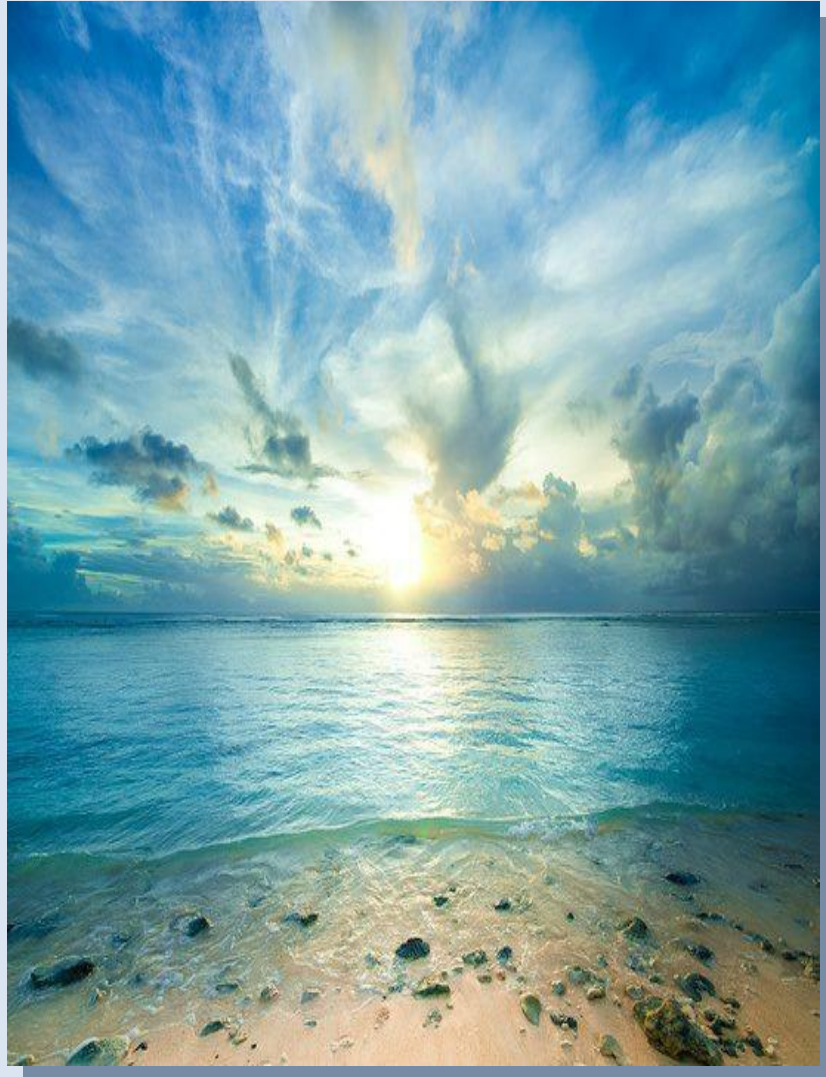
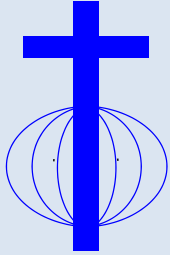


Voluntas Dei Institute
Volume 15

2014

The Present Moment

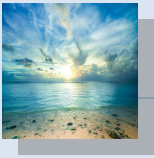


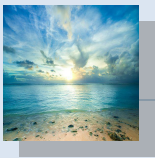
Prayer and Meditation

2014

The Present Moment

Volume 15





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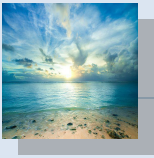
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 Where We are 25

The Present Moment

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FROM THE EDITORS...

Dear Readers,

It is with pleasure that we present to you « the 2014 Present Moment » having as its theme this year: Prayer and Meditation.

In a century where the lack of time, running and stress are omnipresent, we would like you to stop and take a bearing on our time consecrated to the points of the first five of our spirituality and the way in which we are living them.

Our Founder in his book, *In Intimacy With Jesus*, gives us the secret of prayer : « The depth of prayer comes from an act of faith that is a gift of God. The essential element of prayer is believing that God is alive, that He lives in all the dimensions of my being, that He is attentive to my thoughts and to the least of my actions. The awareness that God is always near, that He sees me and loves me, is the real starting point of my prayer. » (*In Intimacy with Jesus*, pages, 18 and 20)

It is now to us to read a number of witnessing and an article from our confreres of the Institute speaking to us about prayer and meditation.

