Characteristics of Prayerfulness

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- **When you Begin to Pray:**
  - Put yourself into the presence of God.
    - Ex: think of God present in your heart, picture Jesus there with you, visualize looking into God's eyes, look at the Eucharist if in Adoration
  - Create a "rite" of prayer for yourself.
    - Ex: light a candle, take a deep breath, sing a song, gaze at an icon

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Characteristics of Prayerfulness

- **While Praying:**
  - Focus on God, not you.
    - Where God is present, He is also hidden.
    - God cannot be found and possessed except by faith and love, because He does not want to be united to us in any way except love.
    - God begs for our love, but respects our freedom. If we are to walk into His presence, we can only do so through love.

Characteristics of Prayerfulness

- **While Praying:**
  - Remain in the present moment and allow God to find you right where you are.
  - Be open to God:
    - We are honest about who and what we are.
    - We aren't hiding from God.
    - We offer God our love freely, with no thought to our own benefit.
    - We open ourselves up to receive whatever God is willing to send.

Characteristics of Prayerfulness

- **While Praying:**
  - Right seeing--God is all around me, God is seeking me, God is here, now, will I stop hiding? Will I be honest with him?
  - Lay down all concerns. We stop trying to figure things out and just place them in God's hands.
  - Embrace stillness. Stop doing and thinking.

Characteristics of Prayerfulness

- **Time Spent Praying is FRUITFUL WASTE.**
  - We shouldn't expect to get anything "out of" prayer.
  - Our time is a gift, no strings attached.

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Characteristics of Prayerfulness

- Themes of prayer:
  - Prayer should be an act of LOVE.
  - Repentance: We trust in His love when we confess.
  - Adoration: Profound love, meant only for the Divine
    - Should consume most of our time in prayer
  - Petition: An act of loving trust in God's willingness to care for us
  - Thanksgiving: Our response to the generous love of God

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Characteristics of Prayerfulness

- Posture during prayer:
  - Prayer itself should not be a form of corporal penance.
    - Positions that are too uncomfortable and cause the body to be a constant distraction of pain are not good.
    - Rest in the Lord, physically, spiritually, and mentally.
    - Sometimes, however, it can be helpful to reinforce our inner attitude by taking on a certain position.
    - Our bodies are part of the prayer and can help our minds be more fully present

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Characteristics of Prayerfulness

- Posture during prayer:
  - St Dominic described 9 ways to pray. Here are 5:
    - Bow in humbleness before the altar of Christ.
    - Lay on the ground, flat on our face as we say, "Lord, have mercy on me, a poor sinner" as St. Dominic did.
    - Kneeling before the Lord in reverence.
    - Pray with your hands open and held before you, demonstrating your openness to God.
    - Stand with your arms stretched out as if nailed to the cross, demonstrating your willingness to suffer with Christ.

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Characteristics of Prayerfulness

- Remain Faithful To Prayer.
  - Prayer is usually an "appointment" we make with God and diligently keep. We might not feel anything, or even reach a level of calm or peace, but prayer is setting aside time for God and refusing to stand Him up.
  - We return to prayer even if it is dry or hard. We remain faithful.
  - Faithfulness to prayer is the major battle we will fight in this life.
    - The devil will work hard to keep you from prayer, for a person faithful to prayer is certainly lost to the devil.

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Characteristics of Prayerfulness

- Concluding Your Time of Prayer:
  - End with Thanksgiving, even when prayer was hard or dry.
  - Add a simple "rite" to conclude your prayer.
    - Ex: Say a Hail Mary, Kiss an Icon, Blow Out Your Candle.

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Characteristics of Prayerfulness

Journaling Questions

It's time to make a plan for your prayer routine:

When will I set up an "appointment" for daily prayer with God?

Where will I set up a small "chapel" that I can use daily for my prayer time?

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