

Meditation 1

JOHN 17:1, 20-26

“He raised his eyes to heaven...”

“When Jesus had said this, he raised his eyes to heaven and said,

I pray not only for them, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, so that they may all be one, as you, Father, are in me and I in you, that they also may be in us, that the world may believe that you sent me. And I have given them the glory you gave me, so that they may be one, as we are one, I in them and you in me, that they may be brought to perfection as one, that the world may know that you sent me, and that you loved them even as you loved me.

Father, they are your gift to me. I wish that where I am, they also may be with me, that they may see my glory that you gave me, because you loved me before the foundation of the world.

Righteous Father, the world also does not know you, but I know you, and they know that you sent me. I made known to them your name and I will make it known, that the love with which you loved me may be in them and I in them.”

Points for Meditation

- 1) “He Raised His eyes to heaven. . .” (John 1:1).

“First of all, I want to give you some advice about how to proceed with your prayer. Feel my breath and imagine being in my presence full of love. . . Imagine that I’m speaking to you personally. Ask my Spirit to reveal my word to you and to open your heart to me. Then sit down and read the passage attentively that I suggest to you. Let every word enter deeply into your heart; try to taste it, to savor it, to repeat it, until it penetrates you. Believe that I myself am addressing every word to you. . . Look at me and let me look at you. Tell me what’s bothering you right now and ask me what I want to say about it. And then listen in silence to my response. . .”

- 2) “He raised His eyes to Heaven. . .”

- a. The very first thing Jesus teaches us is a very practical but necessary thing. We must first and foremost “raise our eyes to Heaven”. Prayer is work, it is a job in some ways, because it takes effort as we attempt to

acquire the virtue of piety, of praying. So how do we begin this “job” well?
By lifting our eyes to Heaven like Jesus did!

- 3) “I pray not only for these but also for those who will believe in me through their word, so that they may all be one as you, Father, are in me and I in you, that they also may be in us, that the world may believe. . .” (John 1:20-21). This one sentence is jam packed with meditative material!

Things to keep in mind with regards to mental prayer:

- 1) Why is Mental (or meditative) Prayer (MP) so transformational?
 - because first of all it is prayer, as vocal prayer is, but it is a prayer that involves and impacts our whole being: thoughts, emotions, will and thus it transforms our whole being.
 - because it helps us to put on the mindset and sentiments of Christ, as St. Paul tells us we must do.
 - because it purifies us! How?
 - Just the mere fact that we do it, purifies us. We could have done a lot of things but instead we said “no” to those other things, to spend time with our Lord.
 - Secondly it purifies us because we are with Him and being with Him transforms and purifies us.
 - Lastly, it purifies us because, as we see in talking about the method of MP, by putting into practice what we have meditated on during our day, we are further transformed into Him, going against our negative, selfish, tendencies.

- 2) Definitions of Mental Prayer
 - From the glossary of the CCC: “Meditation is an exercise and a form of prayer in which we try to understand God’s revelation of the truths of faith and the purpose of the Christian life and how it should be lived, in order to adhere and respond to what the Lord is asking.” (Cfr CCC #2705-2708)
 - From Fr. Jordan Aumann: “Discursive meditation can be defined as a reasoned application of the mind to some supernatural truth in order to penetrate its meaning, love it, and carry it into practice with the assistance of grace” (*Spiritual Theology*, p. 318).
 - Basically meditation/mental prayer is being regularly with the person who loves us the most, in friendship and in dialogue, in order to come to know Him, love Him and serve Him more.

- 3) Methodology of Mental Prayer: The 3 “R’S”: Read, Reflect, Resolve.
 - READ
 - Scripture: The Gospel of the day or other passages from the Bible

- Books: *In Conversation with God* by Fr. Francisco Carvajal; *The Imitation of Christ* by Thomas a Kempis; *The Better Part* by Fr. John Bartunek; *Magnificat* magazine, all of Fr. Jacques Philippe's books, etc.
- REFLECT
 - “. . . and after the fire came a gentle whisper” (1 King 19, 12).
 - Websters dictionary: unhurried consideration of something recalled to the mind, implying deep or intent thinking.
- RESOLVE.
 - Love is shown in deeds. In coming up with a simple, practical, possible, do-able deed, we come up with a small, daily plan to grow in our love of Jesus.
 - Some suggestions could be:
 1. I will remember the gist or a word or a sentence from my meditation, calling it back to mind during the day (a good habit is to write the resolution down somewhere: on my phone, on my hand, definitely in my heart!)
 2. I could come up with something very concrete having to do with what Jesus and I spoke about, i.e. If I meditated on doing a good examination of conscience, I could make the resolution to do it before climbing into bed, maybe on my knees so I don't fall asleep. If I meditated on how patient my Lord is with me, I might come up with the idea of practicing some of that patience with a person I know I will be meeting during my day.
 3. If by chance it is the memorial of some saint, I could decide to spend the day with that saint. That means I would pray to the saint, talk to him/her, acknowledge them in my words, and so on.

