Spirituality
Pencil Preaching





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“Your Father knows what you need before you ask him” (Matt 6:8).

Sir 48:1-14; *Mt 6:7-15*

If God already knows what we need, then why pray? Prayer is not to inform God, but to listen in order to know what we really need.

When we go to see a doctor, based on our appearance a good doctor may already know why we are there. But diagnosis is a dialogue, and by asking questions, both patient and doctor go beyond symptoms to causes. They learn what the matter really is.

Where does it hurt? How long has this been going on? When did it first start? What were you doing? What medicines are you taking?

So it is with prayer, because it is a personal encounter and not just a transaction. When Jesus taught his disciples to pray, he invited them into his own relationship with God. Before they stated their needs, they first were to enter into this intimacy with God, *Abba*, a loving parent to a beloved child. Heaven comes to earth when we enter God’s presence. God wants what we need, so let God’s will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

When it is our turn to speak, we already know we are in competent hands. We speak honestly and freely of our general needs, then of specific situations that are causing us pain. We lack something, have unsatisfied hungers. We are in conflict, have hurt someone or been hurt by them. We are angry or fearful. We need forgiveness to

heal the pain, courage to face some temptation, reassurance to calm our anxiety that something bad might happen to us.

We pray in order to present ourselves before God, tell our story, admit our faults, know that God’s love covers everything, including our sins. We pray to find peace so we can once again feel good, let go of the day’s failures, get some sleep, start again tomorrow.

Regular prayer should be the most natural thing we do because it renews us to be ourselves, gets us back on track, going forward to greater and greater life. When we talk with God, the outcome is always Good News.

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