

Scripture Reading

A Reading of the Gospel According to Luke (Luke 5:15-16) Jesus heals the leper

Yet the news about Him spread all the more, so that crowds of people came to hear Him and to be healed of their sicknesses. But Jesus often withdrew to lonely places and prayed. The Gospel of the Lord. R. Praise to You Lord Jesus Christ.

Reflection – I must pray because I am an Earthen Vessel

During His time on earth, Jesus was always praying. Why does Jesus need to pray? Is He not the only Son of the Most High God the Father, equal to Him in all respects? When Jesus was borne incarnate into the world as a human being, He did not lose any aspect of His divinity. However, He was enclosed in a human body which meant that He was subjected to the same weaknesses and temptations of a human person though He did not sin. Jesus prayed consistently during His time on earth so that His will would always be the same and one with that of His Heavenly Father. His great love for His Heavenly Father places upon Him the great motivation to do only the will of His Father. *Jesus says: “My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me and to finish His work (John 4:34).*

Prayer transports me into the world of God and keeps me in touch with true reality. When we take the efforts to pray we demonstrate to God that we would like to come into His presence and to communicate with Him. It is not that God is only present when we pray. In fact, He is always present. It is we who are not present to Him, not taking the time and awareness to live in His presence in the present moment. When we sincerely pray to God, we are led in spirit into the reality of our existence before God. The truth that I am a creature/a child of God is reinforced in my heart. I gain the essence of the eternal truth that the world revolves around God and not around me. I gain the proper perspective of myself in the universe and the heavenly wisdom that the whole motivation of my life is not to gain glory for myself but to give back to God the love and glory due to Him alone. *“All people are like grass, and all their glory is like the flowers of the field; the grass withers and the flowers fall (1 Peter 1:24).* Prayer puts us into our proper place in the whole universe.

Prayer opens my heart to God, transforms me and brings me closer to my true identity. When I pray and praise God I am transported into the world of God where His attributes become apparent to me: His boundless love, His great mercy, care and compassion, His infinite wisdom, His unsurpassing loveliness and beauty, His immense power, His awe-inspiring majesty, His grandeur, His glory. In His holy presence, I become detached from myself, I rise from my earthly concerns, the eyes of my soul are opened, my mind is lifted in wonder and my soul eagerly arises in praise of and adoration for the God that it wants to render infinite honour. When my heart is opened, God’s Spirit pours in His love and graces of peace and joy that only God can give. I am in touch with my true, eternal identity: I am a child of God (cf. Ephesians 1:5, Romans 8:15).

Prayer is necessary for our happiness and salvation. A human person is made up of body, soul and spirit. A person who caters only to the needs and desires of the body will ultimately feel the emptiness of his heart. *My soul yearns, even faint for the courts of the Lord; my heart and my flesh cry out for the living God (Psalm 84:2).* Scripture tells us real peace comes from the saving blood of Jesus Christ (cf. Colossians 1:20). No thing or person can generate this peace. It is God’s will that all souls find their salvation, peace and joy in Christ His Son for whom the world was created (cf. Colossians 1:16). For His part, Jesus the Son of God embraces each of us as a bridegroom would embrace his beloved bride, and has proven without any shadow of doubt how far He would go to win back the loyalty of His Bride who turned away in sin and pride.

Conversation with Jesus

Precious Lord, You ask me to pray continually (cf. 1 Thessalonians 5:17). Help me develop an interior life of sincere prayers and practice of virtues so that I may retain a mastery over my body, keep my communion with You, be in touch with true reality and my true eternal identity. Give me a true love for prayer and when I pray let my heart and soul which yearn for the Living God like a thirsty deer yearns for running water, take over. Mary, my Mother of Salvation, come to my help in my struggle to find the time for prayer. Help me to give Jesus the quality time He deserves to show Him how much I love Him. Blessed Mother, please intercede for me the graces I need, and ask Your dear Son for every grace and favour, so that He can envelop me into the Bosom of His Sacred Heart. Thank You, Jesus. Praise You, Jesus.