A very special thank you to all those who have collaborated from near and far in the development of this journal, « The Present Moment », 2014 edition.

Good reading,

Renée Crôteau and Richard Normandin

Editors and Writers





FROM THE PEN OF DIRECTOR GENERAL...

Prayer is the development of a relationship of communication with God in order to enter into intimate contact with Him. Meditation is an exercise of the self-discipline of the spirit in order to make easier the personal thrust.

This annual publication arrives your way with different personal experiences and testimonies of our members on the theme of: prayer and meditation.

Prayer is an essential tool for everyone to create a climate of deep union with God through the realization of praise and thanksgiving from the depths of one's very being while accepting one's difficulties and limits in order to draw more closely to God, submitting oneself to the reality of life, especially to the needs, challenges and concerns, etc., and finally opening oneself to the transcendent for healing and transformation.

Father Parent wanted that all Voluntas aspire to become « perfect like our heavenly Father » (Matt. 5 :48). This is only possible thanks to a profound dialogue with God. The state of meditation renders a person to listening to God in order to find Him. That is why Saint Padre Pio said: « through the study of books one seeks God; through meditation one finds God. »

Through the reading of the testimonies on prayer and meditation, we will be able to find our own way of praying and meditating. Let us build a healthy and deep relationship with god and let us try to become holy by allowing god to transform us, (1 Thes. 5 :23-24).

Fr. S. James Dunstan
Director General

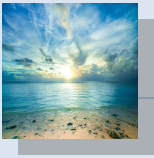


General Assembly 2016

Where: Ursulines de Québec,
20, rue des Dames-Ursulines, C.P. 81276
Succursale Loretteville, Québec, G2B 3W7
Tél. : (418) 842-2424

Date : July 11 to July 24, 2016

Let us pray and prepare individually, in teams, sectors, regions and districts for the General Assembly 2016.



FROM THE FOUNDER'S PEN

Our Founder, Father Parent, has left us so many beautiful reflections on « Prayer and Meditation ». Here are a number of excerpts taken from his book: In Intimacy With Jesus.

« ...Prayer is two living beings coming face to face. They are both free like the air, both interested in one another, made for one another. Two living being, one who is weak, always in search of goodness and the other who is infinitely wise, powerful and good. » In Intimacy with Jesus, page 18

« God is always present in me; I am His image. In reality, because God is always present and attentive, my relationship with Him depends on me, thus it is up to me to think of Him constantly. » In Intimacy with Jesus, page 19

« Whatever the state of my soul, there is always a prayer ready to spring forth. There are so many prayers in me; each faculty, each fiber of my being has its own well-marked prayer. » In Intimacy with Jesus, page 19

The Three Phases of Prayer:

« 1. Meditation: In meditation I pray with my mind. I depend on texts, on testimonies, on the attitudes of others; I am nourished by others. I read. I observe. I listen. I absorb. I analyze. I synthesize. I structure my thoughts . . . » In Intimacy with Jesus, page 22

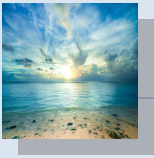
« 2. Mental Prayer: Here we are speaking of prayer of the heart. . . It is dialogue with God. The conversation is simple, confident, stimulating and gives life to my practice of the presence of God. I speak. I listen. I understand. I love God and tell Him so without seeking fancy terms. I remain normal and natural. I question. I say I'm sorry. I accuse myself. I am open to the Lord . . . I give thanks. I praise. I adore. I am comfortable. I sense Him within me . . . » In Intimacy with Jesus, pages 22-23

« 3. Contemplation: Here my whole being prays. My whole being is permeated with God – Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Gestures, words and thoughts are superfluous. » In Intimacy with Jesus, page 23

Here are some precious words to facilitate prayer and meditation.

Father Louis-Marie Parent, o.m.i.





PRAYER AND MÉDITATION - A JOURNEY INTO THE PRÉSENCE OF GOD

I am Shibin Bosco. I am a Voluntas Dei seminarian from the district in formation of India. I am pursuing my studies at the minor seminary at Béthel, Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala.

I would like to share with a number of experiences in which I had the opportunity to be a true Voluntas Dei member while doing my exercises of prayer and meditation in the group where I live with all of the noise and distractions of the world.

I feel that my prayers are always an aid to help me live my life better in the present moment. The objective of my prayer time is to seek the will of God and to follow Jesus in order always to go higher by forcing myself to attain a sincere closer proximity with Him.

