

Introduction to Prayer

By Fr. David Dufresne

Definition:

- Prayer is the raising of one's mind and heart to God or the requesting of good things from God. – CCC 2559, *St. John Damascene*

Motivation:

- Heart speaking to heart- humility is foundational, conversion of our heart is goal
- Those who do not pray are certainly damned- CCC 2744, *St. Alphonsus Ligouri*

Expressions:

- Vocal- When asked how to pray, Jesus instructs us to say the "Our Father"
- Meditative- the quest of trying to understand the how and why of a mystery
- Contemplative- a close sharing between friends- CCC 2709, *St. Theresa of Jesus*

Types: [*you may also see this as ACTS; adoration, contrition, thanksgiving, supplication*]

- Mercy
- Adoration
- Thanksgiving
- Asking

Relational:

- To the Persons of the Holy Trinity
- In communion with the Blessed Virgin Mary & the saints
- For ourselves and the needs of the world
- For the holy souls in purgatory

Incarnational:

- Within the family home- the first sanctuary and encounter of love
- In sacred places- these places that have been touched by His grace
- In creation- we are searching for God, but first He is searching for us
- In quiet and solitude- the language of God is silence

Prepare for battle:

- Holy Mass & Adoration
- Scripture & Liturgy of the Hours
- Holy Rosary & Chaplets
- Novena's & Wrote prayers
- Morning Offering & Scapular
- Examination of Conscience
- Angelus
- Spiritual reading
- Pilgrimage & Retreat
- We are a composite of body and soul. Integral to a good prayer life is a life of virtue, a life of balance, our sleeping and eating habits.
- We are creatures of these habits and we would do well to formulate a S.M.A.R.T plan.
- It's not about checking boxes but creating an environment for the Lord to find us and speak to us.



The prayerful meditation using the Word of God allows the Holy Spirit, who both inspired the Sacred Scriptures and is present in us by grace, to speak to us and to unite us to Him, to the Father through the Son, our Lord Jesus. Prayer is the divine heart of God speaking to our heart. Our relationship with God on earth (which is maintained and fostered through personal prayer) determines our relationship with Him in eternity. The Word of God is “living and effective” (Heb. 4:12) and has a unique power to speak to us. The following is an ancient, simple, and powerful way to pray using the Scriptures called *Lectio Divina*.

Before beginning your prayer period, prepare yourself by answering the following questions: When am I going to pray? How long will I pray? When and where will I be free from the most distractions? What Biblical text will I use and why? What grace do I desire? What virtue would I like to increase and /or what vice would you like to root out?

Lectio : Read the passage slowly several times. Each time reflect on what words or phrase sticks out. What is the meaning of the passage in general?

Meditatio : Focus on that striking element. What is the Lord saying to me? How is it moving me?

Oratio : Respond to this movement. Speak to the Lord like your best friend.

Contemplatio : Listen to what the Lord is saying in response. Linger with the text. If necessary, repeat that phrase several times like a mantra. Rest “like a child in its mothers arms” (Ps 131:2).

+++When the prayer period is over, write the following down in a prayer journal:+++

Consolatio : Where did I encounter God in my prayer?

Deliberatio : How is this encounter changing me? How is the Lord challenging me?

Actio: What concrete action will I do?

Matthew 5:1-10

Beatitudes

Matthew 5:13-16

Salt & Light

Matthew 8:5-13

Just say the word

Matthew 11:25-30

Yoke

Matthew 17:1-13

Transfiguration

Mark 4:35-41

Calming the Storm

Luke 11:1-13

Our Father

John 3:1-5

Born Again

John 3:22-4:3

John the Baptist

John 6:34-38

Bread of Life

John 8:12

Light of the World

John 10:1-18

Good Shepherd

1 John 4:7-11

God is Love

Revelation 3:14-22

Jesus at the Door

Romans 8:28-39

Loved in Christ

Romans 12:9-12

True Christian

Psalms 23

Divine Shepherd

Psalms 46

Refuge & Strength

Psalms 63

My Desire

Psalms 73

Strength of Heart

Psalms 84

One Day

~Speak, Lord, your servant is listening~

1 Samuel 3:10