

Day 8

Jesus Teaches Us How to Pray



For Personal Reflection & Prayer

- Have I ever prayed in Jesus' name?
- Where do I pray to the Father in secret?
- What reminds me that I can trust God as a loving Father?

Take these considerations to the Lord in prayer, asking for light and strength.

Offer a prayer inspired by the words of Scripture:

*Ask and you will receive,
so that your joy may be complete.*

John 16:24

Lessons on Prayer from Pope John Paul II

During Lent, the words: prayer, fasting, alms/deeds, which I already mentioned on Ash Wednesday, often reach our ears. We are accustomed to think of them as pious and good works, which every Christian must carry out particularly in this period. This way of thinking is correct, but not complete. Prayer, alms/deeds and fasting need to be understood more deeply, if we want to integrate them more thoroughly into our lives and not to consider them just as passing practices which demand only something momentary from us or deprive us of something only momentarily. With this way of thinking we would not yet arrive at the real meaning and the real power that prayer, fasting, and alms/deeds have in the process of conversion to God and of our spiritual development. One keeps pace with the other: we mature spiritually by being converted to God, and conversion takes place by means of prayer, as also by means of fasting and alms/deeds, adequately understood.



It should perhaps be said at once that it is not a question here only of momentary "practices", but of constant attitudes which give our conversion to God a lasting form. Lent, as liturgical time, lasts only forty days a year: we must, on the other hand, strain always towards God; this means that it is necessary to be continually converted. Lent must leave a strong and lasting mark on our lives. It must renew in us awareness of our union with Jesus Christ, who makes us see the necessity of conversion and indicates to us the ways to reach it. Prayer, fasting, and alms/deeds are precisely the ways that Christ indicated to us.

https://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/audiences/1979/documents/hf_jp-ii_aud_19790314.html

The Mount of Olives

The "Mount of Olives", rising to the east of Jerusalem, separates the Holy City from the Judean Desert which from here begins its descent to the Dead Sea. The Kidron Valley, which surrounds Jerusalem to the east, separates the Mount of Olives from the city and from the nearby Mount Zion, located further to the south, from where Jesus set off on foot after the Last Supper, crossing the Valley to reach Gethsemane.

Looking towards the north, beyond the Mount of Olives, Mount Scopus (820 m.) comes into view, today the site of Hebrew University. From the summit of the Mount of Olives one can enjoy the most evocative panorama of the Holy City, as it can be observed in its entirety from above.

Its name, still used today, comes from the olive trees that for thousands of years have grown on the slopes of the Mount. In the Jewish tradition it is also known as the "Mount of Unction", since the oil made from its olives was used to anoint the king and the high priests. Starting in the 12th century the Arabs called it "Jebel et-Tur", a term of Aramaic origin signifying "mount of mounts" or "holy mount"; today they simply refer to it as "et-Tur"...

After the first destruction of the Temple of Jerusalem, the Jews began to go there on pilgrimage since, according to tradition, the Glory of the God of Israel had risen from the city and stood upon the mountain which was to its east (cf. Ezekiel 11:23)...



The Mount of Olives was an obligatory transit point for those who, like Jesus, the guest of Lazarus and the sisters Martha and Mary, traveled from the village of Bethany to Jerusalem: the Mount was a “sabbath day's journey” from the city, that is, the maximum distance permitted by Jewish law for traveling on a sabbath (Acts 1:12)...

Jesus' customary presence on the Mount has made it into one of the most cherished places in Christianity.

<https://www.custodia.org/en/sanctuaries/gethsemane-basilica-agony#>

