

THE REVIEW OF PRAYER

After the formal prayer period is over I should review what happened during that time - not so much what ideas did I have, but more the movements of consolation, desolation, fear, anxiety, boredom, and so on - perhaps something about my distractions, especially if they were deep or disturbing. Questions like the following may help:

1. What passage did I choose?
2. What grace did I ask for?
3. What was my mood, changes in mood?
4. Did I experience comfort or discomfort?
5. Where did I dwell?
6. What was enjoyable? Distasteful? Moving?
7. What struck me or stood out for me?
8. Where was the Lord working?
9. How did I respond?
10. Did I receive the grace I asked for?
11. Did the time go slowly, moderately, quickly?
12. Was there some area that I should return to in my next period of prayer?

During this review I thank God for his favours and ask pardon for my own negligences.

This review is an instrument to help me reflect upon the experience of the prayer period. It helps me notice my interior experiences. Thus it enables me to be spontaneous during the actual prayer time and to go with the flow of experience. If I were to monitor myself during the period of prayer, I would be interfering with the Lord's communication. I let happen what is happening during the prayer time; afterwards I take a look to see what the Lord is saying in all this.

It is helpful during this review to jot down a few reflections that strike me so that I can more easily prepare for my next period of prayer. The Lord may be inviting me to go back to a point where I was moved. St. Ignatius says, "I should remain quietly meditating upon a point UNTIL I have been satisfied" i.e., until the movement has been completed (the insight completed; the struggle resolved; the consolation ended; the meaningfulness finished for now.)

Jotting down my reflections during the review is also a help for me to discuss my prayer experience with the spiritual director.

It is also helpful at the end of a prayer period to signalize the difference of this review from the prayer period by some change of place or posture: the activity of review is different from the activity of the prayer period.