



Prayer Prescription

by

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“Prayer is an surge of the heart, it is a simple glance directed to heaven, it is a cry of gratitude and love in the midst of trial as well as joy; finally, it is something great, supernatural, which expands my soul and unites me to Jesus.” --St. Therese of Lisieux

A Few Keys to Prayer:

Prayer is essential to living a holy life and to becoming a saint. Praying is not about a method - there are many fine ones - prayer is about showing up with the proper interior dispositions. Prayer is a work of grace - it's less about us and more about Him. The interior dispositions needed are faith and trust that God is present with me in this time of prayer. Even though it sounds crazy, begin prayer with a prayer: “Lord, I trust that you are present with me in this moment and that you look on me with passionate love.”

Fidelity and perseverance: “Time spent faithfully every day in mental prayer that is poor, arid, distracted, and relatively short is worth more, and will be infinitely more fruitful for our progress, than long, ardent spells of mental prayer from time to time, when circumstances make it easy” (Jacques Philippe, Time for God). Setting aside a specific time of prayer each day and sticking to it will be the means that leads to a better quality of prayer. In the beginning be faithful to your daily time of prayer and persevere during the difficult days.

Prayer of Protection

Lord, almighty, merciful and omnipotent God,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
drive out from me all influence of evil spirits.
Father, in the name of Jesus Christ,
I plead you to break any chain that the devil
has on me.

Pour upon me the most precious blood of your Son.
May his immaculate and redeeming blood
break all bonds of my body or mind.

I ask you this through the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Archangel Saint Michael, intercede and come
to my help.

In the name of Jesus I command all demons
that could have any influence over me
to leave me forever.

By his scourging, his crown of thorns, his cross,
by his blood and resurrection,
I command all evil spirits to leave me.

By the true God, by the Holy God,
by God who can do all,
in the name of Jesus, my Savior and Lord, leave me.
Amen.

Purity of intention: "Blessed are the pure of heart for they shall see God." Purity of intention is desiring to live more for God than for ourselves. It does not mean we are perfect yet, but that we have the desire to be so. Our intention should be to pray to please God - the gifts received during prayer are a bonus.

Ideas for Daily Prayer Game Plan:

Vocal Prayers: It is important to offer a few vocal prayers each day. It helps us raise our hearts and minds to God using some of the most well known prayers of our tradition. The Our Father of course taking pride of place being given to us by Jesus Himself.

Mental Prayer/Meditation: I like to use the term mental prayer vs. meditation because meditation is so often associated with Eastern meditation or mindfulness, which has to do with the emptying of the mind. This is not Christian meditation nor should it be practiced by Christians. It is dangerous because it has to do with emptying of the mind, which is not safe or helpful. Mental prayer or Christian meditation is about engaging our mind with the truth of God. The Catechism teaches us "The mind seeks to understand the why and how of the Christian life, in order to adhere and respond to what the Lord is asking. The required attentiveness is difficult to sustain. We are usually helped by books, and Christians do not want for them: the Sacred Scriptures, particularly the Gospels, holy icons, liturgical texts of the day or season, writings of the

spiritual fathers, works of spirituality, the great book of creation, and that of history—the page on which the “today” of God is written” (CCC 2705). How to practice this will be found later in this booklet.

Daily Mass or an Act of Spiritual Communion (if you cannot get to Mass):

My Jesus,
I believe that You
are present in the Most Holy Sacrament.
I love You above all things,
and I desire to receive You into my soul.
Since I cannot at this moment
receive You sacramentally,
come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace You as if
You were already there and unite myself wholly to You.
Never permit me to be separated from You.
Amen.

Prayer before/after Meals - pray before and after every meal even in public.

Before: Bless us, O Lord! and these Thy gifts, which we are about to receive from Thy bounty, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

After: We give Thee thanks for all Thy benefits, Almighty God, who live and reign world without end. Amen. May the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.

Prayer to St. Michael the Archangel

St. Michael the Archangel,
defend us in battle.
Be our defense against the wickedness and snares of the Devil.
May God rebuke him, we humbly pray,
and do thou,
O Prince of the heavenly hosts,
by the power of God,
thrust into hell Satan,
and all the evil spirits,
who prowl about the world
seeking the ruin of souls. Amen.

