

Fr. Ed Hays, Learning to pray -- Part 1

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Fr. Ed Hays

Episode 1: Learning to pray (24 min.)

Over the years, Fr. Hays has prayed alongside Jews at the Wailing Wall, beside Buddhists in ashrams and with Hindus in Himalayan caves. "The experiences opened me to the catholicity, the universality of prayer and of the search for holiness," he tells Tom Fox. What's necessary to see god? You must have a pure heart. Wow. I was blown away. It was the exact same words as Jesus. ? That's only one small experience that I have found repeated over and over. A great truth that I had found in my own religion, could be found in other religions too." He also talks about building a church in a horse barn (13:30). Fr. Hays says an addiction to storytelling is in human DNA. That's why Jesus taught in parables.

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Learning to pray



After 10 years of being a priest, Fr. Ed Hays approached his archbishop to ask for a three-month

sabbatical. His plan was to spend the time in a Trappist monastery. Much to Hay's surprise, Archbishop Ignatius Strecker wasn't keen on the idea. "Three months isn't long enough," Hays recalls the archbishop saying.

"Wander around the world and pray with all kinds of people, that's the way to learn how to pray," Strecker said. That set Hays on to 40-year odyssey.

Read Tom Fox's profile of Fr. Ed Hays in the Dec. 21 issue of *National Catholic Reporter*:

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