Thursday of the First Week of Lent

Gospel text (*Mt* 7:7-12): Jesus said to his disciples; "Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks, receives; and the one who seeks, finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened (…). If you then, who are wicked, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give good things to those who ask him (…)».

"Vocal prayer" (personal/communitarian) and "continuous prayer"

EDITORIAL TEAM evangeli.net (based on texts by Benedict XVI)
(Città del Vaticano, Vatican)

Today, we consider two expressions of prayer. On one side God's presence, which means being internally and continuously with God in a silent way, which, on the other side, needs nourishment: the vocal prayer, which expresses itself with words, images and thoughts.

This vocal prayer must spring especially out of our heart, our pains, hopes, joys and sufferings; out of the shame for our sins, as well as out of gratitude for the good, thus being a wholly personal prayer. But we also need the support of those prayers which have shaped the meeting of all the Church with God (without this help, our personal prayer and our image of God become subjective and finally are more the reflection of ourselves than of the living God).

—In the prayer's formulas which at first arose from Israel's faith and afterwards from the faith of those who pray as members of the Church we learn to know God and to know ourselves: they are a prayer school.