



JMJ

+

FS400 省會長家書八 (2016 年 4 月)

祈禱，默想，內心默觀，短頌

親愛的青年、使命伙伴、慈幼家庭的弟兄姊妹們，

願主的平安常與你們同在！復活節快樂！上個月，我們看到，為我們主保聖人方濟各沙雷氏來說，淨化或皈依是邁向虔誠的第一步。接下來的一步，是滋養我們與創造者及救贖者天主每日不間斷的深切共融，藉著祂的愛子我們的主耶穌基督。

祈禱 是我們與天主溝通的方式。祈禱就是與天主的溝通。用當下流行的話來講，祈禱就是 WhatsApp 天主，Facebook 天主。聖方濟各沙雷氏關於祈禱及其一些基本形式有些不得不說的話，讓我們來聆聽（Philothea II 1.2.12.13）『祈禱，它將我們的理智，放在天主智慧的光中，又將我們的意志，置於天主愛情的溫床。它會掃除理智的愚昧，又會驅散意志的薄弱。它是一道靈泉，流過我們的心田，滋潤我們的善意，洗刷我們的瑕疵，解除我們的口渴。』祈禱有口禱和心禱兩種主要形式。關於這兩種形式的祈禱，聖方濟各沙雷氏為我們提供了一個實用的『經驗法』：『無論心禱或口禱，在其開始的時候，都應存想天主親臨，這條規矩總別破壞，日久長了，你自會見到它的好處。』如何置身於天主的臨在？『在乎存想天主處處都在，亦即存想祂無所不在，換言之，在我們宇宙萬物之間，無處沒有天主，也就是說，處處有天主 [...] 而且祂以特殊的姿態住在你的心中，可謂是在你心中之心，在你神內之神。』

聖方濟各特別強調心禱的卓越地位，即現在通常所說的 **默想**。『祈禱之中，我特別勸你勤作心禱，尤其是擷取耶穌生平事蹟和祂的苦難作題材，更屬心禱的上乘。你若常以耶穌作為默想的對象，久而久之，自必心心念念，忘不了，離不開。當祂的形影時刻相隨的時候，你的言行也就跟他亦步亦趨了。祂是「照世之光」（若 8:12）』

藉著每日 **內心默觀**，我們力求『活在天主親臨之中』。對於聖方濟各，內心默觀是『神修進展最保險的法門。』那怎樣做？答案是『一天之內，不時存想：想想天主在做什麼？又想想自己在做什麼？這樣你將發現：天網恢恢，祂不僅時時鑒臨你，而且還處處愛護你。你不妨對祂說：天主啊，祢時時都在注視我，我何以很少關心祢？吾主啊，祢常常思念我，我何以很少懷想祢？我的靈魂呀，我的心呀，何處才是我們的歸宿？豈非天主才是我們的真歸宿嗎？然而，我們今之所處，究竟是不是這個真歸宿呢？』

幫助內心默觀的最有效方法是『強而有力的 **短頌** [突發短禱]』。『常用心之動念，簡短而熱切的動念，來仰慕天主：頌揚祂的美好，懇求祂的提攜，跪伏於耶穌的十字架下[...]這種突發式的祈禱方法，偉大的聖奧斯定非常看重，他嘗愷切地囑咐虔誠的白羅芭（Proba）夫人採用。何況，此種操練並不繁難，因為它能與日常工作同時進行，而且對工作又無妨礙。』

『虔誠之功，就在內心默觀和強而有力的短頌[突發短禱]：這兩種善功能頂補其他祈禱之不足，可是，你若不作這兩種善功，那就任何其他祈禱也無法補償這兩種祈禱之缺乏。不作好這兩項善功，談不上渡靜修生活，也搞不好勤勞生活。沒有它們，休息就等於懶惰，工作就等於苦惱，因此，我懇切勸你全心以赴，絕不可等閒視之。』

