

How To Pray

Five Basic Forms of Prayer

Prayer of Blessing and Adoration (praising God)
Prayer of Petition (asking for what we need, including forgiveness)
Prayer of Intercession (asking for what others need)
Prayer of Thanksgiving (for what God has given and done)
Prayer of Meditation



COME HOLY SPIRIT

Come, Holy Spirit, Creator blest, and in our souls take up Thy rest; come with Thy grace and heavenly aid to fill the hearts which Thou hast made.

O comforter, to Thee we cry, O heavenly gift of God Most High, O fount of life and fire of love, and sweet anointing from above.

Thou in Thy sevenfold gifts are known; Thou, finger of God's hand we own; Thou, promise of the Father, Thou Who dost the tongue with power imbue.

Kindle our sense from above, and make our hearts o'erflow with love; with patience firm and virtue high the weakness of our flesh supply.

Far from us drive the foe we dread, and grant us Thy peace instead; so shall we not, with Thee for guide, turn from the path of life aside.

Oh, may Thy grace on us bestow the Father and the Son to know; and Thee, through endless times confessed, of both the eternal Spirit blest.

Now to the Father and the Son, Who rose from death, be glory given, with Thou, O Holy Comforter, henceforth by all in earth and heaven.

Amen.

1. Prayer of Blessing and Adoration

In this prayer, we express praise and honor to God. We praise God for giving us life, for the wonder and beauty of our world, and for all the many blessings we enjoy. We open ourselves up to praise God for all the wonders of creation. This form of prayer encourages bodily expression, such as standing with arms raised or dancing.

2. Prayer of Petition

This is probably the most familiar prayer form of prayer. We are often taught to ask God for the things we need, but asking and praying for them are not necessarily the same. When we pray our petitions, we are asking God, who loves us very much, for something that we believe is good—for ourselves or for others. By using this form of prayer we are mindful of the needs of others as well as of our own needs. We are aware that God wants us to bring our problems and worries to prayer knowing that he will always hear and answer those prayers. God may answer our prayers in a different way and in a different timeframe than we are seeking but God will always give us what we need.

Prayers of petition serve to remind us that God expects us to care for one another and for all his creation. We can pray about the ordinary experiences of life—for people who are sick, for someone who needs a job, for help in our school work, for a safe trip. We pray for peace in our families and in our world. We can also express our sorrow and contrition to God in our prayers.

3. Prayer of Intercession

This form of prayer is prayer on behalf of others. This form of prayer can be a source of blessing upon others, the Church, and our world. Because we know that Our Lady and the saints intercede for us before God, the Church encourages us to pray to them for their intercession. Such prayer can bring us great strength and courage and also great peace of mind and heart.



4. Prayer of Thanksgiving

This form of prayer helps us to be grateful for God's many blessings, spiritual and temporal, and helps us to recognize and appreciate all the good things God gives to us. Reserving some time to praise and thank God for his gifts—the gift of life; the gift of our families and friends; the gift of food, clothing, and shelter; and the numerous other gifts we often take for granted—helps us to form a true spirit of gratitude.

5. Meditative Prayer

Meditation is one of the many styles of prayer. Meditation engages our head and heart in seeking a deeper union with God. It enables us to slow down and quiet our hearts so that we can hear God's voice and communicate with God in a deeper way. Meditation can last a few minutes or hours. It can strengthen our relationship with God and allow us to get in touch with ourselves.

The process of meditation can involve several steps:

Find the time and place which is conducive to meditation. It is important to pick a time when one is alert and able to focus and a comfortable and quiet place.

Prepare to pray by relaxing your body so that you can devote your attention to prayer. Some people use muscle relaxing exercises and breathing exercises.

Choose a word or phrase to focus your attention on God. Some people use "Jesus" or "Abba" or "Jesus saves" or "Jesus loves me."

Connect the word or phrase with your breathing. Silently repeat the word or phrase in tune with your breathing. Let the word resonate within you. The repetition helps to focus on and remain open to God's presence. If you become distracted, focus again on repeating the word or phrase.

(Reproduced from Cathedral of St. Thomas More)

Tips for Praying:

Find a quiet place and time. Prayer can be done anywhere but it is good to have a place that is conducive to relaxing and focusing our attention on God. Finding a regular time to pray each day can also be helpful in making prayer an important daily routine.

Calm yourself and put away distractions. It is important to be relaxed when we pray by finding a comfortable posture.

Use formal prayers or speak what you feel to God, or a combination of each. It is important to note that there is no "right" way to pray. Experiment with styles and forms of prayer. Prayer is an ongoing, developing relationship with God.

Take time to listen. God does speak to us in prayer but we need to listen with our hearts. Be open to what God is telling you rather than just on what you want to or expect to hear.

Use the Bible in your prayer

Keep a journal of prayer

Have a proper attitude. Prayer requires openness to God and a desire to worship and get to know God better.



ACT OF CONTRITION

O my God, I am heartily sorry for having offended You, and I detest all my sins because I dread the loss of Heaven and the pains of Hell; but most of all because they offend You, my God, who are all good and deserving of all my love. I firmly resolve with the help of Your grace, to confess my sins, to do penance, and to amend my life. **Amen.**