



Food for Thought
The Lord Answers Our Prayers

**And I say to you, ask, and it will be given to you....
(Luke 11:9)**

Prayer is a conversation with the Lord—two-way communication. Though we will not hear a voice telling us what to do, the Lord does answer our prayers. We may not recognize the answers as such because the Lord answers our prayers in a variety of ways. For example, we may feel more hopeful about a difficulty we are facing. Or we may have new ideas that help us do more effective problem-solving. The Rt. Rev. Brian W. Keith writes that “All our direct answers can be found in the Word. But prayer helps us to see truths that we previously had not understood or remembered. It also brings us peace when we seem to be surrounded by problems, so that we then have the strength to go out and face all our difficulties.”

For effective two-way communication, it is essential that the participants listen to what the other is saying. After praying to the Lord, we need to be quiet and listen for the Lord’s answer. As the Rev. Christopher R. J. Smith writes in an article on prayer, “Without fail, then, the Lord does answer our prayer every time, even if the answer is ‘No!’ The answer, however, may not be heard because we are not listening.... It may have been answered, but in a way we had not looked for or expected. We may also have missed the answer simply for not keeping still to wait for the reply!”

One thing we can be confident of, sincere prayers are heard in heaven whether they are vocalized or silent. When we are in need of help, earnest pleas in our thoughts and especially our affections for what is good and true are heard as cries in heaven (see *Arcana Coelestia* 9202). It is comforting to know that the hosts of heaven await our petitions and stand ready to give us aid when we need it the most.