



Church

FEBRUARY 2007

CHAT

ON PRAYER

by Fr. Eulogio S. Estaris

We pray because God wants us to tell Him what is in our hearts and minds. Even though He sees and understands our situations better than we do, he still wants to hear from us.

There are five basic types or sorts of prayer.

The first type is the prayer of **praise**. We praise God when we tell Him how wonderful He is. The simplest way of praising Him is in the name we call Him: Almighty God; Lord Jesus Christ; Lord of Lords; King of kings. All these names tell God how glorious He is. Many of the psalms in the Book of Psalms are prayers of praise.

The second type is the prayer of **thanksgiving**, or telling God, "thank you". We thank God for all the wonderful things He does for us. He gives us life; He gives us food, clothing, and shelter; He gives us good people in our lives to help us and to take care of us.

The third type is the prayer of **confession**, telling God that we are sorry for what we have done. We tell God that we are sorry either



when we have hurt one of the people God has created or when we have done some sort of damage to God's beautiful creation. We tell God of the evil things we have done and that we are sorry that we did it.

The fourth type is the prayer of **supplication**, or asking for help. We ask God to keep us safe, to give us courage in tough times, or to give us the things we need to be strong and healthy. God always wants to hear from us when we

are afraid or in trouble and need help.

The fifth type of prayer is the **intercessory** prayer, where we ask God to care for another person or part of His creation. God indeed cares for all people, but we build our Christian community by asking for God's special care for one another. Paul's prayer in Ephesians 3: 14 - 21 is a beautiful prayer for the people of faith. Moses and Abraham asked God to take special care of His people.

Why do we pray? Why pray when God is already in perfect control of everything? Why pray when God knows what we are going to ask before we ask it?

- (1) Prayer is a form of serving God (*Luke 2:36-38*). We pray because God commands us to pray? (*Phillipians 4: 6 -7*)
- (2) Prayer is exemplified for us by Christ and the early church (*Mark 1:35; Acts 1;14; 2:42; 3:1; 4: 23-31; 6:4; 13: 1-3*). If Jesus thought it was worthwhile to pray, we should also.
- (3) God intends for prayer to be the means of obtaining His solutions

in a number of situations.

a) Preparation for major decisions
(*Luke 6: 12 -13*)

b) Overcoming demonic barriers
in our lives (*Matthew 17:14-21*)

(c) The gathering of workers for
the spiritual harvest (*Luke 10:2*)

(d) The gaining of strength to
overcome temptation
(*Matthew 26:41*)

(e) The means of strengthening
others spiritually (*Ephesians 6:18-19*)

(4) We have God's promise that our prayers are not in vain, even if we don't receive specifically what we asked for (*Matthew 6:6; Romans 8:26-27*).

“God intends for prayer to be the means of obtaining His solutions in a number of situations.”

(5) He has promised that when we ask for things that are in accordance with His will. Because He loves us, He will give us what we ask for (*1 John 5: 14-15*). Sometimes He delays according to His wisdom and for our benefit. In these situations, we are to be diligent

and persistent in prayer. Prayer should not be seen as our means of getting God to do our will on earth, but rather as a means of getting God's will done on earth. God's wisdom far exceeds our own.

In one sense, prayer is like sharing the Gospel with people. We do not know who will respond to the message of the Gospel until we share it. It is the same with prayer; we will never see the results of answered prayer until we pray.

A lack of prayer demonstrates the lack of faith and a lack of trust in God's Word. We pray to demonstrate our faith in God, that He will do as He has promised in His Word, and will bless our lives abundantly more than we could ask or hope for. He will help us sanctify our lives. We are encouraged to pray before the Blessed Sacrament because it is our means of “plugging into” God's presence and power. Therefore, may God find us often before His throne, before His Presence, for we have a High Priest in heaven who can identify with all that we go through (*Hebrews 4: 15-16*). We have His promise that the fervent prayer of a righteous man accomplishes much (*James 5: 16-18*). May God glorify His name in our lives as we believe in Him enough to come to Him often in prayer.

CHAT

Question Box

1. How can God hear all these prayers at once?
2. Is it possible to “pray without ceasing”?
3. Does God listen to some prayers first, like from people who are sad or sick or in trouble?
4. If we miss our morning and night prayers, does God “tune us out” for the rest of the day?
5. Has God spoken to you today? What did He say?
6. If someone wanted to start to learn to pray, what would you teach him/her?



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