

CATHOLIC PRAYER

Prayer is our response to God and creates a stronger relationship between us and the Father. We cannot be a friend of God and truly know Him unless we spend time in conversation with Him through prayer.

“Prayer is the raising of one’s mind and heart to God or the requesting of good things from God.”

-Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC) 2559

“Prayer is not asking. Prayer is putting oneself in the hands of God, at His disposition, and listening to His voice in the depth of our hearts.”

-Saint Mother Teresa

The Eucharist contains and expresses all forms of prayer, it is “the pure offering” of the whole Body of Christ to the glory of God’s name (CCC 2643). It is in the Eucharist that we are able to offer our full response to God’s call here on earth.

FORMS OF PRAYER

BLESSING & ADORATION

(CCC 2626-28)

- Expresses the basic movement of Christian prayer
- It is an encounter between God & man
- In blessing, God’s gift and man’s acceptance of this gift are united in dialogue to one another
- Prayer of blessing is man’s response to God’s gifts
- God gives us the grace of the Holy Spirit to continue to bless us
- Adoration is the first attitude of man acknowledging he is a creature standing before his Creator
- Our way to show homage to our Creator and King in respectful silence

PRAYER OF PETITION OR SUPPLICATION

(CCC 2629-33)

- Form of prayer many of us are most familiar and comfortable with
- By prayer of petition we express awareness of our relationship with God
- We are sinners and prayer of petition is already a turning back to Him and away from sin
- Asking God to hear and answer our prayer
- Begin by asking forgiveness
- Petition is centered on a desire and search for the Kingdom to come
- We understand that every need can become the object of petition when we share in God’s saving love

PRAYER OF INTERCESSION

(CCC 2634-36)

- “Leads us to pray as Jesus did”—we learn to pray as Christ did; praying for those most in need
- Christ interceded with the Father for all men, especially for sinners, we too can intercede for others to draw them closer to Christ
- Asking for the needs of others, even those who may have done us harm

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

(CCC 2637-38)

- Gratitude for all circumstances we have been given
- The prayer of the Church that we celebrate in the Eucharist
- Every event and need can become an offering of thanksgiving
- In thanksgiving we offer our thanks to God, as our response to God for all He has given each of us

PRAYER OF PRAISE

(CCC 2639-43)

- This form recognizes that God is God, and acknowledges that God is who He is. We praise God because He is
- Gives us a chance to share in the blessed happiness with all those who love God for who He is in faith before seeing Him in glory
- Embraces all the other forms of prayer and leads our prayers to our source and goal: “the one God, the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we exist”
- First, we must praise and acknowledge there is one, true God, before we can ever speak to Him in prayer

LITURGICAL YEAR AND EXAMPLES OF PRAYER

Shaping our prayer around the various seasons of the liturgical prayer can create a more meaningful and deeper prayer life. We can use any prayers at any time during the year, but the following provides prayers to use during the various liturgical seasons that may prove to have a more meaningful impact.

Advent: Time for spiritual growth and reflection to prepare our hearts before the celebration of Christ's birth.

Examples of prayer during this season

- Advent reflection booklet to give us a daily reflection and scripture
- Advent Stations of the Cross: <http://www.liturgies.net/Advent/adventstations.htm>.
- Novena: devotional praying, consisting of private or public prayers repeated for nine successive days or weeks. Praymorenovenas.com or for a more immediate need: Flying-Novena-Mother-Teresa.
- Ignatian Prayer: Imaginative, reflective, and personal prayer that includes a daily examen: Ignatian-prayer/.

Christmas: Time for rejoicing in the birth of Christ and the importance of the Incarnation in our salvation.

Examples of prayer during this season

- Prayers of gratitude for all we have, even amidst suffering: <https://www.catholic.org/prayers/prayer.php?p=836>
- Rosary: carry a pocket rosary or finger rosary to pray throughout the day
- Liturgy of the Hours: <http://www.usccb.org/prayer-and-worship/liturgy-of-the-hours/>; apps to use: <https://catholicapptitude.org/2017/01/03/best-liturgy-of-the-hours-apps-for-your-phone-or-tablet/>

Lent: Time for spiritual renewal and reflection; interior renewal; a period of penance leading up to Easter.

Examples of prayer during this season

- Fasting: making sacrifices to focus on what is truly important, such as giving up one thing each day that we desire in order to draw closer to union with Christ in His suffering. We can also use our sacrifices as a type of intercessory prayer and offer something up for another person who is in need of grace or healing.
- Stations of the Cross: many versions available
- Chaplet Divine Mercy (recited or sung): <https://youtu.be/oUtqwdaSzx0>.

Sacred Paschal Triduum: The holiest “Three Days” of the Church’s year when we recall the suffering, death, and resurrection of Jesus.

Examples of prayer during this season

- Attend Sacred Triduum services
- Perform acts of service
- Reflection on the Passion of Jesus Christ in the Gospels
- Intercessory Prayer: Praying for those by name who most need our prayers: Intercessory-prayers-for-life.cfm

Easter: 50 days of joyful celebration of the Lord’s resurrection and His sending forth of the Holy Spirit. Time to praise, adore, and be thankful to God.

Examples of prayer during this season

- Adoration before the Blessed Sacrament: Spending quiet time before the Lord and simply being in His presence
- Visio Divina or divine seeing, reflection on art: Saint John’s Bible provides a great tool (Seeingtheword.org)

Ordinary Time: Time to fully live out the Paschal Mystery—the life, death, and Resurrection of Christ; to bring prayer into all the ordinary settings of our lives, parishes, families, schools, and communities.

Examples of prayer during this season

- Prayers of gratitude
- Shorter Christian Prayer: a condensed version of the Liturgy of the Hours: <http://laydominicans.org/modules/novitiate/LOTH.pdf>.
- Daily Saint devotional, reading a biography of a saint, or turning to a saint for intercession
- Lectio Divina: (Wrap-yourself-in-scripture-a-guide-for-Lectio-Divina; [Busted Halo/Lectio-Divina-beginners-guide](http://Busted-Halo/Lectio-Divina-beginners-guide)).