

CHAPTER 5

THE LIFE OF PRAYER

The Prayer Life of the Brother

EMP Acts
Med. 62,2-3
Lk 11,1
Jn 14,23
Rm 8,15-
16,26

65. Prayer is primarily a gift which the Brothers receive from the Father, the Son and the Spirit. For their part, the Brothers welcome this gift in all the events of their daily life and respond to it in praise, thanksgiving, intercession, or by asking for forgiveness. They never tire of saying, “Lord, teach us to pray”.

D 17,4
Med. 37,2
Med. 95,1
MTR 1,1
MTR 4,1
MTR 5,1
MTR 9,2

66. The Brothers contemplate God’s saving action at work in the world and, in particular, in the midst of those who are confided to them, so as to be among them the “ambassadors of Jesus Christ” and the “communicators of his mysteries”.

It is through Christ, the unique mediator with the Father, that the Brothers present to God their own concerns, those of their students, of the people who are close to them, and indeed, those of the entire world.

D 9-11
Med. 159,1
PC 6,2
Can. 663,3

67. The Brothers find the principal sources for their prayer in Holy Scripture, the liturgy, and the challenges that come to them from their ministry, from the Church and from the world. They read and

meditate on the Word of God every day; they prolong this contact with the Lord in their spiritual reading.

67a. *The Brothers arrange their work in such a way as to devote to spiritual reading all the time necessary to deepen their faith. Their personal programme will provide for this.*

D 5,1
D 25,2
EMP
ch 2,3
Med. 70,3
Med. 104,2
Med. 179,3

68. Throughout the tasks which fill their day, the Brothers make an effort to remain united with God whose emissaries they are: they welcome him and serve him in other people.

They remain in union with God by frequently remembering his presence, by looking upon events with faith, by concern to bring a great purity of intention into the different aspects of their work and relationships, and by assuring periods of time for silence and more profound recollection.

68a. *“Live Jesus in our hearts! Forever!” is the usual invocation in the community; the Brothers see in it a reminder of the presence of the Lord who lives in their midst.*

D 42,2
Med. 80,2

68b. *The Brothers provide for moments of personal prayer during the course of the day, aware that this strengthens their willingness to be of service and enhances the quality of their apostolic action.*

Meditation

RC ch. 4
ch 4
EMP
Med. 33,1
Med. 78,1
Med. 129,2
Med. 159,2
Rm 13,14
Can. 663,
1-3
MTR 6,1

69. The Brothers should have a great love for meditation and they should look upon it “as the first and principal of their daily exercises and the one most capable of drawing down God’s blessing on all the others”.

In this prayer they set their minds on God and unite themselves to the person of Jesus Christ in his mysteries, his virtues and his teachings.

Each day they undertake “the ascent to God through meditation”, as apostles responsible for the salvation of those confided to them.

In this way, they hope to receive from the Lord the internal freedom and the spiritual discernment which their ministry requires, and the graces they need to work effectively for building up the kingdom of God.

The Eucharist

D 18,7
D 20,10
1 Co 11,26
Can. 663,2
Can. 897,
899

70. Every aspect of the Brother’s life is energised by the mystery of the Eucharist. As far as possible they participate in the celebration of it every day. There, in communion with the death and resurrection of Christ and listening to the Word of God, the Brothers are a community united in mind and heart in the same Spirit for the same mission.

art. 70a-71a - THE LIFE OF PRAYER

Can. 898

70a. *The community annual programme foresees a certain number of occasions when the Eucharist will be celebrated in a more personalised and festive way. It also provides for a celebration centred around the Eucharist on those days when it is not possible to have Mass.*

Can. 608
Can. 663,2
Can. 898

70b. *The oratory where the Blessed Sacrament is reserved provides the ideal setting for community prayer. There the Brothers also come individually to spend time in adoration.*

The prayer life of the community

D 20,9
Sc 83,2
90,1
Can. 663,3
Can. 1173-
1175

71. The Brothers meet together at least in the morning and in the evening to celebrate the liturgy of the hours in union with the praise and continual intercession of the Church. They may also organise different forms of prayer by which to express the life of their community.

71a. *The Brothers ensure the quality of their community prayer by having it well prepared, allowing sufficient time for it, and entrusting it to capable leaders. They share their petitions and their reflections. They give outward expression to their prayer but they also share the deeper reflection which silence makes possible.*

71b. *As members of a local church, the Brothers take part in the life of prayer of their parish, according to their availability and their talents.*

Can. 1247

71c. *The more flexible timetable on Sundays, holidays and during vacation periods always includes sufficient time for community prayer. This is also an opportunity for more prolonged personal prayer and for their religious development.*

71d. *The Brothers want their community to be a praying community open to all who wish to join them for prayer.*

72. Each Brother has the primary responsibility for his personal prayer. Each one and all together are jointly responsible for community prayer.

