

Scripture Reading

A Reading of the Gospel According to Luke (*Luke 11:1-4*) *Lord, teach us how to pray*

One day Jesus was praying in a certain place. When He finished, one of His disciples said to Him, “Lord, teach us to pray, just as John taught his disciples.” He said to them, “When you pray, say: ‘Father, hallowed be Your name, Your kingdom come. Give us each day our daily bread. Forgive us our sins, for we also forgive everyone who sins against us. And lead us not into temptation.’” The Gospel of the Lord. R. Praise to You, Lord Jesus Christ.

Scripture Reflection ~ Power in My Hands

Lord, teach us to pray like You! Jesus had spent much time with His disciples during His public ministry. He lived with them, preached, performed signs and wonders and prayed in their midst. Jesus did many things in their midst. However, of all the things the disciples witnessed Jesus did, the only thing which they asked the Lord to teach them was how to pray. Through the example of Jesus, the disciples understood deeply the importance of prayer. When Jesus prayed, they must have witnessed first hand the all-consuming love that Jesus has for the Father, His desire of constant union with His Heavenly Father, and the power of His prayer in helping Him carry out the difficult task of His Heavenly Father’s will. How Jesus prayed had made a deep impression on the hearts of the disciples.

Be joyful always; pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus. (*1 Thessalonians 5:16-18*). Prayer is so important that the Lord exhorts us to do so continually. We have not been asked to do other things continually but to pray unceasingly. When we pray continually, we can avail of the Lord’s joy. Jesus, the Lord of joy, and source of eternal joy wishes us to be joyful in Him always! In prayer, we live in the presence of God, are in communion with the Lord, the Lord is able to refresh us, fill us again and again with His love, peace and joy.

Pray first before anything else. *Unless the Lord builds the house, its builders labour in vain. Unless the Lord watches over the city, the watchmen stand guard in vain.* (*Psalms 127:1*). How many projects failed because the Lord was not in it? How much efforts and toil go to waste because it was not in the Lord’s will? In prayer, the Lord speaks to us, communicates His Will, His Desires to our inner being. When our hearts and minds are open, His Will, His Desires become our very own. St. Paul set a very good example. Before any important decision and action, without fail St Paul prayed together and fasted with his community of believers, seeking light to know God’s will and the strength to carry it out. Truly, St. Paul followed the Lord’s command that His house is to be a house of prayer (cf. Mark 11:17, Isaiah 56:7).

Power in prayers. *The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds* (cf. *2 Corinthians 10:4*). The Lord tells us that our prayers, unlike earthly weapons, can destroy the power of evil. Scripture is full of examples of the power of heartfelt prayers especially when coupled with fasting. Prayer cannot change God (He is already perfect) but prayer can change individuals, societies, nations and the whole history of mankind in all the realms that affect us: physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual. The prayer of a good person is powerful: *The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective* (*James 5:16*). There is more power in group prayers: *If two of you on earth agree about anything you ask for, it will be done for you by My Father in heaven* (*Matthew 18:19*).

Conversation with Jesus

Precious Lord, I love You and desire to be united with You at every moment. I consecrate and offer to You my heart, my mind, body and soul with all my joys and sufferings, my merits and my sins, my will and desires, and every moment of my life. In doing so, Lord make my whole life a continuing prayer united with the ardent prayer of Your Sacred Heart, and a living sacrifice united with Your Supreme Sacrifice renewed daily on the altars throughout the world. I echo the plea of Your disciples: Lord teach me to pray like You! Not with empty words and a lifeless mind but with a whole heart that is full of zeal and fire for You! May every beat of my heart be united to Yours as You prayed, “Father, not My will but Yours be done!” (cf. Luke 22:42). Have mercy on me O Lord; help me become what You have in plan for me. Mary, Protectress of the Faith, form my heart only for Jesus. Thank You, Jesus. Praise You, Jesus.