願在此復活佳節，你和我皆能不間斷地與主耶穌相融合，祂為我們受難死亡，並進入祂的光榮。

在耶穌瑪利亞若瑟及鮑思高神父內，

摯愛你們的省會長 斐林豐神父



JMJ
+

FS400 Provincial Letter 8 (April 2016)

Prayer, Meditation, Recollection, Short Sharp Prayers

Dear Young People, Dear Lay Mission Partners, Dear Brothers and Sisters of the Salesian Family,

The peace of the Lord be with you always! Happy Easter! As we saw last month, for our Patron St. Francis de Sales, Purification or Conversion is the first step on the way of Devotion. The next step is to nurture an uninterrupted and deep daily communication with God, our Creator and Redeemer, through his Beloved Son Jesus Christ Our Lord.

We communicate with God by means of **prayer**. Prayer is nothing but communication with God. In today's language, prayer is WhatsApping God, is Facebooking God. Let us listen to what St. Francis has to say about prayer and some of its basic forms (Philothea II 1.2.12.13) "Prayer places our understanding in the divine brightness and light. Prayer exposes our will to the warmth of heavenly love. There is nothing like prayer that so effectively purges our understanding of its ignorance and our will of its depraved affections". The two main forms of prayer are vocal prayer and mental prayer. Regarding both forms of prayer, St. Francis gives us a practical "rule of thumb": "Begin all your prayers, whether mental or vocal, in the presence of God. Abide by this rule without exception and you will soon see how profitable it is to you". How to place oneself in the presence of God? "Placing oneself in the presence of God consists in a lively and attentive apprehension of God's absolute presence. That is, God is in all things and in every place. There is not a place in the world in which He is not most truly present. [...] He is, in a most particular manner, in your heart and in the very centre of your spirit."

St. Francis stresses the pre-eminence of mental prayer, what we now usually call **meditation**. "Above all, I recommend to you mental prayer, the prayer of the heart, and particularly that which concerns the life and Passion of our Lord. By making Him often the subject of your meditation, your whole soul will be filled with Him. You will learn His ways and frame all your actions according to His model. He is 'the light of the world' (John 8:12)."

By practicing **recollection** throughout the day we strive to "live in the presence of God". For St. Francis, recollection is "one of the most assured means of spiritual advancement." How is it done? This is his answer: "In the course of the day recollect as often as you can that you stand in the presence of God. Consider what He does and what you are doing. You will find His eyes turned toward you and perpetually fixed upon you with an incomparable love. Then say to Him: 'O God, why do I not always turn my eyes toward You, as You always look on me? Why do You think so often of me, O my Lord, and why do I so seldom think of You? Where are we, O my soul? Our true place of rest is God, and where do we find ourselves?'"

The most efficacious way to foster recollection is the practice of "**short sharp prayers** [ejaculatory prayers]". "Make frequent aspirations to God, Philothea, by short but ardent movements of your heart; admire His beauty; implore His assistance; cast yourself in spirit at the foot of the Cross; adore His goodness... Ejaculatory prayer was strongly recommended by the great St. Augustine to the devout Lady Proba. There is no difficulty in this exercise, as it may be intermixed with our other affairs and occupations. These interior aspirations do not prevent but rather assist us in the work we are doing."

"The great work of devotion consists in the exercise of spiritual recollection and short sharp prayers [ejaculatory prayers]. The lack of all other prayers may be made good by these two; but the loss of these two can scarcely be repaired by any other means. Without them we cannot properly live the contemplative life, and we can but poorly lead active life. Without them repose is but idleness and work vexation. Therefore, I exhort you to embrace them with your whole heart without desisting from their practice."

Wishing you and me a happy Easter Season lived in constant union with the Lord Jesus who suffered, died, and entered his glory for us, in Jesus Mary Joseph StFrancis DonBosco, I am, Yours affectionately,

Fr. Lanfranco M. Fedrigotti, Provincial