

Lord, Teach Me To Pray

Three-Part Ignatian Prayer Series for Women

VERITAS

And so I strongly urge you, not I so much as the love of Jesus Christ, to be nourished exclusively on Christian fare, abstaining from the alien food that is heresy . . . Never give the pagans the slightest pretext, so that the great majority who serve God will not be mocked because of the folly of a few. "Woe to him on account of whose folly my name (Jesus) is blasphemed." So turn a deaf ear to the talk of anyone whose language has nothing to do with Jesus Christ.

(From a letter to the Trallians by St. Ignatius of Antioch,
Bishop and Martyr)

The above quote is taken from one of seven letters written by St. Ignatius of Antioch while he was in chains in prison awaiting martyrdom in the year 110 A.D. As you know, St. Ignatius of Loyola selected the name Ignatius for himself after his conversion, because Ignatius of Antioch was his favorite saint. What you probably do not know is that St. Ignatius of Antioch was also known as Theophorus. He indicates this at the beginning of this letter to the Trallians. Thankfully, today we are not praying "Theophorian Prayer"!!!

There is something about impending death that enables a person to become extremely focused on their spiritual life. All of us know of cases where people raised in the faith have drifted away from the Lord. They find themselves going through their adult lives without a thought of God or the spiritual life on their minds, fully immersed in the busyness of life, totally distracted by the enticements of the world, when suddenly they are told they are facing a

Facilitators' Q & A with Carol

Q: Some women have hinted at their involvement in the New Age. I am concerned for them and would like something to offer if they ask me specifically about any new Age practice.

A: I would recommend that all our facilitators go to the internet and pull up the document "Jesus Christ The Bearer Of The Water of Life." (see address below) It is a wonderful document by the Church on the new age and after reading it you will want to stay away from anything of the new age. In the First Commandment we are forbidden to give worship or honor to any other god other than the Triune God who has revealed Himself to us. You will also find the Church's teaching on idolatry, divination, etc in sections 2110-2132 of the Catechism of the Catholic Church.

http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/interelg/documents/rc_pc_interelg_doc_20030203_new-age_en.html

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terminal illness. Often in such cases, the person is ultimately grateful to have been given enough time to turn their attention back to the Lord and re-focus on what, and Who, is truly important as they prepare to meet their merciful Savior in the next life.

St. Ignatius of Antioch didn't have to suddenly re-focus. His life was fully consumed with the love of Jesus long before martyrdom stared him in the face.

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In fact, what strikes the reader of his letters is that his primary focus is not his own situation. Rather, he is using the opportunity to exhort and encourage the various Christian communities to persevere and be strong in the faith. When he does write of his own situation, he reminds them that he longs for martyrdom. At one point he begs them not to intervene with the authorities to stop his execution; that if he is found worthy to die a martyr for the Lord Jesus, to rejoice with him!

One of the great blessings of *Lord, Teach Me To Pray* is the element of discipline that it brings into our prayer life. Day-in and day-out we show up for our regular appointment where the Lord awaits us. In religious life we have come to realize that a big factor in the regular spiritual life and our relationship with Jesus is simply “showing up”. A person does not easily drift away from God if he/she is committed first and foremost to showing up each day. Of course, showing up is just the beginning. As we learn to hear the Lord’s sweet voice in our heart and enjoy his loving embrace, the easier it becomes to “turn a deaf ear to the talk of anyone whose language has nothing to do with Jesus Christ”; and the more normal it becomes to seek “. . . to be nourished exclusively on Christian fare” as St. Ignatius of Antioch exhorts us. What a blessing it is to have a discipline of prayer in our lives that will help us always stay focused on what, or I should say, Who truly and ultimately matters.

If you were to spend some time reading the life of St. Ignatius of Antioch, or his letters, you would understand why he was the favorite of St. Ignatius of Loyola. October 17th is the feast day of this great bishop, martyr and saint. Let us take some time during the month of October to ask both of these holy saints named Ignatius to pray for us, for the on-going discipline to simply “show up” each day, so that we never find ourselves at a time of calamity or impending death, scrambling to re-focus ourselves on the One who truly matters.

In the Love of Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary,



Fr. Marty Gleeson, O.P.
Spiritual Advisor to LTMTTP

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I H S

Your Holiness Will Lead to the Evangelization of the World

You may have asked yourself, do I have what I need to live a holy life? St. Catherine has told us that God has graciously granted us free will which she calls our “armor” against sin. Catherine says our will is able to “deflect sin”. These words help us to understand that the purpose of free will is that it be used as an instrument for our protection. I imagine my will as a heavy shield which I can throw up against all the temptations to sin which I daily encounter. God has given me this powerful “armor”, my free will, with the intent that I use it correctly. We really do have what we need to protect our self, a free will, but we can forget to use it as a shield.

Catherine writes on in her letter that nothing, no one, nor the devil “can force a soul to commit a deadly sin against our will”. She says that “we cannot be overcome unless we give over our will”. Catherine’s words make me think how very important my daily spiritual exercise of prayer is in order to keep my will strong in Christ Jesus. Every day as I pray with the Holy Scriptures I am training my will and strengthening it with the Truth of God.

