

What is Prayer?

Prayer is the raising of one's mind and heart to God or the requesting of good things from God." But when we pray, do we speak from the height of our pride and will, or "out of the depths" of a humble and contrite heart? He who humbles himself will be exalted; *humility* is the foundation of prayer. Only when we humbly acknowledge that "we do not know how to pray as we ought," are we ready to receive freely the gift of prayer. "Man is a beggar before God." CCC 2559



Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and you shall find; knock, and it shall be opened to you. He shall give good things to them that ask him. Matthew 7:7

For me, prayer is a surge of the heart; it is a simple look turned toward heaven, it is a cry of recognition and of love, embracing both trial and joy.
St. Therese of Lisieux

The Lord, desires and wills to pour forth his graces upon us, but will not give them except to him who prays: 'God wishes to give, but only gives to him who asks.'

St. Augustine,

Prayer is necessary it is not an option! Just as we need food to survive physically, we need food to survive spiritually as St. Augustine tells us: "Prayer is also called the food of the soul, because the body cannot be supported without food; nor can the soul, be kept alive without prayer: 'As the flesh is nourished by food, so is man supported by prayers.' Prayer is how we come to know God and to nurture our relationship with Him. All friendships and relationships need time and effort. Our relationship with God is no different. We cannot live spiritually without God- talking with Him; listening to Him; praising Him; and just being in His presence. He longs for us more than we long for Him. He takes great delight in us as His children. It is important to set aside specific time each day to pray as well as lifting our hearts and minds to the Lord throughout our day. The Church invites the faithful to regular prayer: daily prayers, the Liturgy of the Hours, Sunday Eucharist, the feasts

Expressions of Prayer

Vocal Prayer is an essential element of the Christian life as Jesus Himself taught us. As human beings we are body and spirit so need to express our feelings externally. Yet it is most important that the heart should be present to him to whom we are speaking in prayer: "Whether or not our prayer is heard depends not on the number of words, but on the fervor of our souls."

St. John Chrysostom

Meditation is above all a quest. The mind seeks to understand the why and how of the Christian life, in order to adhere and respond to what the Lord is asking. We are usually helped by books: the Sacred Scriptures, particularly the Gospels, holy icons, liturgical texts of the day or season, writings of the spiritual fathers, works of spirituality, the great book of creation, and that of history the page on which the "today" of God is written.

Contemplative Prayer Contemplative prayer is the simple expression of the mystery of prayer. It is a gaze of faith fixed on Jesus, an attentiveness to the Word of God, a silent love. It achieves real union with the prayer of Christ to the extent that it makes us share in his mystery.

CCC 2697-2724

Resources for Prayer

Bible – especially the Gospels

Hungry for God, Ralph Martin

Prayer Primer, Thomas Dubay, S.M.

Fulfillment of All Desire, Ralph Martin

Catholic Family Book of Prayers, Our Sunday Visitor

The Illustrated Rosary, Regina Press

The Rosary, Chain of Hope, Fr. Benedict Groeschel

Imitation of Christ, Thomas a Kempis

Catechism of the Catholic Church

Miracle Hour – Linda Schubert

Websites:

www.salvationhistory.com

www.catholic-forum.com

www.domestic-church.com

www.holyspiritinteractive.net

Called to Study . . .

You mean there's homework involved???

"Let us know, let us press on to know the LORD"

Hosea 6:3

Yes, there is study involved in the life of faith but getting to know the Lord and His ways is never a drudgery! When we love someone we are eager to spend time with them; to get to know them through and through; to honor them; to please them; and to be a reflection of goodness. In studying our Catholic faith through the Scriptures and the teachings of the Church we come to know our Father in Heaven, His Son, Jesus and our Advocate, the Holy Spirit. Study of our faith draws us closer to our Lord and the Truth so for this reason we are called to a lifetime of study! There is always more to know about God. Pray for a deep unending hunger to know and live the Truth and commit to daily study through Scripture, the Sacraments, the teachings of the Church and the lives of the saints.

"and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free."

John 8:32

Study Resources

Resources available through Ste. Marie Bookstore

The Bible—New American or Revised Standard Version

You Can Understand the Bible—Peter Kreeft

Pathways to Scripture—Damasus Winzen

The How-To Book of the Mass—Michael Dubruiel

Catholicism for Dummies- Fr. John Trigilio

For more advanced Study . . .

Introduction to Catholicism: A Complete Course -Emmet Flood

Our Moral Life In Christ: A Complete Course- James Socias

The History of the Church: A Complete Course -Peter V. Armenio

Understanding the Scriptures: A Complete Course on Bible Study- Scott Hahn

A man's mind plans his way, but the LORD directs his steps."

Proverbs 16:9