

Office for Unity on Thursday, March 10, 2021

Meditation Text

Persevere in the place of the heart

by Father Michel Evdokimov

"Praying at all times in the Spirit, with all kinds of prayers and supplications," st. Paul writes. Far from being an activity limited to specific times [...], prayer is a permanent state of mind. State of the bride of the Canticle of Canticles who awaits the return of her beloved and does not stop thinking about him... How much more attractive man's outdoor activities seem to man than the prayerful activity with its sobriety, its aridity! The call of interiority is constantly interrupted by the fascination of the images and voices of this world. Constantly, it is necessary to descend into one's own depths to rekindle the spirit of zeal. Repeated with perseverance, this exercise prevents the soul from becoming numb. In an apothegm of the Desert Fathers, an old monk was on the verge of death. When he approached his bedside, one of his brothers keeping him company at the end of his life did not ask him the question that is usually asked: "How do you feel? He asked, "How is your prayer going? Do you really maintain it? Thus supported, the dying man was able to keep his mind clear until his last breath. Likewise, it was said of early Christians that when they met, they did not exchange a banal "how are you? but "how is your prayer going? ". Some spiritual advice to pray as if it were for the first time to renew the enthusiasm of the beginning and the fervor of the beginnings. One of them gravely warns: "If you do not succeed in prayer, do not hope to succeed in anything else. Because prayer is the root of everything."

Extract from: Michel Evdokimov, Ouvrir son coeur, Desclée De Brouwer, 2004, pp. 77-78

Intercessions

Prepared by our brothers and sisters in Puteaux, France.

(To be adapted according to location)

In union with our brothers and sisters of Puteaux in France and in the deep desire for Unity between our Churches, we turn to You, Lord, and we pray to You.

Chorus of intercession

1/ On Friday, March 4, 2022, the World Women's Day of Prayer (WPD) took place around the world. This ecumenical initiative of social action and prayer for disadvantaged populations was founded by Protestant women in the United States in 1887. This year's theme was prepared by the women of England, Wales and Northern Ireland: "A future to look forward to" (Jeremiah 29, 11).

Lord, we pray for all women involved in this movement not to tire of offering their talents, their time and their skills. Empower them to be bearers of hope and strengthen them in this constant concern to "inform in order to pray" and "to pray in order to act", - as the motto of the JMP stipulates - in a spirit of service.

2/ The current dramatic situation in Ukraine, in a country which brings together many Christian Churches, creates many divisions and sufferings of all kinds.

Lord, keep all Christians in this country united, open their hearts more to the concrete demands of the love of all our brothers and sisters in humanity. In your benevolence, make the Churches agents of unity and peace.

3/ More than a million Ukrainians are already refugees in neighboring countries.

Lord, come and support all those who organize themselves to give the necessary to Ukrainians fleeing the war. We pray especially for our brothers and sisters in the parish of Mistów (pronounced "Mistoof") in Poland who are hosting refugee families.