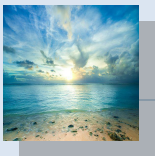
In all of the activities that I do as a seminarian and in the parish milieu, I have the desire to share the Word of God and its importance in my daily life as well as my Voluntas spirituality that invites me to recognize the presence of God in these services. It is then that I realize that the good can exist through the spreading of my spirituality (i.v. Dei) and from activities in a given environment.

What I have learned from the Institute in the course of my last years of formation is to give more attention to prayer and meditation as well as in my personal life to develop an affection for the will of God, in particular, by cultivating a spirit of contemplation, humility and service.

This permits me to accept better in a positive way persons and events.

I try to make all of my time a prayer to God.

By giving my time, love and passion to prayer and meditation, I receive warmth, peace and enlightenment.



In closing, I make this prayer: « Lord, teach me to pray so that I can come to know you more clearly, love you more dearly, follow you more closely and live in Your presence. »



Voluntas Dei per Mariam Immaculatam !

Shibin Bosco,
Seminarist, India

Anniversaries of priesthood

Marc Laroche	Canada	25 years	December 2, 1989
Calonge Lemaine	Haiti	25 years	25, 1989
Xavier Ponnayyan	Inde	25 years	December 19, 198
Yvon Carpentier	Canada	50 years	June 6, 1964
Michel Laroche	Canada	50 years	June 6, 1964
Gérald Michaud	Canada	50 years	July 14, 1964

Wedding Anniversaries

Donald Routhier / Véronique Doyon	Canada	25 years	May 13, 1989
Sanchez, Freddy / Antonia Sylvertre	Rép. Dom.	50 years	May 6, 1964
Mariathas, Mathias / Jenova Mariathas	Sri Lanka	50 years	December 14, 1964



HOW TO PRAY IN THE MANNER OF A VOLUNTAS DEI

How does one as a Voluntas Dei situate oneself in order to live the present moment while praying in a world that is in agitation (in turmoil)?

Firstly, it is your total person who is in prayer before God and this is completely in the moment of your life. All seems easier when love is mixed in!

At every moment of the day you have the opportunity to be the good news for the neighbor.

To pray is an act of humility that places me before God and my neighbor. Each little thing or small gest can become a prayer since there is associated compassion: the compassion of Jesus.

Through your attitudes of life: for example your look, your smile is in itself a prayer and at the same time a way of evangelizing. You become a witness of Jesus by your whole life.

In the morning, I take precious time for the Lord. I have the good fortune of doing adoration in the chapel of the rectory. I place myself in the disposition to welcome His love: Jesus shows Himself in a secret and discreet way to my heart in order to be His heart to carry in daily life each day.

And the Mass is the greatest prayer, the prayer of Jesus that asks the Father to gather all to Himself to give life, the resurrection. And in doing this, Jesus remits the world to His Father and to our Father.

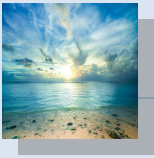
Without forgetting Mary is united to her Son through the Holy Spirit.

A friend of mine said to me: « What you cry out is stronger than what you say. »

Jesus, I offer to you who I am, my heart, my personhood, and I ask of you to make of me your instrument of peace, love and hope in today's world. This is what dwells within me that makes a difference in the art of being Voluntas Dei.

Jean Dubé, Canada
Priest, Canada





LOVE BASED ON THE TESTIMONY

Our family, committed to the Voluntas Dei Institute, aspires to the perfection of love based upon the witness of the Christian life.

Consecrated life as a couple is realized through the public commitment of the evangelical counsels: poverty, chastity and obedience.

POVERTY

Our poverty, as a project of partnership, is based upon:

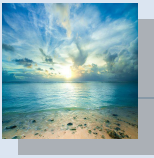
1. The commandment of love.
2. The sacraments.
3. The correct orientation of our desires concerning the things of this world and material riches.
4. God is the ultimate and true riches.
5. To share material and spiritual goods, not by constraint but through love.
6. To see in each person the human face of the Lord Jesus.
7. To do the will of God and not make decisions based upon logic or human judgment.
8. Jesus became poor and we must not be slaves to wealth.
9. We live modestly: we have a house of 52 square meters in a low social area.
10. Our monthly revenue is the minimum salary and when we take out the participation for health, there remains only 520.000 pesos (\$286.00 CA) to meet our basic needs each month.