Catherine tells me we have “a helper” in our quest for personal holiness. She quotes St. Paul, “I can do all things in Christ crucified who is in me and strengthens me.” She is telling us that we are not working alone in our own flesh, but Christ who is in us is our strength. Catherine reminds us that “no one can withstand God”. What comforting and encouraging words from her! We actually do have the very power of God within to live a virtuous and holy life even today. “All of this”, Catherine writes, “God has given us as favor and not as our due”. This “favor” was won for us in Christ’s death. This is Divine Love. This is the Good News!

Catherine continues on, “It is clear that sin alone is the cause of Christ’s death and since it is we who commit sin we can say that we are the one who killed God’s Son.” She goes on to say, “. . . so our desire should be to take vengeance out on ourselves”, on our sinfulness. Catherine tells us “we must see our sin as our mortal enemy as it took the life of our Jesus.” “We must keep before us the memory of the blood of God’s Son shed with such fiery love.” Catherine’s words here are very clear. Our enemy is sin, MY SIN because it crucified Christ Jesus! If we do as St. Catherine directs us in her writing, we will need to be ever more vigilant over our desires so that our strengthened “Christ-like will” can protect us from allowing selfish sinful desires to cause us to sin. I think this is what St. Catherine means when she writes that we are to “take

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Q: A few of the women in our group are having trouble with their prayer. I would like to recommend that they spend their time praying the daily scriptures in an Adoration Chapel. Would this be alright?

A: Yes, this would be a great suggestion. Fr. Apostoli asked many years ago that we suggest that everyone try to do some of their weekly prayer in an Adoration Chapel.

vengeance on ourselves". Our desire for holiness must become a blazing zeal for virtue out of love for God with a singular purpose, namely that Jesus Christ be glorified eternally both on earth and in heaven. If souls would live as St. Catherine instructs, the whole world can become holy.

When we are praying through *Lord Teach Me To Pray* we do come into the true knowledge of our selfish self love. This is a great grace because we can see clearer each time we pray with the different parts of *Lord Teach Me To Pray*. God both forgiving and gracing us. Our will is being trained and strengthened through prayer enabling us to live our new Christic life. God is molding us more and more into the likeness of His Son. It is truly amazing to personally experience what the power of God can do in a soul. This is happening within all facilitators. So I would say the result of our prayer is bringing Jesus present into the world around us. We might even say we are evangelizing the world around us. Did you realize you are an evangelist?

This summer my John informed me that God had told him "now is the time to spread *Lord Teach Me To Pray*." John's words to me were "spread it". Do you remember me sharing that it was because of John's push that I even found the courage to start *Lord Teach Me To Pray*? He said God told him to tell me to start. "Just pick a date", he said. The date I chose was September 11, 2001. Today is the beginning of October 2010, and here we are 9 years later. We are being told to "spread" *Lord Teach Me To Pray*. I have been working on this over the summer. FOCUS Worldwide Network has produced a DVD video explaining the series and it is available to anyone who would like a copy. This is a very easy way to spread *Lord Teach Me To Pray*. Requests for training-retreats are coming in. You can help "spread it" by sending the DVD video to your friends and telling them about your work as facilitators. You truly are evangelizing the world. How very much God loves you for your generosity and so do I. Let us ask St. Catherine to pray for us as we "make it very easy" for others to "know and love" Jesus Christ!

With much gratitude and love in Christ Jesus,

Carol Weiler

LTMTTP Weekend of Prayer

The Weekend of Prayer will be Feb. 17 – 20, 2011 at the New Orleans Airport Hilton. See the attached flyer or go to www.lordteachmetoprayer.com for more details.

Facilitator Helps

from Fr. Marty Gleeson, O.P.

As facilitators we sometimes find ourselves in the situation of trying to give a satisfactory answer to a practical question raised by one of the women in our group. It is important to remind ourselves that we are not the "answer person"; however, some questions should be answered. Often we know through experience why we do certain things a certain way in LTMTTP, but we don't feel prepared to articulate a satisfactory answer on the spot. Following are a few helps for responding to a couple of common questions raised by pray-ers.

Why do you (the facilitators) read the materials aloud during the weekly group sessions?

There are two reasons for this practice. First, experience has shown, time and again, that people tend not to do "assigned reading" between weekly sessions. We facilitators read the materials aloud during the weekly sessions so that the pray-ers will hear it at least one time. Secondly, most of us have very busy lives; and many of us are able to set aside only so much time for prayer. The LTMTTP series is structured so that throughout the week all of the time you set aside for prayer can be dedicated to praying and not to reading or studying the materials presented in the weekly sessions.

I (a pray-er) don't understand "X" (a catechetical, spiritual or theological point read aloud during the weekly sessions).

This is not important! Really . . . this is not important. Some of what is read aloud will certainly seep into your understanding as it is read; and that is good. But, please keep in mind that this is not a class or a course on prayer. The LTMTTP series is not a matter of learning about prayer, or about Ignatian Spirituality, or about the virtues or about the saints or about contemplation or about meditation, etc. Rather, it is all about praying! The only really important thing is praying. If you learn about some of these other things (and you will) that is good. But if your focus shifts to trying to learn about these other things, thereby relegating your actual prayer to second place, you will find yourself missing out on the very purpose of LTMTTP as well as the plentitude of graces that only come through this most powerful way of prayer. (It is important to note that it is a common human temptation to "go up into the intellect" to escape the sometimes uncomfortable moments in prayer when the Lord is inviting us to face the obstacles that keep us from letting him break through and get closer to us.)