

On Prayer

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What is prayer? –

Prayer is the act of acknowledging God as the source of all things. In a more general sense it is turning our hearts and mind to the Divine. It is a way for us to remind ourselves of God's presence with us at all times.

Why do we pray? –

As mentioned, it is a way for us to remind ourselves of our dependence on God and of his constant presence with us. But prayer is always a way for us to worship our God, give Him thanks, and acknowledge our need for Him in our lives.

How do I pray? –

There are many ways to pray.

There are the traditional Catholic prayers most of us learned from childhood: the Hail Mary, the Our Father, etc.

Devotional prayers are popular and have been part of the Church for a long time. As an example, the Rosary can be considered a devotional prayer. Another popular devotional prayer is the Miraculous Medal Novena that is offered here every Monday. These are just a couple of examples of devotional pray.

Other forms or prayer include meditative prayer or contemplative prayer. Examples of these would be Taize Prayer around the Cross and Centering Prayer.

Prayer also takes more structured form. Mass is actually a prayer. From very early in the history of the Church all clergy have been required to pray the Holy Office, or Liturgy of Hours. Today this prayer form is open to all Christians.

There are less formal prayers; spontaneous prayers we may make. "Thank God" is one such prayer that many of us may say in our everyday conversation even though we may not realize it's a prayer.

Prayer is an important element of faith. It is the basis of spirituality and keeps us aware of our relationship with God. As people of faith prayer should be an integral part – even the focus of – our daily lives.

Some familiar prayers –

The Lord's Prayer (the Our Father)

Our Father, who art in heaven,
Hallowed be thy Name.
Thy kingdom come.
Thy will be done,
On earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
As we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
But deliver us from evil.
Amen.

The Hail Mary

Hail Mary,
Full of Grace,
The Lord is with thee.
Blessed art thou among women,
and blessed is the fruit
of thy womb, Jesus.
Holy Mary,
Mother of God,
pray for us sinners now,
and at the hour of death.
Amen.

Glory Be to the Father

Glory be to the Father,
and to the Son,
and to the Holy Spirit.
As it was in the beginning,
is now, and ever shall be,
world without end.
Amen.