CHASTITY

As a couple, we live fidelity and unselfish love. The purity of body is possible if there is truly the purity of spirit and heart and this occurs also through the mortification of the senses. But, without the help of God it is not possible to achieve this virtue.

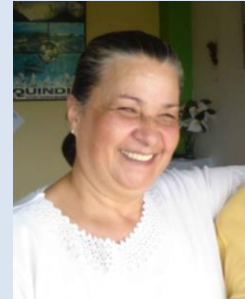
- «Chastity is to follow in the footsteps of Jesus. »
- «Chastity is a mirror in which God sees within the human the face of Jesus. »
- «Chastity is to die to temporal things in order to live in communion with the divine. »
- «Chastity is the perfection of the spirit. »

These four preceding statements are from the Colombian doctor. (Angie Ware).



OBEDIENCE

- To obey is to do the will of God.
- Fidelity to sound authority.
- To accomplish the commandments of the law of God.
- To accomplish the Constitutions.
- To obey the authority of the Voluntas Dei Institute.
- God rejoices when we do what He asks of us.
- Obedience to the Church.
- Obedience when we do what is asked of us.
- Obedience a wall of protection against evil.



Alicia Correa Franco Maximiliano Guzman Roa
Associated Member, Colombia

THE PLACE OF PRAYER IN THE LIVE OF VOLUNTAS DEI

Daily prayer and meditation are a part of the spiritual exercises that constitute the first « 5 » of the Voluntas Dei spirituality.

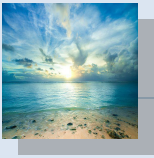
They are a point of departure and a privileged time for developing a life of intimacy with God that allows us to abandon ourselves completely in full trust in the Lord Who is always with us.

Daily prayer allows us to build a solid relationship with the Lord who is our daily nourishment for our ongoing formation. Without it, all loses its meaning and significance.

Our interior life becomes impoverished and our relationship with God becomes distant.

Uncertainty, discord and complaint appear. It is then, the nourishment that strengthens our will and our spiritual life, and allows us to live the attitudes of life (second 5) and Christian contacts (third 5) resulting in gentleness as a reflection of our relationship with the Lord and as a distinctive and essential main road for being Voluntas Dei.

God knows our smallness and our greatness. Nothing can be hidden from Him. However, His love for us is unconditional.



Prayer is a conversation or a sincere dialogue that brings us closer, establishes and ratifies our relationship with Him.

The quality of prayer marks without doubt our daily life and our relationships with others since it underscores our actions.

That is why in this world more and more agitated and uncertain where time is always scarce, it is essential that the Voluntas Dei not neglect his/her relationship with God through prayer in order to be truly the salt and the light of the world at this present hour.

Andrea Saez Jara .
Associate Member, Chile



Deceased

Juliette Roy	Canada	January 3, 2013
Germain Côté	Canada	January 15, 2013
Denis Legault	Canada	June 28, 2013
Antony samy Pathimanathan	Inde	July 8, 2013
Rogelio Antonio Pando Urbina	Chili	September 9, 2013
Mariampillai Bosco Mathuranayagam	Sri Lanka	September 10, 2013
Arthur Beaulieu	Canada	September 15, 2013



PRAYER AND MEDITATION

My name is Ivan Cristobal and I am a seminarian in the District in Formation, Chile. We have at the moment many academic and pastoral activities where prayer and meditation are a deep breath that gives continually life to our journey before God and others.

From my experience, the two are certainly a daily attitude that through our spirituality we live as an essential pillar of our being Voluntas Dei. But, it is also true that it is not easy being a person of prayer.

At the same time, I can also say that it is not easy being a community of prayer especially when our difficulties « enter with us into the chapel » as a determining factor of our spirit and our will.

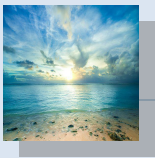
That is why it is difficult to make prayer and meditation a true encounter, a privileged place favorable to encountering God, a space to admire His face, to hear His voice and to express our prayers and gratitude.

It is also true that prayer and meditation claiming to be in the forefront of our spiritual and personal life requires a constant effort.

We must put forward something of our very self in order to pray since it is not just a matter of kneeling as God is always ready and attentive, but our being has a need of an involvement permitting it to prepare the spirit and to make of real life in the daily moment, the good and the bad, a true prayer and not one of complaint or meaningless words. Consequently, through our prayer we live also in a process of daily conversion.

