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- 1 One of the world's greatest musicians, Ludwig van Beethoven, began to lose his hearing when he was only 26. This was particularly tragic for someone so gifted in using sound as music. When he realised he could not be cured of his deafness, he wrote the following prayer. As we hear his words, we can pray for those who are going through difficulties at this time:
- 2 **O God, give me strength
to be victorious over myself.
O guide my spirit
and raise me up
from these dark depths,
so that
I may fearlessly struggle upward
in fiery flight.
For it is you alone, Lord,
who understand me
and can inspire me. Amen.**
- 3 Part of Beethoven's 9th Symphony (which is called "The Choral") has become the Anthem of today's E.U. - the European Union. When this symphony was first performed in Vienna on this day in 1824, Beethoven was completely deaf. During the performance he faced the orchestra and, before each of the four parts (or "movements") of the music, he beat the speed (or "tempo") to let the conductor know how fast the music should be played. In his last years, his only experience of his own music was not through hearing, but through watching the musicians, imagining what they were playing.
- 4 At the end of this symphony, the audience stood and applauded enthusiastically, but Beethoven could not hear them; someone turned him round to face the audience so that he could see their appreciation of his music.
- 5 Beethoven's last words before dying are said to have been: "*I will hear in heaven.*"

This is an excerpt from the page of this date in
'Praying Each Day of the Year',
a 3-volume book
by Nicholas Hutchinson, FSC.

For details:

<http://www.matthew-james.co.uk/>

Could make use of a search engine
to research this topic further.

This material is part of
the prayer and education website
of the De La Salle Brothers
in Great Britain:

www.prayingeachday.org