

# ARRR: ACKNOWLEDGE, RELATE, RECEIVE, RESPOND

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## **A**CKNOWLEDGE IS SIMPLY TO BE AWARE.

Prayer is a relationship. It is a personal relationship of growing intimacy with the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. It is a dialogue of love. Like any relationship, intimacy with God grows as I come to know and love Him and as I experience being known and loved by Him.

In order to receive the gift of greater intimacy with God, I must first become aware of what is transpiring in my heart. **Thus, I acknowledge (notice, see, name, attend to, become aware of) the thoughts, feelings, and desires that are moving in my heart.**

I want to notice – not analyze, critique, prioritize, judge or filter, but simply notice – what is happening in my heart. This is a contemplative noticing, a gazing with love upon what is there: the good, the bad, and the ugly; the significant and the trivial; the noble and the petty; the excellent and the messed-up.

What am I thinking? How do I feel? What do I desire?

## **R**ELATE IS TO TELL JESUS EVERYTHING!

I gather what is in my heart and honestly relate it to God, to tell God all about it, to talk to the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit about what is found in my heart, to entrust what is in my heart to God.

As I honestly entrust my thoughts, feelings, and desires to God, I am aware, in faith, that God is present, that He listens, that He sees, that He cares and takes interest in me.

It's not too silly; it's not too unimportant; He already knows, but I need to tell Him. Even if I have told Him the same thing a million times, if I find it in my heart, I need to tell Him again.

Thus I share the THOUGHTS, FEELINGS, AND DESIRES in my heart as I become aware of them.

## **R**ECEIVE FROM JESUS, OUR FATHER, THE HOLY SPIRIT, MARY...

I depend completely on God for every good thing. His love is a gift freely given to me at every single moment of my day. Pope Benedict XVI, explains: "In the power of his Spirit, Jesus is always present in our hearts, quietly waiting for us to be still with him, to hear his voice, to abide in his love, and to receive 'power from on high,' enabling us to be salt and light for our world" (July 20, 2008).

This is God's work, not mine. I acknowledge and relate with the light of the Holy Spirit to open my heart to receive God's love and life. I notice how my thoughts, feelings, and desires change and are made new.

Thoughts, feelings, and desires that draw me to God ARE God pouring His love, life, and grace into me.

## **R**ESPOND TO GIFTS WE RECEIVE.

Our heart's natural response to God's love is gratitude. Receiving God impels us – with great ease and simplicity – to respond. A response flowing from the experience of the love of God is accompanied by joy and is immensely fruitful, contrasting the tedious and limited results of our exertion alone, however well-intentioned we may be. It is impossible to separate our authentic response from the action of God's love received in our heart.