

DO YOU PRAY LIKE JESUS?

CHECKING THE HEALTH OF OUR

PRAYER LIFE;

From the book "To Be like Jesus" of Fr. P. Ribes, s.j. published by the Gujarat Sahitya Prakash

Notes:

- ✓ *This method of prayer could very profitably be used from time to time, say once in every two or three months, to keep a check on how do you fare in your prayer life.*
- ✓ *It is based both on the teachings of our Lord on prayer - **The Our Father - and on his practice of prayer.** Then, we apply it to our prayer life.*
- ✓ *The Our Father, properly speaking, is not just a 'Prayer Formula' to be recited time and again, but rather a sketchy description of the basic attitudes we should have when we pray.*
- ✓ *Remember, closeness, communication, intimacy with God – that's what prayer is -is not a matter of words or readymade formulae - but a business of the heart, a matter of love.*

Preparation:

- Before you begin this exercise, decide the length of time you want to spend in it, and then strictly stick to it.
- If you cannot have finish the exercise in one go, stop when your time is up, and take it over again later, on another date. Start then, where you stopped on the previous occasion..
- Keep a copy of the New Testament at hand for easy reference.
- Quiet down and relax.
- Place yourself in the presence of God and for a while remain in silence.
- Ask for the assistance of the Holy Spirit.

Petition:

Beg from Our Lord Jesus for for two graces;

- **1st.** To come to know how healthy or sickly your prayer life is.
- **2nd.** To be able, as far as possible, to pray as Jesus taught us to pray.

Reflection and Personal Check;

A) On the "Teachings of Jesus on Prayer" The Our Father (Mt 6/7-13)
"In your prayers do not use a lot of meaningless words, as the pagans do, who think that God will hear them because of their long prayers.

- Do your pray with your heart or with your lips?
- Are you paying attention while you pray?

When you pray, pray like this; Our Father in heaven,

- Do you approach God at prayer as you would to a loving,, kind, and forgiving father?
- Can you talk to God with love and confidence, without fears and anxieties?

- Do you believe it in your guts that there is no other father as good as God the Father?

Hallowed be your name

- When you pray do you care for God's glory or for your own success and glory?
- When you pray, do you remember most of all to Praise and Thank God?

Your Kingdom come.

- Do you pray that love, peace and justice may reign in our world?
- That Christ's teachings may be known and practice by one and all?

Your will be done on earth as it is done in heaven

- Do you really want to do God's will, however hard and painful it may be, rather than wanting God to do yours?
- Are you ready equally to accept riches or poverty, health or sickness, short life or long life, success or failure according to what God determines?

Give us our daily bread

- Do you ask your heavenly Father to satisfy all your needs: material, economical, emotional moral, spiritual, or do you ask mostly for your material needs?
- Do you satisfy your brothers' and sisters' needs before you ask God to satisfy yours?

Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sinned against us.

- Are you humble enough to own up to God, to others and to yourself that you are a sinner?
- Have your forgiving others - yes all those who did you wrong- before you dare ask God to forgive your sins??
- Is there anyone you have not yet forgiven? If so, in order to be able to pray like Jesus taught us, are you ready to do it now in your heart in the presence of your heavenly father>

Let us not fall into temptation.

- Temptations are part of human life. Temptations in themselves are not sin, but lead us to sin. Are you prompt or careless in fighting temptations or easily you fall into them?
- What about checking the way you handled the occasions of sin. What about drinking, T./V. watching, reading materials, dubious friendships, greed, pride anger, sloth, etc,? Do they lead you to sin? How do you keep away from them?

But, deliver us from evil

- Do you pray that you may not fall into evil?
- Do you keep away from evil things, evil people, superstitions, sorcery and the like?

B) Comparing the Way your pray and the way Jesus Prayed.

Jesus prayed at all times.

- Early in the morning (*Mark 1:35*) "Very early the next morning, long before daylight, Jesus got up and left the house, He went out of the town to a lonely place where he prayed.
- Late in the night (*Luke 6:12*) At that time Jesus went up a hill to pray, and he spent the whole night there praying to God...
- Often: (*Luke 5:16*) But he would go away to lonely places, where he prayed,

And you, at what times you pray?

- How often do you pray?
- Is prayer such priority in your life that you will get up early in the morning or stay late up in the night to pray?

- Can you pray oftener and for longer periods of time? Why not?

Jesus prayed at the critical moments in his life.

- Jesus prayed at the beginning of his ministry (*Luke 3:21/22*) "Jesus was baptized, while he was praying, heaven was open..."
- Jesus prayed before he chose the apostles (*Luke 6:12/13*) "At that time, Jesus went up a hill to pray. When day came he called his disciples and chose twelve of them"
- Jesus prayed before his transfiguration (*Luke 9:28/29*) Jesus took Peter, John and James with him and he went up a hill to pray".
- Jesus prayed before the his Passion. (*Luke 22:39-46*) The prayer of Jesus in Garden of Olives.: No My will, but your will be done!.
- Jesus prayed on the cross (*Luke 23:34 & 46*) "Forgive them, Father, They do not know what they do" "Father, into your hands I place my spirit"

And you, on what occasions do you pray?

- Do you pray in critical times? When you have to take decisions- big or small?
- Do your pray in your joys and sufferings, successes and failures?
- Do you turn to God, in prayer, in your difficulties and trials?

Jesus prayed for others?

- (*Luke 22-32*) Jesus prays for Simon Peter that his faith may not fail.
- (*John 17:9-16*) Jesus, at the Last Super, prayed for his disciples
- (*John 17:20*) Jesus, at the Last Super, prayed for us all Christians-to-be
- (*Luke 23:34*) Jesus prayed for his enemies, all those responsible for his crucifixion.

And you, for whom do you pray?

- Who do you pray for your family? For your in-laws, your servants and employees?
- Do you pray for your friends and neighbors?
- Do you pray for your enemies and those you dislike?
- Do you pray for the poor, the sick, the old, the exploited, the sinners, the children, the unemployed, the authorities? etc.
- Do you pray for general intentions: for peace in the world, for the Church, for unity among peoples, for the propagation of the faith, etc. ?

Closure:

- Frame some sort of resolutions to improve your prayer life
- Recite the Our Father.
- Read or sing an appropriate hymn.

