

**Confirmation Class – 13<sup>th</sup> January 2024**  
**Topic: Prayer (YOUCAT 256-287)**  
**By Fr. Jerome Ituah, OCD**

**Aim:** To develop a personal relationship with God in prayer and to pray together as a family.

**Questions for reflection**

- What is your understanding of prayer?
- What is your picture of God?
- Are there different kinds of prayer?
- Can you give some examples of people who prayed in the Bible?
- What prayer did Jesus teach us?

**Prayer**

- What is prayer?
  - 'Prayer is the raising of one's mind and heart to God or requesting of good things from God.'
- Prayer as friendship
  - Prayer is a relationship of friends.
    - How do you talk to your friends?
    - St. Teresa of Avila says: "Prayer...in my opinion is nothing else than an intimate sharing between friends; it means taking time frequently to be alone with Him who we know loves us." (Life, 8:5).
    - Who is a good friend?
    - Jesus is our friend and the best of friends.
- How do we talk to Jesus, our friend?
  - We mean what we say from the heart.
  - We talk to our friends the way we are and feel.
  - We do not put up a false look before the person we call our friend.
- Different ways to pray
  - Our growth in friendship helps us understand different ways to pray.
    - Vocal prayer
      - When we start to pray, we use many words just as if we are talking to a new friend.
    - Meditation
      - As we grow in prayer, we pray more from the heart, using fewer words, thinking more about the person we are talking to, knowing the other person and trying also to understand them.
    - Contemplation
      - As we grow even deeper in friendship, we may sit with our friend without saying a word for some time, just knowing that our friend is there and we love each other.
  - Different types of prayers
    - Blessing and adoration
    - Petition
    - Intercession

- Thanksgiving
  - Praise
- Example of prayer in the Scriptures
  - Abraham
    - Abraham prayed for Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen 18:16-33).
  - Moses (Exo 33:11)
    - Moses became so close to God that he is described as one who sees God face to face (Exo 33:11). That is what it means to be a friend of God.
  - Hannah
    - Hannah had no child and was distressed. She went to the Temple to pray; she poured out her heart to God the way she was, and God heard her prayer (1 Sam 1:13).
  - The blind Bartimaeus (Mk 10:46-50).
    - The blind Bartimaeus heard that Jesus was passing by. He cried out to Jesus, 'Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me.' When Jesus asked him what he wanted, he said he wanted his sight back.
    - Jesus restored his sight.
  - Mary (Lk 1:46-55)
    - Mary's prayer is one of gratitude to God for what God did in her life.
    - She also interceded for the bride and groom at the wedding when their wine was finished (John 2).
    - Mary can intercede for us, too.
  - Jesus
    - Jesus, as a human being, learnt how to pray from his mother and foster father. He prayed using the formulas of prayer at the time, especially the Psalms.
    - Jesus taught his disciples how to pray. That is what we call the pattern of all prayer – the Lord's Prayer – Our Father (Matt 6:9-13)
  - The Lord's prayer
    - Seven petitions
      - Hallowed by thy name
      - Thy kingdom come!
      - Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven
      - Give us this day our daily bread
      - Forgive us as we forgive others
      - Lead us not into temptation
      - Deliver us from evil
- A praying family
  - As Mary taught Jesus to pray as a family, we must also learn to pray in the family.
  - The family is a small church where we can encounter God together.
  - Why is it important to pray together as a family? Give your own reasons.