

Catechesis on prayer: 33. The Struggle of Prayer

Dear brothers and sisters, good morning!

I am happy to resume this face-to-face meeting, because I will tell you something: it is not nice to speak in front of nothing, to a camera. It is not nice. And now, after many months, thanks to the courage of Msgr. Sapienza, who said, "No, we'll do it there", we are gathered here again. Msgr. Sapienza is good! And finding people, finding you here, each one of you with your own story, people who come from all over, from Italy, from the United States, from Colombia... That little football team of four Swiss brothers, I think... who are over there... four. The little sister is missing, I hope she arrives... And seeing each one of you pleases me as we are all brothers and sisters in the Lord, and looking at each other helps us to pray for each other. Also people who are far away but always make themselves close to us. The ever-present Sister Geneviève who comes from Lunapark, people who work... So many. They are all here. Thank you for your presence and your visit. Take the Pope's message to everyone. The Pope's message is that I pray for everyone, and I ask you to pray for me, united in prayer.

And speaking of prayer, Christian prayer, like all Christian life, is not a "walk in the park". None of the great people of prayer we meet in the Bible and in the history of the Church found prayer "comfortable". Yes, one can pray like a parrot – blah, blah, blah, blah, blah – but that is not prayer. Prayer certainly gives great peace, but through inner struggle, at times hard, which can accompany even long periods of life. Praying is not something easy, and this is why we flee from it. Every time we want to pray, we are immediately reminded of many other activities, which at that moment seem more important and more urgent. This happens to me too! It happens to me. I go to pray a little... and no, I must do this and that... We flee from prayer, I don't know why, but that is how it is. Almost always, after putting off prayer, we realise that those things were not essential at all, and that we may have wasted time. This is how the Enemy deceives us.

All Godly men and women report not only the joy of prayer, but also the tediousness and fatigue it can bring: at times it is a difficult struggle to keep to the time and ways of praying. Some saints continued it for years finding any satisfaction in it, without perceiving its usefulness. Silence, prayer and concentration are difficult exercises, and sometimes human nature rebels. We would rather be anywhere else in the world, but not there, in that church pew, praying. Those who want to pray must remember that faith is not easy, and sometimes it moves forward in almost total darkness, without points of reference. There are moments in the life of faith that are dark, and therefore some saints call this "the dark night", because we hear nothing. But I continue to pray.

The Catechism lists a long series of enemies of prayer, those that make it difficult to pray, that put us in difficulty (cf. nos. 2726-2728). Some doubt that prayer can truly reach the Almighty: why does God remain silent? If God is Almighty, He could say a couple of words and end the matter. Faced with the elusiveness of the divine, others suspect that prayer is a merely psychological operation; something that may be useful, but is neither true nor necessary: and one could even be a practitioner without being a believer. And so it goes on, many explanations.

However, the worst enemies of prayer are found within us. The Catechism describes them thus: "Discouragement during periods of dryness; sadness that, because we have 'great possessions', we have not given all to the Lord; disappointment over not being heard according to our own will; wounded pride, stiffened by the indignity that is ours as sinners; our resistance to the idea that prayer is a free and unmerited gift" (2728). This is clearly a summary that could be extended. What should be done in time of temptation, when everything seems to waver? If we look at the history of spirituality, it is immediately seen that the masters of the soul were very clear about the situation we have described. To overcome it, each of them offered some type of contribution: a word of wisdom, or a suggestion for dealing moments fraught with difficulty. It is not a question of elaborate theories, of preconceived theories, no, but of advice born of experience, which shows the importance of resisting and persevering in prayer. It would be interesting to review at least some of these pieces of advice, because each one deserves to be explored further. For example, the Spiritual Exercises of Saint Ignatius of Loyola is a short book of great wisdom that teaches how to put one's life in order. It makes us understand that the Christian vocation is militancy, it is the decision to stand beneath the standard of Jesus Christ and not under that of the devil, trying to do good even when it becomes difficult.

Our Lady of Divine Providence ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

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VII SUNDAY OF EASTER



HOLY MASS

Saturday: 05:30pm English, Church.

Sunday: 09:00am English, Church.
10:30am Creole, Church.
12:30pm Spanish, Church.

Weekdays: 05:30pm English, Church.
(*Except Wednesdays*)

Fridays:
05:30pm Church.
06:00pm Adoration Blessed
Sacrament and Rosary.

SCHEDULE OF SACRAMENTS

Baptisms: Contact one of the priests in person.

Confessions: Everyday before Mass or by appointment.

Anointing of the Sick: Upon request.

