

ENCOUNTER

THE HEART OF PRAYER

Week 2

WHAT IS PRAYER?

Notes

Quotes From the Video

“God calls man first. Man may forget his Creator or hide far from his face; he may run after idols or accuse the deity of having abandoned him; yet the living and true God tirelessly calls each person to that mysterious encounter known as prayer. In prayer, the faithful God's initiative of love always comes first; our own first step is always a response.”

— *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, no. 2567

“LORD, you have probed me, you know me
you know when I sit and stand; you understand my thoughts from afar.
You sift through my travels and my rest; with all my ways you are familiar.
Even before a word is on my tongue, LORD, you know it all.
Behind and before you encircle me and rest your hand upon me.
Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, far too lofty for me to reach.

Where can I go from your spirit? From your presence, where can I flee?
If I ascend to the heavens, you are there; if I lie down in Sheol, there you are.
If I take the wings of dawn and dwell beyond the sea,
Even there your hand guides me, your right hand holds me fast.
If I say, “Surely darkness shall hide me, and night shall be my light” —
Darkness is not dark for you, and night shines as the day.
Darkness and light are but one.

You formed my inmost being; you knit me in my mother's womb.
I praise you, because I am wonderfully made; wonderful are your works!
My very self you know. My bones are not hidden from you.
When I was being made in secret, fashioned in the depths of the earth.
Your eyes saw me unformed; in your book all are written down;
my days were shaped, before one came to be.”

— *Psalms 139: 1-16*

“For I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope. Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will hear you. You will seek me and find me; when you seek me with all your heart, I will be found by you, says the Lord.”

— *Jeremiah 29:11-14*

Suggested Small Group Questions

- What's the one thing that was presented in this talk that you found most interesting?
- What is it about prayer that you most struggle with?
- What stirs within your heart when you consider the fact that "God is already there"?
- As you find yourself in the 2nd week, what is it that you want from God?

For Your Prayer - Week 2

Below is a Scripture passage for each day of the next week.

The daily audio recordings prepared by Fr. Mark may be especially helpful this week. You can find the recordings on our diocesan website under the video for this week's session: htdiocese.org/encounter.

Day 8 | PSALM 118

"Give thanks to the LORD, who is good, whose love endures forever"

Day 9 | JOHN 15: 1-16

"It was not you who chose me, but I who chose you."

Day 10 | GENESIS 1 & 2

The story of creation. *What was God thinking when He made you?*

Day 11 | LUKE 1: 46-55

Mary's Magnificat. *Rewrite the Magnificat in your own words.*

Day 12 | JOHN 3: 22-30

"He must increase and I must decrease."

Day 13 | LUKE 17: 11-19

"Ten were cleansed, were they not?" *When, where, and how am I ungrateful?*

Day 14 | GENESIS 6: 5-6 & GENESIS 3

"His heart was grieved." *Ask the LORD to allow you to taste the grief in His heart because of the reality of sin.*

Suggestions for Praying with the Scriptures

- Read the passage once to become familiar with the text.
- Slowly read the passage a second time.
- Very slowly read the passage a third time.
- Pay attention to which word, words, or phrases capture your attention or tug at your heart.
- Talk to God about what is on your heart... and listen.
- After you pray, journaling in some manner could be helpful.

Simply jotting down a word, phrase, or sentence about one thing that stuck out to us from our prayer can help us as we look back on our those notes and remember how God has been speaking to us.