Spontaneous Prayers:

- Jesus, I Trust in You.
- Jesus, You know all things, I entrust all of my worries to You.
- Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, I love you.
- I invoke the protection of the Blood of the Lamb.
- Lord, take this temptation. I give it to you for the conversion of sinners.
- Lord, perfect love casts out all fear. Take my fears and replace them with your love.
- Lord, I Trust in Your Providential care.
- “Lord, I believe, help my unbelief”
- Lord, I place myself in your Sacred Heart to be purified, protected, and transformed.
- Mary draw me to the love of your Son.

Appendix I: Prayers

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.

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 our death. Amen.

Glory Be

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.

Rosary/Divine Mercy Chaplet or if you want to get crazy both
- pray as a family or individually: pray on the way to work
(helps with road rage, trust me, I know). Listen to both on
the Relevant Radio app.

Daily Examen - go over your day (graces and failures); thank
God and ask for His merciful forgiveness and the grace to be
better tomorrow. The Daily Examen as practiced by St.
Ignatius Loyola is one of the most powerful daily prayers,
but in my experience one of the most difficult to get started.
This prayer is explained later on in the booklet.

The Point of Prayer:

We have our keys to prayer and a daily prayer regimen, now
let's review the point of prayer. Prayer, which is communion
with God, is that for which our heart longs. Those who pray
are healthier and happier. The reality of God's love and our
response (prayer) are undeniably beneficial to us spiritually,
mentally, and even physically.

I propose in this booklet a way to let God change our lives.
As a priest, I often hear the excuse that we are too busy to
pray. I understand why this seems to be the case in our
world. I believe, however, this is just the work of the
kingdom of darkness. I don't think I have ever been too busy
to eat or sleep. Praying is much more important than either
one of those activities. Praying is necessary for our soul. We
are body and soul composites after all. We know we must

feed the body, which will eventually pass away and be raised in the Resurrection of the Body at the end of time. Do we also then not realize we must feed our souls, which begin their eternal reward or punishment immediately after death?

Prayer is essential to developing our relationship with Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. God will give us what we want the most and if that is not Him that is the definition of hell - eternal separation from God. Prayer not only helps us eternally, but even temporally here on earth. Prayer is the key to avoiding temptations that lead to serious sin. Think about the serious sins you have fallen into in your life. How was your prayer life leading up to that fall. I bet it was wavering at best and closer to non-existent.

Prayer makes us a person of hope. In prayer, we recognize our complete dependence on God. This gives us hope. Prayer keeps us focused on heaven and hope is that we will attain heaven based on the promises of our Beloved. Prayer helps us grow in trust in the goodness of God. We recognize that we are not promised heaven in this fallen world but in the one to come if we choose to live this pilgrimage well. Prayer helps us to live in peace of heart knowing that Our Father in heaven loves us and everything is in His control. All of the adversities that we may face, when accepted in trust and brought to prayer, will work for our good (cf. Romans 8:28).

likely show you some ways that you fell short. Make note of these sins and faults. But look deeply for other implications. Does a feeling of frustration perhaps mean that God wants you consider a new direction in some area of your life? Are you concerned about a friend? Perhaps you should reach out to him in some way.

4. Choose one feature of the day and pray from it. Ask the Holy Spirit to direct you to something during the day that God thinks is particularly important. It may involve a feeling—positive or negative. It may be a significant encounter with another person or a vivid moment of pleasure or peace. Or it may be something that seems rather insignificant. Look at it. Pray about it. Allow the prayer to arise spontaneously from your heart—whether intercession, praise, repentance, or gratitude.

5. Look toward tomorrow. Ask God to give you light for tomorrow's challenges. Pay attention to the feelings that surface as you survey what's coming up. Are you doubtful? Cheerful? Apprehensive? Full of delighted anticipation? Allow these feelings to turn into prayer. Seek God's guidance. Ask him for help and understanding. Pray for hope.

End with an Our Father.

4. Conversation (core of the meditation): converse with Our Lord about the material. Employ the affections of love, adoration, thanksgiving, sorrow, petition.
5. Conclusion: Gratitude to Christ for the gifts received. Examination of faults during meditation, and resolution of further effort in succeeding meditations.

DAILY EXAMEN (Pray Daily over the previous 24 hour period, takes 5 - 10 minutes)

1. Become aware of God's presence. Look back on the events of the day in the company of the Holy Spirit. The day may seem confusing to you—a blur, a jumble, a muddle. Ask God to bring clarity and understanding.

