

Pray Like a Pro - Finding Your Prayer Voice
January 25, 2026

Handout 1 - Prayer Exercise First Breakout

You will have 6 minutes for this exercise. Please unmute yourself, turn on your camera, and introduce yourself.

Exercise 1: Prayer Mad Libs- Create prayers by matching any part A introduction with any part B request.

Part A	Part B
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Father in Heaven2. Good and Gracious God3. God you created all people to live in harmony4. Jesus, healer of all ills5. Holy Spirit, you inspire creativity and new ways of seeing things6. Father we come before you tonight grateful for all you have given us	<ol style="list-style-type: none">A. Be with us today in our meetingB. Guide our small group discussion tonightC. Help us to be a light to all as we go forth from this spaceD. Bring your healing upon all who are sick, especially_____E. Grant us peaceF. Help us face the problems that weigh upon us, especially_____

Exercise 2 - Make a prayer up on the spot, for one of these common scenarios:

- Saying grace at a family gathering
- Opening a meeting in prayer
- Praying at the end of small group
- Prayer with EMHCs, lectors and servers before Mass starts

If time allows, discuss if it felt natural and how you might be more comfortable

Once everyone has done both, feel free to return to the Main Session. If you don't know how, you will be moved automatically.

Handout 2: Prayer Exercises Second Breakout:

You will have 10 minutes for this exercise.

Exercise 3 - Prayer Partners/ How can I pray for you?.

Buddy up and choose one of these scenarios to pray for. One of you will be the person praying and one will be the one in need. If your group has a third person, serve as witness. Then rotate roles until everyone has had a chance to be the person praying.

Scenarios -

- A friend is worried about her child who is struggling in school.
- A coworker is concerned about whether her marriage will end in a divorce because of constant arguing and tension with her husband.
- A friend is overwhelmed with anxiety
- A friend is grieving for the spouse who recently passed away.
- A friend is struggling with their co-workers and/or boss
- A friend is having a bad day.
- A relative is awaiting biopsy results.
- Or make up your own.

After you finish, briefly check in - did it feel natural? Was it helpful?

If time remains, use scenarios from real life. Having practiced with made up scenarios, now ask your partner, "how can I actually pray for you today?" Then pray for them about whatever is happening in their life. If they are not comfortable sharing, you can say a prayer for their general well being, growth in faith, or for a stronger prayer life.

Once everyone has done both, feel free to return to the Main Session. If you don't know how, you will be moved automatically.

Handout 3: Favorite Biblical Prayers

Also see:

<https://orthochristiantools.com/finding-comfort-in-scripture-psalms-for-every-need/>

Or search for “biblical passages for when I am feeling _____”

Psalm 23 - a prayer of trust in God

A psalm of David.

The LORD is my shepherd; there is nothing I lack.
In green pastures he makes me lie down;
to still waters he leads me; he restores my soul.
He guides me along right paths for the sake of his name.
Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,
I will fear no evil, for you are with me;
your rod and your staff comfort me.

You set a table before me in front of my enemies;
You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.
Indeed, goodness and mercy will pursue me all the days of my life;
I will dwell in the house of the Lord for endless days.

Psalm 27 (Trust in God during fear or anxiety)

Of David.

The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom should I fear?
The LORD is my life's refuge; of whom should I be afraid?
When evildoers come at me to devour my flesh,
These my enemies and foes themselves stumble and fall.
Though an army encamp against me, my heart does not fear;
Though war be waged against me, even then do I trust.

One thing I ask of the LORD; this I seek:
To dwell in the LORD'S house all the days of my life,
To gaze on the LORD'S beauty, to visit his temple.
For God will hide me in his shelter in time of trouble,
He will conceal me in the cover of his tent;
and set me high upon a rock.
Even now my head is held high above my enemies on every side!
I will offer in his tent sacrifices with shouts of joy;
I will sing and chant praise to the LORD.

Hear my voice, LORD, when I call; have mercy on me and answer me.
"Come," says my heart, "seek his face"; your face, LORD, do I seek!
Do not hide your face from me; do not repel your servant in anger.
You are my salvation; do not cast me off; do not forsake me, God my savior!
Even if my father and mother forsake me, the LORD will take me in.

LORD, show me your way; lead me on a level path
because of my enemies.
Do not abandon me to the desire of my foes;
malicious and lying witnesses have risen against me.
I believe I shall see the LORD'S goodness in the land of the living.
Wait for the LORD, take courage; be stouthearted, wait for the LORD!

