

Reflections

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The Prayer of Jesus

Circumstances. The prayer of Jesus – as our own – was not something automatic which He started whenever He wanted. He had to choose the place well: the desert, the solitude of a mountain. He also had to choose the moment, the circumstances which inspired and favored prayer.

In his life which was so full of things to do – as ours is – it was often difficult for him to find the necessary time. So, He then had to get up at dawn or get away at dusk, or he would stay up during the night. At times when He was bothered by the presence of his disciples, He would have them get on the boat and send them to the other side of the lake.

Frequently, Jesus prayed alone. His special relationship to the Father explains this singular way of praying in which not even the most intimate disciples have access to.

Why does He pray? What was that prayer which Jesus tried hard to protect? What did He, the Son of God, have to ask for....what grace or what assistance?

Let us not think that Jesus prayed to give us a good example! A modern theologian correctly says: *“If the prayer of Christ has meaning for us, if it is an example, then it is because it especially has meaning for Him.”*

It is the same for all of us, Jesus did not always have the same clarity of conscience nor the same ability to concentrate. He was vulnerable to the impressions and sensitive to the influences. He had the need for recollection in order to think better about what He was thinking and to know better what He knew.

Encounter with the Father. Tired of the people’s unbelief, He would frequently separate himself from the people: *“perverse and incredulous people, how long will I have to put up with you?”* Or, he was troubled by their hardness of heart....impatient with their obstinacy and their slowness to understand: *“Is your mind closed?”* He asked them on one occasion.

Then He would need to calm down....consult in his interior with the Father to find the true meaning of his mission....his leniency with the people....his faith in its power of redemption. Then He would return to his own, renewed and serene.

The will of the Father. Jesus knew the temptation He would have with suffering, loneliness, and fear. He needed to express what came spontaneously to his lips: *“Father, spare me this hour! Father, if it is possible, spare me this cup!”*

Thanks to prayer, Jesus grew deeper and found his true nature. He remembered from whence He came and where He was going. He would again feel as SON and once again united with his Father, He only had one prayer: *“Father, your will be done!”* It was his best prayer, the culmination of all his prayers.

And we? If we want to know the condition of our Christian life, we only need to look at how we pray.

Perhaps we do not know how to pray. We know how to chat with our friends and companions for hours and hours, but we do not know how to chat with God, not even for a few minutes per day.

The more simple and childlike our prayer is, the more it pleases God. God seeks the simple person who talks to Him like a child to his father. Childlikeness which is the fundamental attitude before God is also the attitude of prayer before God.

Dear brothers and sisters, the great example of Jesus....of Mary, the prayerful Virgin....and of the Saints....wants to challenge us and motivate us to a life of prayer which is more serious, more intense, and deeper.

Questions for reflection

1. Do we choose the place and the time for prayer, and do we give it enough time?
2. Do we take it seriously as the nourishment and breath of the soul?
3. Is our prayer really a personal, spontaneous talking to God?

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<http://cmsms.schoenstatt.de/en/resources/periodicals/virtual-retreat.htm>