

Excerpt from

Benedict XVI. *Spe Salvi (Saved in Hope)*. Libreria Editrice Vaticana, Vatican City: 2007, #34.

For prayer to develop this power of purification, it must on the one hand be something very personal, an encounter between my intimate self and God, the living God. On the other hand it must be constantly guided and enlightened by the great prayers of the Church and of the saints, by liturgical prayer, in which the Lord teaches us again and again how to pray properly. Cardinal Nguyen Van Thuan, in his book of spiritual exercises, tells us that during his life there were long periods when he was unable to pray and that he would hold fast to the texts of the Church's prayer: the Our Father, the Hail Mary and the prayers of the liturgy [27]. Praying must always involve this intermingling of public and personal prayer. This is how we can speak to God and how God speaks to us. In this way we undergo those purifications by which we become open to God and are prepared for the service of our fellow human beings. We become capable of the great hope, and thus we become ministers of hope for others. Hope in a Christian sense is always hope for others as well. . . . It is an active hope also in the sense that we keep the world open to God. Only in this way does it continue to be a truly human hope.

27. *Testimony of Hope*. (Boston: Pauline Books & Media, 2000), p 121ff.