2. Review the day with gratitude. Gratitude is the foundation of our relationship with God. Walk through your day in the presence of God and note its joys and delights. Focus on the day's gifts. Look at the work you did, the people you interacted with. What did you receive from these people? What did you give them? Where did you experience a call to conversion, a gift of grace, or God's peaceful presence?

3. Pay attention to the movements of your heart. One of St. Ignatius's great insights was that we detect the presence of the Spirit of God in the movement of our heart. Reflect on the feelings you experienced during the day. Boredom? Elation? Resentment? Compassion? Anger? Confidence? What is God saying through these feelings? God will most

I suggest not fitting prayer into your life, but instead fitting your life into your prayer. How can we accomplish this you might ask? What follows is my prayer prescription (like a doctor of the soul) for developing a life of prayer. Not only does it help our life revolve around prayer it creates a routine of discipline.

VOCAL PRAYERS: (Pray Daily in the morning)

(V)erse. Our help is in the name of the Lord.
(R)esponse. Who made heaven and earth.

Prayers to be said every day:

Pray the Angelus morning (6 am), noon, and night (6 pm).

V. The angel of the Lord declared unto Mary.

R. And she conceived by the Holy Spirit.

Hail Mary...

V. Behold the handmaid of the Lord.

R. Be it done unto me according to your word.

Hail Mary...

V. And the Word was made flesh.

R. And dwelt among us.

Hail Mary...

V. Pray for us, O Holy Mother of God.

R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.
Let us pray. Pour forth, we beseech Thee, O Lord, Thy grace into our hearts, that we to whom the incarnation of Christ, Thy Son, was made known by the message of an angel, may

by His passion and cross be brought to the glory of His resurrection, through the same Christ our Lord. Amen.

Our Father. Hail Mary. Glory Be. St. Michael Prayer. Guardian Angel Prayer. (see Appendix I for these prayers)

Morning Offering:

O Jesus, Through the Immaculate Heart of Mary, I offer You all my prayers, works, joys, and sufferings of this day for the intentions of Your Sacred Heart, in union with all the Masses said throughout the world, in reparation for my sins, for the intentions of all our associates, for those who will die this day, for the holy souls in purgatory, and in particular, for the intentions of the Holy Father. Amen.

Litany of the Most Precious Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ:

Lord have mercy.

Christ have mercy.

Lord have mercy.

Christ hear us.

Christ graciously hear us.

God the Father of Heaven, have mercy on us.

God the Son, Redeemer of the world, have mercy on us.

God the Holy Spirit, have mercy on us.

Holy Trinity, One God, have mercy on us.

Blood of Christ, only-begotten Son of the Eternal Father, save us.

Blood of Christ, Incarnate Word of God, save us.

Blood of Christ, of the New and Eternal Testament, save us.

after reading Matthew 19:21. When we encounter the Lord, He never leaves us unchanged. He calls us to live out a deeper faith, hope, and charity in our lives.

5. Actio / Act: "Living out the Lectio Divina."

We do well also to remember that the process of lectio divina is not concluded until it arrives at action (actio), which moves the believer to make his or her life a gift for others in charity. Once we have encountered God in prayer and recognize His specific call for us it is a matter of doing it.

Postgame: Reviewing how our prayer time went will help growth in prayer. It can be done briefly as the prayer is concluding or after the prayer. It helps deepen our awareness of the gift of prayer.

Questions that may assist: As I prayed with Scripture, what was I thinking? What drew my attention, what struck me? What was I feeling as I prayed? What stirred in my heart? Did I feel joy? Did I experience peace? Was I anxious? Did I struggle in any way?

Another version of Mental Prayer:

1. Preparation: place oneself in the presence of Christ.
2. Selection of material: read or study a spiritual book reflection on a part of the life of Christ or a Saint or ponder the Crucifix or some devout picture of Christ.
3. Consideration: reflect upon the material. Ask oneself the questions: who, what, why, for what reason

days each week praying through the Sunday readings, especially the Gospel.

2. Meditatio / Meditate: "What does this biblical text say to me in the context of the faith?"

We must let ourselves be moved or challenged by the "living and active" Word of God (Heb 4:12). God will move our hearts and inform our intellects through this pondering. A deeper prayer will lead us to an encounter with God as He speaks to us where we are and draws us closer to Himself.

