a spirit of openness? How is Jesus asking us to come to Him today, to leave behind our fears and our selfishness?

**3**

**Psalm 107:5-9** *"They were hungry and thirsty; their life was ebbing away...For he satisfied the thirsty, filled the hungry with good things..."*

We may have the same experience as those in today's reading, that at certain times, we are hungry and thirsty for God. We may lose hope, feel insecure, unhappy ... However, when we call out for God and search for Him, God will come to us and rescue us. God never abandons us as we are His children. Through prayer and encounter with God, we can get to know Him more and more.

God gives light and a new life to us every time we choose to follow Him. We can discover His deepest love and experience His peace and joy. God is someone who we can share with others and bring people to. He's our hope, love and everything. Do we realize that there is a place inside of us where only God can fulfil the emptiness?...

(Continued over)

**4**

**John 7:37-38** *"Let anyone who thirsts come to me and drink..."*

Jesus tells us today that if we believe in Him, we will drink from his heart of love. Do we really believe that he can answer our thirst for love?

Maybe we have gotten so thirsty, that our faith has grown weak. Try, for this day, to draw all your nourishment from Jesus. You will see how his water can quench your thirst.

We get thirsty when we try to do so many things, go to so many places, see so many people. Or we can get thirsty when we are lonely and inactive, when we are out of work, for example. We can get thirsty worry over bills. Or worrying over our sins and past mistakes. But really, our thirst comes because when these things happen, we forget to drink!

So today, take (or make) the time to drink from one of the purest sources of living water we have - prayer with Jesus and his Word.

**3. (Cont)** Prayer is as essential to life as water and food. By praying, the Word of God can quench our thirst, satisfy us, and bring us hope. His Word can save us from distress, worries, doubts etc and lead us to more positive attitude and thoughts. We are called to pray and encounter with God who nourishes our spiritual well-being and always blesses us with all good things.

5

**Matthew 14:13-20** “... They all ate and were satisfied....”

Jesus feeds the crowd he has been teaching. He does this to show them that God, His Father, cares for their needs. He feeds them not only with food, but answers their deeper hunger for a Word of Life.

Do we turn to prayer when we feel that restless ache inside ourselves, that we know is not physical hunger, or do we open the fridge, turn to chocolate, ice cream, junk food or drinking, or some other escape? Often we turn to these things even when we are not hungry because we mistake the needs we have. What we need is the deeper love of God.

Do I turn to God to meet my deepest needs during the day?

6

**Luke 6:21** “*Blessed are you who are now hungry, for you will be satisfied...*”

Jesus here seems to be saying that is good to be hungry. This hunger that he speaks about is the deeper hunger that we experience because this life cannot fulfil us completely. Our hearts long for a love that will enter every corner of our being.

Are you hungry for the Word of God? This is where you will find a glimpse of this love that will satisfy you completely.

Jesus message is for his disciples. He knows that we will face hardships of all kinds in this life, but he will give us what we need for them all.

7

**John 6: 34-35** “*I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me will never hunger, and whoever believes in me will never thirst.*”

Jesus is the ultimate sustenance of our lives. Jesus tells us here in this reading that He “is the bread of life” and that all who come to Him will “never hunger” and “never thirst.” The hunger and thirst Jesus is talking about here goes way beyond the physical. Jesus is referring to the deepest needs of our heart. In prayer, Jesus is able to answer these needs – our hunger for love, meaning and hope. Through His Word he is able to help us overcome fear, to stand up for the truth where necessary, and be honest in what needs to be said in situations.

Do we realise the power of prayer to satisfy the deepest needs of our heart? Or do we look to other people and things to provide this satisfaction? Today in prayer let us come to Jesus with a humble heart and be open to listening to His Word, so that it can satisfy the deepest needs of our being and so that we can share this with others.

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SCHOOL OF  
THE WORD



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*“Come to me  
all you  
who are  
thirsty,  
come to the  
water...”*

Isaiah 55:1-5