

Fr. Perozich comments —

The love in the Holy Trinity is so exuberant that it overflows into creation, first to angels, and then to human beings and all of creation.

Each angelic being was given full knowledge of creation and assigned a rank and a task. They had an instant to accept it, then saw the Beatific Vision, and are enthralled at each moment of God's beauty and glory.

The path for humanity is a lifetime of learning guided by conscience, an imprint of God's ways on the soul as is taught in the Catechism of the Catholic Church:

1776 "Deep within his conscience man discovers a law which he has not laid upon himself but which he must obey. Its voice, ever calling him to love and to do what is good and to avoid evil, sounds in his heart at the right moment.... For man has in his heart a law inscribed by God.... His conscience is man's most secret core and his sanctuary. There he is alone with God whose voice echoes in his depths."

The world, the devil, and the flesh (human desire) can mute the voice of conscience as can other religions, political speech, cultural pressure among others.

Christians, and Catholics in particular, are different from those who do not enjoy the privilege of sonship and the sacramental graces offered to us. This is not a cause for boasting, rather a reminder to offer it to others.

In baptism Christians have entered the kingdom of God, and nothing can remove us — except ourselves choosing to live as those outside the kingdom, and then not being ready when God opens the gates to the other side.

The kingdom of God was brought to earth by Jesus, who now resides with the heavenly Father in the fullness of the kingdom, and who promised to lead us to the same realm of glory.

We who live in this side of the kingdom, who are journeying toward the other side, have the privilege of divine encounters with God in prayer.

Archbishop José Gómez opens up an understanding to that privilege.

Why it's a privilege to pray

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"St. Jerome in the Desert," by Joachim Patinir, 1485-1524, Flemish. (Wikimedia Commons)

Recently, I was praying the Liturgy of the Hours.

The spiritual reading for the day was a passage from St. John Mary Vianney about prayer: "Humanity has a noble task: that of prayer and love. To pray and to love, that is the happiness of men and women on earth."

He goes on to talk about something that I think about too: **what a privilege we have to be able to pray.**

We have the beautiful privilege to talk to the Creator of the heavens and the earth, the One who made all the seas and mountains and planets and stars, and everything that lives. And we can know that **the Creator is listening.** This will never cease to amaze me.

We live in a culture that prizes “efficiency.” We can buy what we need to be comfortable and secure. We have technologies that can answer our questions in seconds. It can be tempting for us to think that prayer is “obsolete,” that we don’t really need to pray.

But we do need to pray.

God himself has given us this treasure of prayer, so that we can know him and love him and share our lives with him, both in this world and in the world to come.

So we need to renew our attention to prayer. We need to put God first, to make our friendship with God our primary obligation. Prayer is our “noble task,” as the saint says.

Make a time every day when you can set yourself apart from the “noise” of your responsibilities and activities. It doesn’t need to be a long time. Ten minutes is a good start. Just make time to have some silence in your heart so God can speak to you — and so you can listen and speak back to him.

Getting into that daily habit of silence will help you grow in your friendship with God. You will find yourself more and more aware of his presence, of his love, in your daily life.

Whenever we hear Jesus praying in the Gospels, he calls God his Father. And he teaches us to pray in the same way.

In every Mass, we hear those amazing words: “At the Savior’s command and formed by divine teaching, we dare to say: Our Father.”

Our baptism makes us God’s sons and daughters and gives us that beautiful privilege we have to call God our Father.

Because we are children of God, the “Catechism of the Catholic Church” tells us that we should pray to him with “filial boldness.” Such a beautiful expression, and it reflects a beautiful truth.

As children of God, we can talk to our heavenly Father, not out of fear, but out of love. We can talk to him with confidence, with that “filial boldness.” When you pray, pray as a child who knows that you are loved, who knows that your Father has a beautiful plan of love for your life.

_____ Jesus said whatever we ask for in prayer, if we believe that we will receive it, we will. He said, “Everything is possible to one who has faith.”

What an amazing promise! Filial boldness means praying with that promise always in mind, praying always with that holy hope — that in everything, Jesus is working for the good of those who love him.

St. John Vianney also encourages us to be bold when we pray. He challenges us to be more intentional in our prayers, especially when we are praying for those we love or things we need in our lives.

“How often do we come to church without thinking about what we are going to do or for what we are going to ask,” he says. “And yet, when we go to call upon someone, we have no difficulty in remembering why we came. ... I often think that when we come to adore Our Lord we would get all that we ask if we asked for it with a lively faith and a pure heart.”

Get into the habit of spending a little time each day, calling to mind the people in your life — your family, friends, loved ones. Pray for their health and happiness. Pray for them to stay close to Jesus and persevere on their journey to heaven.

And pray for “hard cases,” too. We all have them in our lives. We can ask our Father for miracles, healings, and conversions for us, and for people in our lives. All things are possible for the child of God, so let’s pray with a lively faith and a pure heart!

Pray for me and I will pray for you.

And may our Blessed Mother Mary teach us to pray as she did — that God's will be done in our lives, always and in all things.