

Augustinian Prayer

For the NF Personality Preference

Of all the personality types, the NF needs more time in prayer and quiet meditation than any of the others. Such time is not a luxury but a necessity for personal growth and development in relationship with God. Allow yourself the time you will need for this prayer to be most effective.

In Augustinian prayer, you will use your creative imagination to transpose the words of scripture to your situation today. You will try to imagine what meaning the scriptures would have if Jesus or God or the Holy Spirit appeared and spoke them to you at this moment. You will try to think of the words of the Bible as if they were a letter from God addressed to you personally. Only secondarily will you be concerned about the original, historical meaning of the scripture. Your primary concern will be to discern what meaning these words have for you today.

To be fully effective, Augustinian prayer should consist of a dialogue between you and God. (You can do this in your mind, but a notebook is an invaluable help in the process.) This can best be accomplished by using the four steps of the *lectio divina*. First, listen attentively to what God is telling you in the words of scripture by reading between the lines to discern the deeper meaning contained within the words. Then reflect prayerfully upon their meaning and try to apply this eternal wisdom to your situation today. Next, respond to God's Word with appropriate personal feelings and dialogue. Finally, remain quiet and still in order to be open to any new insights that your intuition brings forth.

As an one with an NF temperament, you will probably find this form of prayer to come very naturally and will probably spend the most time on the last two steps, for it is in these that the dominant intuitive and feeling aspects of your personality are most active.

Other personality types may need to use more energy to activate their intuitive and feeling functions, so they will need to be well rested and allow ample time for this type of prayer.

AN EXAMPLE

Read Isaiah 43:1-7. Change the words "Jacob" and "Israel" to your own first name. Try to imagine God speaking these words directly to you. What meaning would they have for you in your present situation? Try to transpose the message from God to yourself today. What is God saying to you in the words, "fear not"? What fears do you have? Water and fire were the two great dangers which aroused the fears of ancient people. What are the greatest dangers you face in your life? What is God telling you to do in time of danger? Imagine Jesus saying to you now, "You are precious in my eyes, and I love you," and "Fear not, for I am with you." How do you sense this to be true in your own situation today?

ANOTHER EXAMPLE

Read 1 Corinthians 13:4-13. Put your own name in the passage each time the word "love" appears. How authentic would these words be to you? What do you need to change in order to make them authentic? Begin a dialogue with Jesus about your failures in love, and ask him what he wants you to do.