In light of this, Father Parent encourages us and tells us that all prayer is good, and effectively it is the same whether it is difficult to do, alone or in community. Prayer and meditation are a moment of encounter with God. Thus, put something of ourselves forward in order to pray while knowing that we are right at the good instant to pray in the present moment and say to Jesus: «Look, Lord, who I am and I ask Him what I can do? » It is a way among many others in which he has shown us that prayer and meditation are a personal encounter with an « I » and a « You. »

It is like walking and slowing down the step always looking at the one who walks beside me while sharing a few words on what is happening. The more we look at who is walking with us, better still, when we walk always aware of their presence, our walk will be different and we will be continuously in the presence of God and we will be able to say that our very life is a prayer that makes us people of prayer.



Daily prayer and meditation translate into the strength needed to realize our ideal. All prayer is good and there is so much good at the interior of each person. There are many forms of prayer, a lot to support me many times, one or the other complementing each other and interchangeable says Father Parent.

Just as it is always good to encounter someone that you love, it is always good to pray and each time it is a good moment for him/her whether he/she is happy or sad.

It is always a brief moment of encounter with God in prayer that renders our being transformed in the most intimate way. It is the power of the prayer of the Virgin Mary. May she help us to review our personal life and in this way make of it a life of prayer.

May God bless you and greetings from Chile.

Ivan Carvajal Juica,
Seminarist, Chile



Ordination

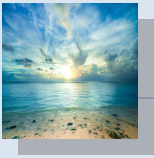
Joseph Panakkal	India	January 2, 2013
Anthony Jesuraj Silva	Sri Lanka	September 26, 2013
Alien Iliótes	Haiti	December 28, 2013

MY PERSONAL PRAYER

From my experience, I carry out my prayer through three aspects: my daily activity, another through my liturgical and sacramental life in the Church and thirdly my space of intimate encounter with the Lord.

Prayer in my daily life I achieve also in two moments, the first when I thank the Lord for having allowed me to live in His presence, for giving me the power to contemplate Him through His actions and His creatures.

I thank God and the Holy Virgin for having given me the opportunity to see that a sick person sees in me a mediator in order to receive in fullness the divine mercy that relieves the pain and fills with hope their world of suffering.



In assuming being of service, I pray with the person firstly through the needs of the same patient, and secondly, as a witness and accompanying person in prayer, I accompany this sick person while directing him/her so that he/she does not fall into despair but that he/she has recourse to prayer as one of the means to be in the presence of God.

The other moment of my experience of prayer is in my sacramental life. This is no longer in my daily life, but in my life as Church, as community when I feel myself taking part and being a part of this Church our mother and protector. This phase of experience realizes itself in the daily encounters carried out in particular in the Eucharist, but also in other religious calls like the recitation of the rosary, evening prayer, triduums as well as during celebrations, etc.

And finally, the other moment which is also the phase that gratifies me the most is the intimate encounter with God in the Blessed Sacrament or through my personal and meditated prayer. In the morning in asking for the presence of God and the gentle company of the Virgin Mary during activities to be undertaken, and at night, thank you for what they allowed me to achieve and to forgive me for what has been left undone. There are critical moments where indisputably I seek the Lord and my Holy Mother Mary through prayer, sick friends, family crisis etc. with the assurance that their support will give me the strength to face the difficult moments.

Be that as it may, thanks to my experience of Voluntas in regarding the presence of God, may my life be a prayer, a prayer in order to surmount all in life.

Gildardo Noreña,
Lay Member, Colombia





Stabilities in 2013

CANADA

Dominique Filion / Louise Gervais

Norbert Thibert / Lorraine Fleury

CUBA

Eduardo Enrique Fonseca Ponce

HAITI

Alien Iliotès

INDIA

Albernas Ajin

LAOS

Thomas Kandavong

SRI LANKA

Anthony Jesuraj Silva

UNITED STATES

Francis Rashid Peter

Martin Theys / Eileen Theys



PRAYER AND MEDITATION

Prayer is the best opportunity for me to find myself alone with the person who loves me a great deal and to have an intimate dialogue with Him, to feel His enriching influence which fulfills all of my expectations.

Each morning when I read and meditate upon the liturgical readings of the day, the words of the Gospel come to my spirit that says: « But when you pray, go to your private room and, when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in that secret place and your Father who sees all that is done will reward you. » (Matt. 6 :6)

To live this proximity with the Lord each day and to be able to express all of my anguishes and concerns and to feel the peace that He gives me, are the best things that I can perceive in prayer.