3. Oratio / Prayer: "What do I want to say to the Lord in my response to His Word?" Have a conversation.

St. Augustine says: "Your prayer is the word you speak to God. When you read the Bible, God speaks to you; when you pray, you speak to God." Now speak to God what has arisen in your heart. What are the fears or doubts that arose? What are the insights and joys that arose? What was challenging for you about the text?

4. Contemplatio / Contemplate: "What conversion of mind, heart, and life is the Lord asking of me?" In this conversation what is the Lord speaking to you in the silence of your heart?

St. Francis of Assisi was inspired to begin his mendicant lifestyle, and eventually the Franciscan Order, after hearing a homily on Matthew 10:7-19. Likewise, St. Augustine recounted the radical conversion he underwent after reading Romans 13:13-14, while St. Anthony was converted

Blood of Christ, falling upon the earth in the Agony, save us.
Blood of Christ, shed profusely in the Scourging, save us.
Blood of Christ, flowing forth in the Crowning with Thorns, save us.

Blood of Christ, poured out on the Cross, save us.

Blood of Christ, price of our salvation, save us.

Blood of Christ, without which there is no forgiveness, save us.

Blood of Christ, Eucharistic drink and refreshment of souls, save us.

Blood of Christ, stream of mercy, save us.

Blood of Christ, victor over demons, save us.

Blood of Christ, courage of Martyrs, save us.

Blood of Christ, strength of Confessors, save us.

Blood of Christ, bringing forth Virgins, save us.

Blood of Christ, help of those in peril, save us.

Blood of Christ, relief of the burdened, save us.

Blood of Christ, solace in sorrow, save us.

Blood of Christ, hope of the penitent, save us.

Blood of Christ, consolation of the dying, save us. Blood of Christ, peace and tenderness of hearts, save us.

Blood of Christ, pledge of eternal life, save us.

Blood of Christ, freeing souls from purgatory, save us.

Blood of Christ, most worthy of all glory and honor, save us.

Lamb of God, Who takes away the sins of the world, spare us, O Lord.

Lamb of God, Who takes away the sins of the world, graciously hear us, O Lord.

Lamb of God, Who takes away the sins of the world, have mercy on us.

V. Thou hast redeemed us with Thy Blood, O Lord.
R. And made of us a kingdom for our God.

Let us pray.

Almighty, and everlasting God, Who hast appointed Thine only-begotten Son to be the Redeemer of the world, and hast been pleased to be reconciled unto us by His Blood, grant us, we beseech Thee, so to venerate with solemn worship the price of our salvation, that the power thereof may here on earth keep us from all things hurtful, and the fruit of the same may gladden us for ever hereafter in heaven. Through the same Christ our Lord. R. Amen.

Memorare:

REMEMBER, O most gracious Virgin Mary, that never was it known that anyone who fled to thy protection, implored thy help, or sought thy intercession was left unaided. Inspired with this confidence, I fly to thee, O Virgin of virgins, my Mother; to thee do I come; before thee I stand, sinful and sorrowful. O Mother of the Word Incarnate, despise not my petitions, but in thy mercy hear and answer me. Amen.

MENTAL PRAYER (First two weeks 10 min/day, Second two weeks 20/day, and after a month 30 min/day which is the goal)

Mental Prayer/Christian Meditation:

“Meditation engages thought, imagination, emotion, and desire. This mobilization of faculties is necessary in order to deepen our convictions of faith, prompt the conversion of our heart, and strengthen our will to follow Christ. Christian prayer tries above all to meditate on the mysteries of Christ, as in lectio divina or the rosary. This form of prayerful reflection is of great value, but Christian prayer should go further: to the knowledge of the love of the Lord Jesus, to union with him (CCC 2708).” I would like to prescribe for you the ancient practice of the Church that was at the heart of the practice of countless Saints throughout the history of the Church, Lectio Divina. There are five simple steps (a very easy way to do this is by signing up for carpeverbum.org):

Pregame: Ask the Holy Spirit to fill your heart and mind with His Presence and grace. Ex. “Holy Spirit, I know you are present to me in this moment, please help me to be more aware of your presence. Draw me into your presence.”

1. Lectio / Read: “What does the biblical text say in itself?” Find a Gospel passage that you want to pray with. The easiest way to do this is to pray with the Gospel of the day, usccb.org/bible/readings. You can also spend a few of the