

PRAYING IS NO EASY MATTER

I received the following email from a directee recently (Used with permission.)

"I just found something from Henri Nouwen that I think explains why I find prayer so hard.



"Praying is no easy matter. It demands a relationship in which you allow someone other than yourself to enter into the very center of your person, to see there what you would rather leave in darkness, and to touch there what you would rather leave untouched."

- Henri J.M. Nouwen

I found myself thinking that we sometimes play cat and mouse with God. We don't want to go somewhere in our prayer because it is too painful or shameful to be there with God. We pretend that God doesn't know about that thing – that place that we are keeping all to ourselves. In reality we know that God knows. It is we who are afraid to go there. Yet sometimes when we are willing to take the risk and venture to touch those places, we are in touch with the very places that God wants to touch us in more deeply, and to heal. As spiritual directors we are sometimes afforded the amazing privilege of accompanying people as they are called gather up the courage to go to that place of healing. At other times we have the gift of loving, accepting, companionship from our own director as God calls us to allow his light to shine into our darkness.

Tom Bell