

Today's 1st Reading and Gospel are about PRAYER and PRAYING. Here are some letters to God, by children, from a book called Dear God. They serve as a useful starting point to reflect upon an important part of our spiritual lives.

Dear God: What's happening up there where you push all the buttons? See ya. Terrence, age 10.

I know you care about me God. That makes me feel good even if I don't feel so good about my self. Love always, Amanda, age 8.

Dear God: How do you find a mom and dad for each kid? Do you match them up by their religions, what colors they are or by cities? Or maybe something else very different. Maybe you just use a big lottery. I must have won kind of but my friend Billy did not do so good. Please help him. Love, Paul, age 9.

Dear Lady God: I love you. And I want to thank you for making the color pink. Pink is a beautiful creation. I think in heaven you must have made lots of pink: pink cushions, pink houses, even pink clouds. I just hope that the boys don't feel too out of place. That would be too bad. I love you lots. Liz Marie, age 7.

Mister God: Why don't you buy a big microphone and loud speakers so that we can hear you better down here? Think about it, please. We really need some changes. Alexander, age 10.

Dear God: I know that you made all kinds of people. When I suggested this in religious school my teacher told me I was wrong. You should be more careful about who you hire to teach your stuff. Yours truly yours, Marci, age 11.

These letters could also be called prayers. Each child is them self. They express a comfortable and friendly relationship with God. They use simple language...just as they are....nothing fancy, nothing long, but honest, direct, and trusting. They presume God is listening.

In our 1st Reading Abraham speaks with God....is praying. Abraham keeps the conversation going because he passionately believes in what he is praying. And God listens. God hears. And God is influenced. Abraham is honest, direct and trusting.

In the Gospel, Jesus teaches us a specific prayer: the Lord's Prayer. He also is encouraging us to be childlike; to be direct, honest and trusting; nothing fancy. We don't have to impress God. Why not? Because we are God's beloved daughters and sons. God loves us, cherishes us, and delights in us.

This week when we pray, let God know what is in our heart, soul, mind and thoughts. Share with Jesus our feelings, desires, concerns and needs. Ask the Holy Spirit for guidance, support, strength, wisdom, even a sense of humor.

Be like the children whose letters we heard moments ago: be our self; be honest; be direct; and be trusting. Be like Pope John XXIII who prayed every night, even before he became Pope, "Lord, I have done all I can for the day. It's now time for you to take over. Good night!"