Relationship and Prayer

What does relationship have to do with prayer?

First, we need to know who we are:
* Husband, wife, child, mother, father, Godparent, grandmother, 
grandfather, uncle, aunt, Secular Franciscan, clergy, farmer, carpenter, 
salesperson, physician, educator, homemaker, retired, etc.
* Introvert or extrovert

[Francis was a friar, deacon, friend, confidant, son, introvert etc.]

Where do we like to pray?
* Church, home, in the backyard, in the woods, sitting in the car, 
  washing dishes, feeding the animals, etc.

[Francis liked to pray in Churches, out in the fields, in caves, 
in people’s homes, with his brothers, etc.]

When do we pray?
* On Sundays and Holy Days at Mass
* When happy
* When needing a favor
* When there is a crisis
* When mad

[Francis prayed most of the time. He saw that everything in his life 
was connected to his loving Father and he gave praise and honor to that fact.]

For whom do we pray?
* Parents
* Children
* Neighbors
* Relatives
* Strangers
* Enemies
* Secular Franciscans
* Franciscan family
* Clergy
* People involved in an accident

[Francis prayed for everyone and everything. If you look at the Canticle of the Sun, 
you’ll see that Francis prayed in gratitude for: brother sun, sister moon, brother wind, 
sister water, brother fire, sister mother earth, and even for sister bodily death.]

To whom do we pray?
* God the Father
* Jesus the Son
* Holy Spirit
* Saints
* Relatives
* Friends

[Francis prayed to: most high glorious God; Lord Jesus Christ, Creator & Redeemer; the Almighty King; the Lamb; Great and wonderful Lord; God almighty; Merciful Savior.]

So, we know who we are, where we like to pray, when we pray, for whom we pray, and to whom we pray. Putting all of this together, we draw the conclusion that we must be in relationship with all of these so that we are praying with our whole selves. It is not outside of ourselves; it is part of our very being. We enter into the sacred so that our lives can be touched by God and we can be transformed into people who are trying our best to be more and more Christ-like. That is why we encounter the Sacrament of Reconciliation so that we are gifted with the graces we need to turn away from sin and be faithful to the Gospel. We are all called to be holy and to mirror the love of God to others.

Why was prayer important to St. Francis?
What can we learn from how and where St. Francis prayed?