Marriage: Call the parish office for preparation before setting a fixed date.

1st Communions: June 6, 2021.

Confirmation: Fall 2021.

Today we are celebrating the solemnity of the Ascension. This means that for forty days after His resurrection Jesus accompanied his disciples and instructed them on how to continue without Him. Jesus 'ascended'. Just what does this mean? He went to heaven in His human nature. Today a human being, like you and me, became a part of the Holy Trinity in heaven and this marriage of our human nature into God can never be changed. God can not go back on this. It is irreversible! The Lord through this event shows His total commitment to us, the human race and He cannot change this. This feast also shows that now Heaven is open to all of us, no matter our sins or our weaknesses or our disregard for the Lord. When Adam and Eve sinned, the human race alienated itself from God. Heaven was, in fact closed to us. Secondly, Adam and Eve were living in an earthly paradise before they sinned and after they sinned, they were given a promise that the "son of the woman would crush the head of the serpent." (Genesis 3:15). Well, this means that instead of an earthly paradise Adam and Eve are for ever in a heavenly paradise which is much better than the first! How can this be, you might think. Instead of punishing Adam and Eve, (who includes us as well,) the Lord gives them an even greater gift, which is eternal life with Him in heaven. I believe that this shows the immense generosity and mercy of God. After the original sin He blesses our first parents with a greater gift than they would have had if they had not sinned! Hopefully you can receive and appreciate this Good News which can soften your heart to the Lord and the other people around you and then you can begin to pass this good news to others. This is also in the Gospel of today. Jesus sends the apostles out to evangelise the whole of creation. This means everyone is invited to know this great love of the Lord for them.

Let us pray that we can all receive this love and begin to evangelise those around us.

Fr. Paul

THE ASECION OF THE LORD

will be celebrated on
Sunday, May 16.

BLESSING OF THE HOUSES

During this Easter Season the priests of the parish will be blessing the houses in the island, if you are interested, please contact the church to schedule the visit.

"Come to me, all you who labour and are overburdened and I will give you rest". (Mt. 11:28)

God's mercy is greater than
our weaknesses.
He Loves you as you are.



Come and listen!

Catechesis for adults
Starting: Monday, April 12th.

Monday and Thursday
7:00 - 8:00 PM

Our Lady of Divine Providence, Parish Hall.
Everyone 13 & older is invited
Free Babysitting.

Parish Events May 16—May 23

Sunday: Holy Mass: 09:00am, 10:30am and 12:30pm
05:00pm Coeur de Marie: Children's group.
05:30pm Sacre Coeur de Jesus, P. Hall.
05:00pm Fraternité, Red Room.
05:00pm Creole Youth Choir Practice
05:00pm Choeur D'hommes 1st and 3rd Sunday at church.

Monday: 05:30pm Mass, Church.

Tuesday: 05:30pm Mass, Church.
Liturgy of the Word, NCW.
1st English Community, S.M.Goretti
2nd Spanish Community, Red Room

Wednesday: **Liturgy of the Word, NCW.**
1st Spanish Community, SM.Goretti.
1st Creole Community, Red Room.
2nd English Community, Parish Hall.
3rd English Communities, Blue Chap.

Thursday: 05:30pm D. Mass Church.
06:00pm Creole Choir Practice
06:30pm English Choir Practice.

Friday: 05:30pm Daily Mass, Church.
06:00pm Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament & Benediction.

Saturday: 05:30pm Mass Church.

NCW. Eucharist
05:30pm
07:00pm



School Notes

Holy Family Academy
Tel: +1(649) 941-7875

With the celebration of the Ascension of the Lord into Heaven 40 days after the resurrection, students are so excited to receive the Holy Spirit who will give us the strength to keep moving forward and help in our studies.

We are happy the 11th graders were able to continue the annual Bazaar this year. This economics project has allowed our students to participate in real world applications of their knowledge.



For more information visit
www.hfa.catholic.tc

SPONSORS / BENEFACTORS

We continue to look for donations and sponsors to support our **Scholarship Program** and help the school with necessary supplies. Any help God will reward you a hundred fold. If you would like and are able to help contact us at holyfamilytci@gmail.com

You can also donate from the US in the following link: <https://www.rcan.org/mission-turks-and-caicos-islands>

Wish List

This is another way to help the missionary school or students who are in need, by donating any of the following:

- Moving Outdoor planters and gardening material
- Heavy Duty Sun Shade Sail Canopy
- Tablets
- Hand Sanitizer / alcohol
- Paper hand towels
- Tonner Canon ImageRunner ADVANCE C5255

Thank you!