D 19,2

73. Ordinarily the Brothers give to God at least two hours of each day in meditation, the Eucharist, community vocal prayer, spiritual reading and personal prayer. In this way they nourish their life of faith and strengthen their religious and apostolic commitment.

73a. *At the beginning of each year, when they are setting up or revising the community programme, the Brothers regulate the order, times and rhythm of their prayer in community. Then they live out in practice what they have decided.*

When they are prevented from taking part in community prayer, they find ways to make up for it.

Asceticism and the spiritual life

D 15,2
D 53,2
Can. 664

74. The Brother's life of prayer, like the other aspects of his life as a consecrated person, will be possible and authentic only if it is rooted in a continual effort of conversion, affecting his relationship with God as well as his relationship with other people.

***74a.** Self-mastery and renunciation in following the example of Christ leads the Brothers to accept the demands of community life and observance of the Rule, as well as the fatigue that comes from their work, their suffering of soul and body, and the infirmities that come with advancing age.*

CL 8,464
CL 15, 83-86

***74b.** During the days and seasons of penitence, the Brothers unite themselves with the spirit of the Church by exterior and, especially by interior practices of mortification, as recommended by St. John Baptist de La Salle.*

RC ch. 16

75. The Brothers find in the daily examination of conscience, in spiritual direction, in the frequent reception of the sacrament of reconciliation and in the time of retreat, particularly the annual retreat,

opportunities to grow strong in charity and to persevere to the end in fidelity.

Can. 664
MTR 13,1
CL 15,75-76

75a. *Every day in God's presence the Brothers examine their conscience by reflecting on their lives in the light of the gospel.*

Can. 630,1

75b. *In order better to discern the will of God in his regard, each Brother is invited to seek an experienced spiritual director, especially in the most decisive moments of his life, as a companion for his spiritual journey.*

Can. 630
Can. 634

75c. *The Brothers make frequent use of the sacrament of reconciliation. There they meet Christ and learn from him how to be forgiving towards everyone. They willingly take part in penitential celebrations that emphasise the community aspect of this sacrament.*

CL 15,79-80
Can. 663,5
Can. 765

75d. *Each year the Brothers take part in a spiritual retreat of adequate length in order to renew their union with God and their zeal in the apostolate. Periodically they spend some time in recollection for the same purpose. The Districts and communities determine how these periods for renewal are to be organized.*

On these, and all other such occasions, it is for the Brother Visitor or the Brother Director, as the

case may be, to authorise speakers to address the Brothers of the District or their community.

Institute devotions

M 150,3
Can. 663,4

76. The Brothers have a special devotion to Mary, Mother of Jesus Christ and of the Church. They discover the meaning of their own consecration in the total “Yes” that she spoke to God. They learn from her how to be docile towards the Spirit who brings them to the likeness of Christ by faith, hope and love, and so leads them towards the Father from whom all good flows and to whom all apostolic activity is directed.

D 53,3
Med. 150,3
Med. 151,3
Can. 663,4

76a. *Mindful of the recommendations of the Church, and faithful to the traditions of the Institute, the Brothers honour the Virgin Mary each day, whether personally or in community, by the recitation of the rosary or some other practice of devotion to Mary which is in keeping with the guidelines of the Church.*

B 1°

77. The Brothers find a model for their whole life in St. Joseph. He responded in confidence and faith to the fidelity God showed his people; he was a helpmate to Mary; he participated in the work of salvation by providing for the upbringing and education of Jesus; he was faithful to death in his humble role as foster

father. The Brothers invoke him, always remembering that St. John Baptist de La Salle placed his Institute under his protection.

D 53,3

78. The Brothers pay special homage to St. John Baptist de La Salle as their Founder. They immerse themselves in his writings and the lessons to be learned from his life. They make every effort to imitate him in his submission to the will of God, his love for the Church and his devotedness towards people. They entrust to him their fidelity to their own vocation and the future of the Institute.

79. The Brothers also honour the beatified and canonised members of their Institute. Inspired by their example, the Brothers count on their intercession to procure in faith and zeal, day after day, the glory of God as they work for the salvation of those who are entrusted to them

Our deceased Brothers

Med. 185

80. The Brothers remember faithfully their deceased Brothers, especially those whom they have known and loved. The prayers and suffrages they offer for them show that there is a communion between those still on their journey and those already resting in the peace of Christ.

art. 80a-80c - THE LIFE OF PRAYER

80a. *Once a week, each community remembers the deceased Brothers during community prayer and the celebration of the Eucharist*

AD ch. 8

80b. *The Centre of the Institute arranges to have a Mass celebrated every day for the deceased Brothers, relatives, affiliated members and benefactors. Each year during the course of the District Retreat, and in all the communities during the month of November, or on the occasion of the death or anniversary of a deceased confrere, the Brothers offer their participation in the Eucharist for these same intentions.*

80c. *The communities and Districts are careful to provide for every deceased Brother the suffrages which are due to him, according to what is specified in The Administrator's Directory.*