

“Lord, I don't know how to pray!”

You write: 'To pray is to talk with God. But about what?' About what? About Him, about yourself: joys, sorrows, successes and failures, noble ambitions, daily worries, weaknesses! And acts of thanksgiving and petitions: and Love and reparation. In a word: to get to know him and to get to know yourself: 'to get acquainted!' (The Way, 91)

24 October

How should we pray? I would go as far as to say, without fear of being mistaken, that there are many, countless, ways of praying. But I would like all of us to pray genuinely, as God's children, not gabbling away like hypocrites who will hear from Jesus' lips 'Not everyone who says to me, "Lord, Lord!" shall enter into the kingdom of heaven' [1]. People who live by hypocrisy can perhaps achieve 'the sound of prayer', says St Augustine, 'but they cannot possess its voice, because there is no life in them' [2]. They lack the desire to fulfill the Father's Will. When we cry 'Lord!' we must do so with an effective desire to put into practice the inspirations the Holy Spirit awakens in our soul...

I have never tired of talking about prayer and with God's grace I never will. I remember back in the thirties, as a young priest, people of all kinds used to come to me looking for ways

of getting closer to Our Lord. To all of them, university students and workers, healthy and sick, rich and poor, priests and laymen, I gave the same advice: 'Pray'. If any one replied, 'I don't even know how to begin', I would advise him to put himself in God's presence and tell Him of his desires and his anxiety, with that very same complaint: 'Lord, I don't know how to pray!' Often, humble admissions like that were the beginning of an intimate relationship with Christ, a lasting friendship with him. (Friends of God, 243-244)

[1] Matt 7:21

[2] St Augustine, *Commentaries on Psalms*, 139,10 (PL 37,1809)

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