



Prayer Series - Session 3: How to Start Praying – Relating to God

***{Start with reviewing the previous Meetings Challenge or discuss prior to sharing this week's challenge.}**

Opening Prayer:

Begin with a brief moment of silence shaking off any and all distractions or difficulties of the day and remembering that God is always with us.

Read: Isaiah 43:1-7

After the Reading Conclude with this prayer:

Heavenly Father, please help us to center our gaze on You. May we look deeply into Your eyes and rest in Your presence. {pause} Give us the ability to look past our own weaknesses so that we can see ourselves as You see us. We ask this all in Your holy name. Amen.

Reflection or Discussion Question:

1. What do you think/feel God is telling you in the scripture verses today?

YouTube Video: Fr. Mark Toups – Question 3 (6:15 Min) - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9FNZ-WuMkA>

Reflection or Discussion Questions:

2. What are some of your initial thoughts and feelings after watching the video?
3. What are some difficulties you have encountered while praying that keep you from acknowledging God's love and from receiving His gaze?
4. Do you find that you project your own doubts and guilt onto God and what He might be thinking of you?
5. Think of moments where you have gazed at your loved ones. How do you think this compares to the love God might have for you?
6. How does knowing that God loves us infinitely more than we love others change your view of praying?

Session Challenge:

Reflect on God's gaze upon you:

1. Take a moment at the beginning of your prayer time to pause and place yourself in God's presence. During this time imagine yourself looking into His eyes and see how precious you are to Him, His gentleness, His compassion. Rather than focusing on yourself, consider what is in God's eyes as He gazes upon You.
2. Share with the group any changes in perspective you have during your prayers.

Closing Prayer: (Leaders: We recommended offering time during the closing prayer for participants to offer personal intentions.)

Dear Lord, we thank You for Your loving gaze. We pray that we have the patience to allow You to see us as You always see us. Build in us a desire to spend time each day to share with You the love You share with us. In your holy name, Amen.