When I walk while reciting and meditating on the mysteries of the Holy Rosary, I look at and admire the coffee growing countryside.

It is a very special reason to give thanks to God for His work of creation.

To give Him thanks for all that He has made so perfectly gives meaning to my existence. My soul is filled with hope to attain the goal of eternal life.

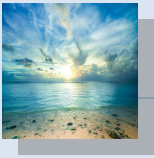
In all forms of prayer, I find more reasons to thank God in the Liturgy of the Hours, *lectio divina* and in other disciplines of meditation.

CARLOS ALBERTO ORDUÑA
Lay member, Colombia



MESSAGE ON PRAYER AND MEDITATION ON THE WORD OF GOD

One of the key elements of the Voluntas Dei spirituality is prayer or meditation on the Word of God (first 5). They help us to develop a life of intimacy with the Lord that we cannot not neglect even if we are involved in thousands of daily concerns since a life without prayer and meditation on the Word of God is like a body without life, since, without doubt, it is what nourishes and energizes our spirituality.



For the tasks of each day, one can easily forget to connect oneself with God, and sometimes even be tempted to think that this is a easy thing that necessitates little time and can be done as the day unfolds. However, it is there where resides our greatest error.

Firstly, because it is this that stimulates and strengthens our day and when we are right in the midst of the concerns of our era that take our time there is no longer place for what, fundamentally, we have relegated to later. Thus, in order to avoid losing completely our life of intimacy with God, the loss to taste what it realizes, it is necessary every day to submit our human will and to consecrate time for prayer and meditation on the Word of God in order to help us certainly to face the obstacles and the concerns of the day.

In my life of prayer and meditation on the Word of God, many times, notably at the beginning of the day, I have been confronted with the temptation mentioned above. But I apply the same recipe of sacrificing my human will in order to forget the things that I have to do during the day in order to stop for an instant to nourish and strengthen myself.

I have sometimes experienced a spiritual aridity, not having any strength, inclination or motivation, and I have not had any other choice but to return to the source since the cooling of the heart does not have any other reason than that of forgetting and neglecting prayer and the meditation on the Word of God.

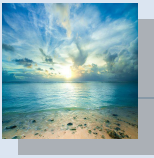
And being a priest, I have need more than most of this proximity and intimacy with God in order to have the strength to pick up people who have fallen, the light to guide those who are lost, the wisdom to guide those who are bewildered and the energy to counter the evil that comes so often my way.

It is through the power of prayer and meditation on the Word of God that I receive the strength, the light, the wisdom and the energy that I need.

I invite you to watch always this closeness of intimacy with God by taking moments of the day to pray and meditate on the Word of God. This is our strength : to pray and meditate on the Word of God and the enemy will go far from us. May God bless you.



Raul Santos Peña Peguero,
Priest, Dominican Republic



PRAYER

This action is the elevation of the spirit toward God, not considered as a reading nor as a monologue but always as a dialogue.

To pray is to raise on high those things that distract us (work, studies, daily life, etc.) To pray is to receive what God wants to give us. It is to open ourselves to forgiveness that He offers us and to receive what He offers us.

Prayer is to receive God Who prays within us since it is He Who has commenced it, pursues it and ends it. The human person returns to his/her own story that God allows to take place freely.

Consequently, this awareness entails a re-evaluation in order to determine time for prayer. There is necessary a personal deepening for it is the human person alone with his/her God.

We must find a style of personal prayer for ourself : in order to find a bit of hope, to find silence, calm and to resist the impulses of today's world and to be vigilant as well as to live an intense interior life that is not superficial.

We must be aware that the human person has been created to know, love and serve God. We must pray in order to hear the word of God that is our nourishment.

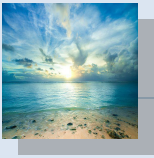
We pray to learn how to dialogue with others, to give a Christian meaning to our criticism, to forgive, to excuse and to know how to ask for what people living in constant renewal do in order to seek always what is pleasing to God.

To see God acting in our time today, we must discover the meaning of the Cross and to accept the meaning of suffering, and that is why we must pray. It is to be able to do the will of God.

Consequently, we must pray in order to know, judge and eliminate the faults that we have, and not to be blinded by reality in order to be freed from slavery, fear and to be faithful to the heritage received.

