

Prayer of the Heart: “For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.”
(Lk 12:34)

The Heart - The center of our being: thoughts, feelings, emotions, attitudes, desires, hopes and dreams, fears and worries. It is the seat of the human person. In the deepest depth it is where we receive our identity from God.

Level 1: Numerous fleeting thoughts, feelings, reactions and affective responses. This is essentially the surface level of our heart. Things are constantly moving through and acting upon this place of our heart. Most often we are moved about, rather tossed about by these fleeting movements based upon what is going on around us. (Peter walking on water towards Jesus).

Level 2: This level of our heart is deeper and more established. Here we find psychological dispositions, thought patterns and habits of reacting. Here is where vice and virtue are found, coping mechanisms and perceptions of ourselves and others.

Level 3: Here is where God dwells by the gift of our Baptism. It is the inner-sanctuary, the holy of holies within. Here God whispers His words of love and mercy, constantly pouring out His love into our being that we might know that we are His children, His Beloved. The enemy seeks to attack here through level 1 and 2 in order to establish our identity in something or someone other than God. (The mountain vs. the weather)

Acknowledge: What is going on in my heart? What have I been thinking about, feeling or hoping for today? Have certain memories repeatedly passed through my interior thinking? What has been the prevailing attitude or disposition of my heart today, this week, and this month? Simply put, what is going on inside me?

Relate: Pray. The most important thing to remember and bring yourself back to is to keep it simple. Speak to the Father, Son or Holy Spirit like a child; with honest and forthright language. Speak to Him how you actually speak. Ultimately the invitation/movement here is to place whatever you have acknowledged into the hands of God, to empty your heart into His heart.

Receive: “In the Sacred Scriptures the Father who is in heaven comes lovingly to meet his children, and talks with them. And such is the force and power of the Word of God that it is the Church’s support and strength, imparting robustness to the faith of its daughters and sons and providing food for their souls.” (*Dei Verbum*, 21.)

Respond: Be attentive to the overflowing response of your heart. This is much more about an interior response (i.e. Psalm 111: gratitude, joy, contrition, renewed zeal for prayer etc.) than figuring out some exterior action of what ‘I can do for God’.