

PRAYER OF INTERCESSION

A Christian community lives through the intercession of its members or else it dies.

.....When I pray for a brother, no matter what pettiness or ill he does to me, I can no longer condemn him or hate him. As odious or unbearable as his face may be to me, during the intercession it takes on the aspect of a brother for whom Christ died, the aspect of a pardoned sinner. What a soothing discovery for the Christian is intercession : there can be no more antipathy, tension or personal discord over which we cannot triumph insofar as it depends on us. Intercession is a purifying bath into which every day the believer and the community must plunge. It may sometimes mean a very hard struggle with a certain one of our brethren, but the promise of victory is inherent to it.

"Lord, act Yourself on him, according to Your severity and Your goodness." To intercede means to give to our brother the benefit of the same right which we have received ourselves ; the right to present ourselves before the Christ in order to partake in his mercy.

Through this we see that our intercession is a duty which we owe every day to God and to our brothers. To refuse our intercession to our neighbor is to refuse him the most Christian of duties. We see also that intercession is not a general, vague thing but absolutely a concrete act. It is a matter of praying for certain people, for certain difficulties and the more precise the intercession, the more fruitful it becomes.