We must pray in order not to lose the joy of our lives and to live happily.

The fullness of the Christian life requires my silence before God and the fullness of interior silence, Luke 21 :36 « Stay awake, praying at all times, for the strength to survive all that is going to happen and to stand with confidence before the Son of Man. ». Note 14. 32.



In order to live Christian love and to forgive, it is necessary to pray. Prayer does not allow isolating or marginalizing oneself from life. To the contrary, it is the link that joins us to life. To pray gives glory to God. It makes us Christians and fills us with Christ.

Prayer must be constant and persevering. Luke 18 :1



Cordially,

Javier Quintero
Lay Member, Colombia

PRAYER - MEDITATION, SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCE OF VOLUNTAS DEI

At the depths of the human being, there is a murmuring of the Infinite, something that is difficult to define rationally or logically, but we feel the need to know, to feel and to have an intimate relationship with It. Throughout human history, the forms have been diverse and varied, that do not interest us in the realm of space, but the thing most precious for us is the final result.

For us believers, we observe it through prayer and meditation. The Voluntas Dei profits from the presence of God. He is with us and we with Him through the reading of the Word of God and books of spirituality, through active participation in the Eucharist, through devotion to and intimacy with the Blessed Sacrament and through devotion to the Holy Virgin through meditation upon and recitation of the rosary.

These manifestations of intimate love with God in prayer and meditation allow us to live and be in the presence of God in the midst of the world for it is not possible to be authentic Voluntas Dei and transform the circumstances of our life if we do not live a deep and sincere life of intimacy with the Lord.

The different tasks wherever Christ has His rights, bring out His effect and goal from prayer and meditation.

Father Parent, our Founder, is a palpable example. A simple look on mortals less rational is capable of discovering in him a man of prayer – deep meditation. His sole presence is enough to captivate someone and bring him/her to see Christ in the human face or in all of the other works of God's beautiful creation.

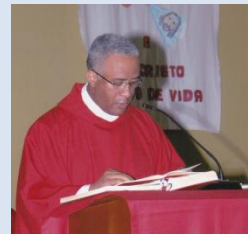


In my personal and community experience, having constant contact with numerous people and situations through the demands of ministry, I have discovered that I could not have remained faithful to joy, love and the spirit of service and especially to have surmounted many tests and difficulties and to have found the solutions to my shortcomings without the strength of prayer and meditation.

We can say that thanks to God and His infinite goodness, we can be truly happy feeling the love and the peace of God in our lives and in this way we can give to others through a generous gift to His service because we have received the grace and blessing of God through prayer – meditation.

Do not let this great richness that God us given us through dear Father Parent pass by. Please, may you be men and women of a life of prayer and steadfast meditation and may love and peace increase within each of us each day and in the world. (District Altagracia) .

Dionicio Reyez Gonzalez,
Priest, Dominican Republic



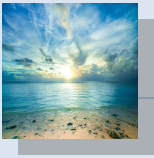
TO PRAYER WITH LIFE

For all of the Voluntas Dei members, like for all Christians, there exist religious practices that are fundamental in order to persevere on the route that we have chosen to follow Christ. This becomes more widespread in a world that has a lot of offers that invite us to take different routes and pathways that the Lord offers us.

For us, as Voluntas Dei members, we are called to live our consecration to Christ in a secularized world. This is an essential element and it is not by chance that Father Parent gave as the first point of the first 5 of our Voluntas Dei spirituality the permanent culture of prayer and meditation. Prayer is the channel through which I can maintain a life of intimacy and close friendship with a faithful friend who chose me one day and called me to follow Him and to serve Him as a priest.

As a member of a secular Institute, there are challenges in respect to a life of prayer in the world, a world that is fast and where all exercise many professions that make it difficult to have appropriate and sustained moments of prayer.

But, outside of all of these situations, as a celibate layman, I have learned that it is possible to pray and to meditate from two dimensions that I think are important : 1) from the example of Mary who gave herself unique moments to be alone with the



Master; 2) from the example of Martha who made of her work and service a prayer to God.

In brief, each Voluntas Dei, and why not, all Christians who want to maintain a close relationship with Christ, should cultivate these two dimensions of prayer as appropriate means of union with Christ.

But especially, we are aware that as committed laymen, the greatest testimony that we can give to the world is to know how to make prayer an integral and essential part of all that we do, but also, to make life a prolonged prayer to God in which we give thanksgiving unceasingly for having chosen us in order that we may be His friends and become participants in His grace.

