Prayer

Prayer is the journey inward. It is a journey into our hearts. Just as the heart is the "life-giving pulsation" of our physical make-up, so prayer is the "life-giving pulsation" that gives meaning to our lives. It gives meaning to our lives because it is a journey inward into the ***heart of ourself*** *in which we meet the* ***Heart of God****. We journey inward to seek the mystery of a God Who created us and lives within us - a God "...in Whom we live, and move and have our being." (Acts 17:28)*

Prayer is a journey inward to touch the mystery of God.

And as we journey inward to the center of our person, searching for the relationship in which we touch the mystery of God, we touch the core of our being. For in seeking God, we seek ourselves, and in touching God, we touch ourselves. Creation takes on new meanings as the Creator takes on new meaning for us. God becomes alive in a new way as gradually, in experiencing Him, a new sensitivity emerges within us. Through prayer, we become sensitive to the gentle touch of God in our lives. There is a new awareness of ourselves, of relationships, of the world, of the whole of creation because we are awakened to the Creator Who is Love. We begin to ***see*** *in a different way and we begin to* ***feel*** *in a different way as a new sense of God penetrates our awareness - the love of God which is the foundation and root of all life.*

Prayer is like the ***birth of Love*** *in our hearts. When we seek communication with the Lord on a regular prayer basis, then* ***little miracles of Love*** *seem to burst forth everywhere. Perhaps they happened before, but we were unaware of them. A rainbow colors the sky, and we are suddenly reminded of a Father-God and His care. We rejoice at beauty, and we rejoice in creation. We rejoice in the mystery of ourselves, in the fact that we are capable of experiencing this beauty. An azalea flashes its blossom, heralding the first promise of Spring, and we gasp at its Maker. The eyes of a friend shine brighter, and we feel a warm handclasp. Laughter bubbles forth with a joyful spontaneity and pain wells forth with a new frequency as our sensitivity for others is heightened. As we bring our lives before the Lord in fidelity of His trust and His care for us, there seems to be a freshness of life everywhere because when one begins to touch the* ***Heart of God*** *in prayer each day, then one begins to touch the* ***Heart of Life****.*

The journey of prayer is a life-long venture. It is a journey in which we become familiar with the way only when it is traveled regularly. At first, our day's journey may be short and then, little by little, we are able to travel longer as we become accustomed to the road which leads us inward. Companions may be needed - thoughts from others, Scripture helps, aids to guide us. The journey will take us to the mountaintops as well as deep valleys. We will travel in the sunlight and we will travel in the night. At times, the touch of God will awe us with wonder and at times, lack of feeling will cause us to grope in anguish. Our journey is a mystery - a very personal mystery, however, because it is a journey into the mystery of a Person. Prayer is opening ourselves to the mystery of the Person of God within us, letting His truth activate our lives to the fullest.

Just as a relationship with a person deepens when we spend time in getting to know that person, so our relationship with God deepens when we spend time getting to know Him. Opening ourselves to Him in surrender, we let Him grace us with His presence and He becomes ***Personal Friend****. A friend is one with whom we can completely be ourselves. A friend is one with whom we can share our low moments as well as our high moments, our laughter as well as our tears. A friend will climb the mountains with us and go down into the valleys with us.* ***A friend is always there for us.*** *Sometimes, words are not necessary; presence only suffices. So it is with God and prayer. He is always there beckoning us into His presence, asking only for our openness to seek Him in faith,*
for He truly wants to be our ***Friend and our God****.*

Opening ourselves to Him in surrender, we let Him grace us with His Presence.

These next weeks are an invitation for us to begin the journey inward. It is a time to meet and reflect more deeply on God and Friend, to touch Him as Father, Jesus, and Spirit. And in return, to let Him touch us with a new awareness of His presence in the joys, pains, deaths, and resurrections of our lives.

Quiet Time

One thing, however is necessary in order to make this journey inward meaningful as a genuine encounter with our Friend-God. There must be a time set aside each day when we can gather ourselves in stillness, seeking our God in quiet communication. It may be only for a short while, but there must be a time for this aloneness on a regular basis - a time when we can rest and become aware of the Presence within us. Each day, there must be a ***Quiet Time*** *and a* ***Quiet Place*** *to which we can bring a* ***Quiet Heart*** *in an encounter with our* ***Friend Who says "Be still and know that I am God." (Ps 46:10)***