



HOW TO PRAY

MISSIONARIES OF GOD'S LOVE
PRIESTS AND BROTHERS



WELCOME

Are you interested in going deeper in prayer, but don't know where to start? This resource will provide some practical advice on how to have a really fruitful prayer time. We believe that everyone can grow in prayer.



PRACTICAL TIPS:

There are many ways that we can pray. At first, it is easy to get confused as to what we should do or say. However, prayer is actually quite simple and anyone can do it.

For example, you might like to try one of the four styles listed below. You could even split your prayer time into four sections for each style.

1

GIVE THANKS TO GOD

God has given us everything, and therefore we spend time thanking the Lord for what he has blessed us with.

2

PRAY FOR THE NEEDS OF YOURSELF AND OTHERS

God loves to hear our prayers. He asks us to turn to him for what we need. Let us be confident in His goodness.

3

PRAY WITH VERSES FROM THE BIBLE

Praying with the Scriptures can be a profound personal encounter with God.

4

QUIETLY SIT WITH THE LORD AND ADORE HIM

Just sitting and looking at the Lord in the *Blessed Sacrament* on the altar can lead to a profound experience of His presence.

1 - GIVE THANKS TO GOD

How to grow a disposition of gratitude has certainly been a hot topic in the self-help industry of recent years. This is for good reason, as being thankful certainly increases our quality of life.

As Christians, we believe that God wants us to live a joyful life. A key to achieving this is to harness the gift of gratitude. This is not God egotistically seeking us to praise him, but rather a call to respond to His great love. A person in a relationship must actually tell the other party that they love them and care for them. See God has given us everything that we have, even the breath in our lungs, and so we respond to him with hearts full of gratitude. The amazing thing is that when we take on the spiritual practice of praise, we actually deepen in our relationship with God and become more aware of His presence in our lives.

You might like to try this style of prayer by:

1) Writing a list of what you are grateful for on a piece of paper.

Don't make this too complicated, just list what first comes to mind, even if it seems insignificant.

2) Then, ask the Holy Spirit to highlight one item or word from your list. Spend some time meditating on this particular thing. You might like to write down what comes to mind, or how it makes you feel.

3) Lastly, write a prayer of thanks to God about why you are grateful for this particular blessing.

Don't feel like you have to do it perfectly, just give it a go. God values the genuine prayers from our hearts.



2 - INTERCESSION

A great way to pray is to ask God for our own needs and for the needs of others.

In fact, when Jesus taught his first disciples to pray by giving them the words of the *Our Father*, he instructed them to pray: “give us this day our daily bread”. Bread in many cultures has been a staple food to sustain people in their day-to-day lives. What Jesus is teaching us is to turn to the Father with expectant hearts for what we need.

What do you need? Is there something that a loved one or friend needs?

Ask the Lord with confidence in His great love and mercy for us.

If you would like to, we have a prayer box for the petitions of our people. Feel free to write your prayers and place them into the box.

As a powerful symbol, we will bring this box up and place it before the altar during our next Sunday Mass. This symbolises that we as a community are offering these prayers to God during the most important moment in our faith: Jesus coming to us in the Blessed Sacrament.



3 - PRAY WITH THE BIBLE



*“For in the sacred books, the Father who is in heaven **meets His children with great love** and speaks with them; and the force and power in the word of God is so great that it stands as the support and energy of the Church, the strength of faith for her sons and daughters, the **food of the soul**, the pure and everlasting source of spiritual life.”*

Dei Verbum n.21

The Holy Scriptures are not like any other book on Earth! Its words are powerful and a means of communication between Father God and His beloved children.

As it says in Hebrews 4:12

“For the word of God is alive and active.”

The Bible is like a library because it is made up of many different books with various genres. It can be a little overwhelming to pick up the Bible for the first time. A good place to start is with the story of Jesus, which is primarily found in the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. The great story of Jesus is the kernel of the Scriptures. In fact, the entire Bible is basically one continuous story that leads to Christ.

Prayerfully reading the Scriptures is different from reading any other book ever written. Through the Scriptures we can encounter Christ in a personal way. We meet Him not only in our minds, but also in our hearts.



If you would like to try this type of prayer, here is a method based on the ancient tradition of *Lectio Divina* or sacred reading. The FIRES method is as follows:

F - amiliarise

The first step is to **familiarise** yourself with the text. Read it through a couple of times and if possible try and memorise a good portion of the text.

I - nvite

Invite the Holy Spirit to lead you as you give Him permission to speak to your heart.

R - ead

Read the text slowly and meditatively. This type of reading is done with no agenda or hurry. Allow your mind to calm as you read the text.

E - voke

Pay attention to what the text **evokes** in you. Is there a word or a phrase that jumps off the page? Does something stir your heart, evoking feelings within you? Does the verse produce a mental image or knowledge of the Lord's closeness?

S - tay

Once something strikes you **stay** there. For example, if a particular phrase evokes a feeling of peace within you, remain in that space, mediating on that same verse. In doing so you allow the verse to continue to speak to you.

Make sure you write down what struck you, what God is saying to you through the Scriptures, so that you can revisit this later.



4 - ADORATION

A special way to pray is to just sit with Jesus. This type of prayer is very simple and yet greatly enriching. We silence our mind and hearts as best as we can and just sit with Jesus. We are open to the Lord speaking to us in a “still small voice” (Kings 19:12-12). A special way that we do this is in Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament.

“Of all devotions, that of adoring Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament is the greatest after the sacraments, the one dearest to God and the one most helpful to us.”
St Alphonsus Liguori

In Adoration, we spend time with Jesus, who is truly present in the Blessed Sacrament. This practice of spending time in the Lord’s presence is of immense spiritual value. We sit with Jesus, who is our ultimate source of comfort, support, and peace. The love that Jesus has for us is without end, and when we sit with Him in adoration, we can encounter His heart for us. Jesus looks upon us with His gaze of love, and our hearts respond in adoration.

SOME TIPS

- Begin by taking a few deep breaths slowing your heart rate.
- Ask the Spirit to make you aware of the presence of Jesus.
- Don’t worry if you become distracted or tired, simply try to regain your focus.
- Just sit and be present to Him, you don’t have to do much.
- Be open to anything that He might say to you and write it down.





THANK YOU

for using our resource on prayer.
May God bless you and your love
ones as you journey deeper in your
faith through prayer.

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