

## Relate – “gaze turned heavenward”

Sometimes we can get the impression that prayer is about self-awareness and the goal is self-actualization. This misses the heart of prayer – it’s a relationship. Prayer is about noticing the presence of another. We know when someone is looking upon us. In fact, relationships begin with a look. The young people of Boystown, Neb., are always learning social skills: making introductions, introducing oneself or concluding a conversation. Every social skill begins with: “Look at the person.” Looking in the eyes of another is the golden rule for beginning a social and relational life. Something is going terribly wrong when we cannot even look at someone.

Even when we are not returning the gaze, certain thoughts, feelings and desires will arise when that person is gazing upon us. For example, when

our parents see us, certain thoughts of doing well or doing right may come up. When our coach is watching us, we may become preoccupied with executing a play. When our friends are watching us, we may notice thoughts and feelings of ease and acceptance. When strangers gaze upon us, we may feel uncomfortable or even fearful. When beginning our prayer, it is essential to consider “*how* God our Lord looks upon you.” Without this relational gaze and awareness turned toward God, prayer would resemble a navel-gazing, an exercise ending in self-awareness instead of relationship. How often do we miss the chance to share everything with God? If someone were to ask God, what does God know of you *based upon what you have shared*, how much would God have to say?

### PAUSE ... PRAY with Luke 24:1-35

Pause with God gazing upon you with love and longing to speak to your heart; observe Jesus with the men on the road to Emmaus. Pray with Luke 24:1-35 ... “*What sort of things?*” Consider: Is Jesus intrusive? Is Jesus interested in their conversation? Is there anything important that Jesus is gently inviting you to share with Him? Let Him invite your telling of everything. What happens when everything is shared? What happens when you feel like, “*Are you the only one who has not heard?*” Does our frustration discourage Jesus? Is Jesus eager to hear more?



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The Angelus

## Receive – receive – receive

Notice what happens on the Road to Emmaus. (Luke 24) The two disciples were walking on the road, looking downcast. Jesus drew near without their recognizing Him. He asks about their discussion on the way. He wants to hear from them, but they respond with a flippant: “Are you the only one who has not heard of the things ... ?” The attitude would put someone “off” in most instances. However, Jesus does not retreat from the resistance. Jesus presses into the sorrow: “What sort of things?” Jesus wants to hear the

particulars of their experience.

The Internet is filled with parents’ videos of their children. Parents love to see and hear the lives of their children. A parent may watch their child play in the yard, but the parent will still ask: “What were you doing outside?” Similarly, we love to hear our loved ones tell the same stories again and again. In other words, whether it be a child or close friend, we enjoy hearing our loved ones reveal themselves. Their disclosure is a delight for us. We enjoy the details and idiosyncrasy of what

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