Psalm 51]

The Miserere: Prayer of Repentance

For the leader. A psalm of David, when Nathan the prophet came to him after he had gone in to Bathsheba.

Have mercy on me, God, in accord with your merciful love;
in your abundant compassion blot out my transgressions.
Thoroughly wash away my guilt; and from my sin cleanse me.
For I know my transgressions; my sin is always before me.
Against you, you alone have I sinned; I have done what is evil in your eyes
So that you are just in your word, and without reproach in your judgment.
Behold, I was born in guilt, in sin my mother conceived me.
Behold, you desire true sincerity; and secretly you teach me wisdom.
Cleanse me with hyssop, that I may be pure;
wash me, and I will be whiter than snow.
You will let me hear gladness and joy; the bones you have crushed will rejoice.

Turn away your face from my sins; blot out all my iniquities.
A clean heart create for me, God; renew within me a steadfast spirit.
Do not drive me from before your face, nor take from me your holy spirit.
Restore to me the gladness of your salvation; uphold me with a willing spirit.
I will teach the wicked your ways, that sinners may return to you.
Rescue me from violent bloodshed, God, my saving God,
and my tongue will sing joyfully of your justice.
Lord, you will open my lips; and my mouth will proclaim your praise.
For you do not desire sacrifice or I would give it;
a burnt offering you would not accept.
My sacrifice, O God, is a contrite spirit;
a contrite, humbled heart, O God, you will not scorn.

Treat Zion kindly according to your good will; build up the walls of Jerusalem.
Then you will desire the sacrifices of the just,
burnt offering and whole offerings;
then they will offer up young bulls on your altar.

Psalm 139: The All-knowing and Ever-present God (Praise)

For the leader. A psalm of David.

LORD, you have probed me, you know me: you know when I sit and stand;
you understand my thoughts from afar.
You sift through my travels and my rest; with all my ways you are familiar.
Even before a word is on my tongue, LORD, you know it all.
Behind and before you encircle me and rest your hand upon me.
Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, far too lofty for me to reach.

Where can I go from your spirit? From your presence, where can I flee?
If I ascend to the heavens, you are there; if I lie down in Sheol, there you are.
If I take the wings of dawn and dwell beyond the sea,
Even there your hand guides me, your right hand holds me fast.
If I say, "Surely darkness shall hide me, and night shall be my light"—
Darkness is not dark for you, and night shines as the day.
Darkness and light are but one.

You formed my inmost being; you knit me in my mother's womb.
I praise you, because I am wonderfully made; wonderful are your works!
My very self you know. My bones are not hidden from you,
When I was being made in secret, fashioned in the depths of the earth.
Your eyes saw me unformed; in your book all are written down;
my days were shaped, before one came to be.

How precious to me are your designs, O God; how vast the sum of them!
Were I to count them, they would outnumber the sands;
when I complete them, still you are with me.
When you would destroy the wicked, O God, the bloodthirsty depart from me!
Your foes who conspire a plot against you are exalted in vain.

Do I not hate, LORD, those who hate you?
Those who rise against you, do I not loathe?
With fierce hatred I hate them, enemies I count as my own.

Probe me, God, know my heart; try me, know my thoughts.
See if there is a wicked path in me; lead me along an ancient path.

Magnificat/The Canticle of Mary - Luke 1:46-55 (Mary's prayer of praise and justice)

And Mary said:

“My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord;
my spirit rejoices in God my savior.
For he has looked upon his handmaid's lowliness;
behold, from now on will all ages call me blessed.
The Mighty One has done great things for me,
and holy is his name.
His mercy is from age to age
to those who fear him.
He has shown might with his arm,
dispersed the arrogant of mind and heart.
He has thrown down the rulers from their thrones
but lifted up the lowly.
The hungry he has filled with good things;
the rich he has sent away empty.
He has helped Israel his servant,
remembering his mercy,
according to his promise to our fathers,
to Abraham and to his descendants forever.”

Hymn to the Philippians (Phillipians 2:5-11)

Have among yourselves the same attitude that is also yours in Christ Jesus,
Who, though he was in the form of God,
did not regard equality with God something to be grasped.
Rather, he emptied himself, taking the form of a slave,
coming in human likeness;
and found human in appearance, he humbled himself,
becoming obedient to death, even death on a cross.
Because of this, God greatly exalted him
and bestowed on him the name that is above every name,
that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend,
of those in heaven and on earth and under the earth,
and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord,
to the glory of God the Father.