May God bless you!

Wander Polanco Vladimir Sanchez,
Priest, Dominican Republic



PRAYER AND MEDITATION

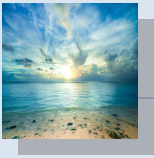
NOT A MECHANISM TO SPEAK,

BUT A THOUGHT TO SHARE.

“Prayer is touching god and becoming better. It is liberating oneself from anxious concerns and worries. It is giving value to the present moment and living a moment of paradise. It is letting the peace of Christ invade one’s heart and spirit, in other words, one’s whole being....”, Father Louis –Marie Parent.

Yes, the words of Father Parent draw me back to a self realization of what prayer mean to me as a Voluntas.

For me to share about prayer and meditation is something which I have not learnt but experienced through the days of formation. It’s very beautiful to speak of, not just beautiful, but a loving experience where I felt the presence of someone who loves me a lot, who cares me a lot, who always thinks of me, who is always present to me even if I am not in his presence.



As I was grown up, the search of God was also rooted in me. But the answers to my questions did not satisfy my intellect. Everything was beyond the realities of my life. With this attitude only I related myself to the Voluntas family.

But this start was a new beginning for my spiritual journey. At this stage I really felt that the pages of my life were enriched and empowered by someone and I am sure that is really God worked in and for me through different personalities.

It is true that God is beyond the human capacities, but as Father Parent says, it is possible for us to find God in our life with our head and to enter into him and to discover him with our heart. And this is the call of 2nd point of the 1st five of our spirituality.

PRAYER AND MEDITATION invites every one of us to discover God who is within us, among us, and for us. This is not an easy task, it demands constant exercise. But once when it is achieved there is no greater beautiful experience than this. I would rather call this as "GOD EXPERIENCE". For us Voluntas, Father Parent has simplified and shared this spirituality which he has not learnt but experienced. THIS SPIRITUALITY IS NOT JUST TO DO THE WILL OF GOD BUT TO BE THE WILL OF GOD.

Friends, here only we are challenged. Even though we put lots of intellectual reflections forward for others we don't experience God in the PRESENT MOMENT for ourselves. The reason is because we don't know what to pray, what to meditate, what to do in prayer.

For all these problems the only solution is to allow God to enter into our lives and master it through prayer and meditation. Prayer is not a verbal quiz, but the inner thirst of our heart. Our heart should search for God and feel him in and around. This is the best prayer that brings us closer and closer to God.

Let us also pray with Father Parent to give a heart to search for him, to experience him and to share him with others. So that we may be the will of God, where ever we go. Let us be the gospels of Christ.

Joe Sanjuthan,
Seminararian, Sri Lanka





PRAYER AND MEDITATION

When we reflect on prayer and meditation in the Christian circle or catholic context both has a deeper meaning within itself. So, both, the prayer and meditation is something for a Christian to lead a meaningful life.

When we consider what really prayer is, it is the direct application of our energy towards a goal, whether it is to acquire something or to bring a desire state. For instance, praying for someone else to be healed. In short, prayer is the directing tool of our energy towards God.

On the other hand meditation is the art of quieting the inner noise in the mind to allow the higher self (God) to descend into our consciousness. Every moment of our life God is sending us a message about our life, ourselves and the universe.

Therefore it is very good to say, meditation is knowing God's creation in inner noise by being always in the presence of God.

In brief, I can say that prayer is talking to God and Meditation is listening to God. We the Voluntas know that our 1st spiritual exercises is called "MENTAL PRAYER" in other word, it can be said that prayer and meditation.

What is important here is that we the Voluntas must exercise meditative prayer or prayerful meditation. How are we going to exercise this?

It is only possible when we have the mentality and attitude which father founder had. Let us step in to our founder's path to exercise our spirituality.

A. Jesuraj Silva,
Priest, Sri Lanka



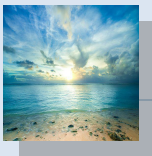


Internet Sites to be consulted

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Voluntas Dei Institute (U.S.A. District)	www.voluntasdeiusa.org
The Oblates Missionaries of Mary Immaculate	www.ommi-is.org
The Oblates	www.omiworld.org
The Missionary Recluses	www.reclusesmiss.org
Canadian Conference of Secular institutes	www.ccis-ccis.ca
The World Conference of Secular Institutes	www.cmis-int.org
Vatican	www.vatican.va

Where We are ...





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