

# FAMILY CATECHESIS



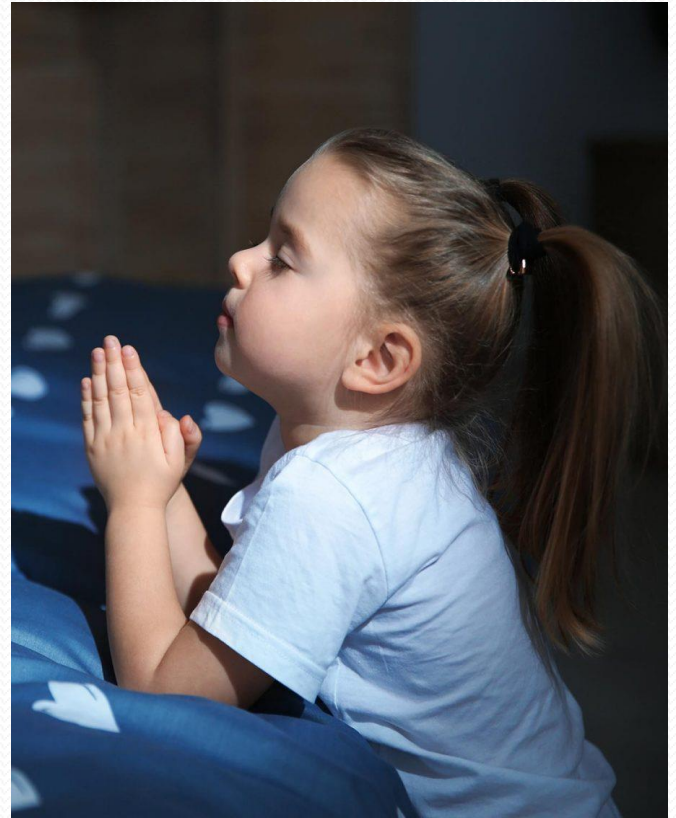
PRAYER

1. 22. 2023



“Every one of us  
needs half an  
hour of prayer a  
day,  
except when we  
are busy  
then we need an  
hour.”

# WHAT IS PRAYER?



# What is Prayer?

“For me,  
prayer is a surge of the heart;  
it is a simple look turned  
toward heaven;  
it is a cry of recognition  
and of love,  
embracing both trial and joy.”

St Therese of Lisieux:

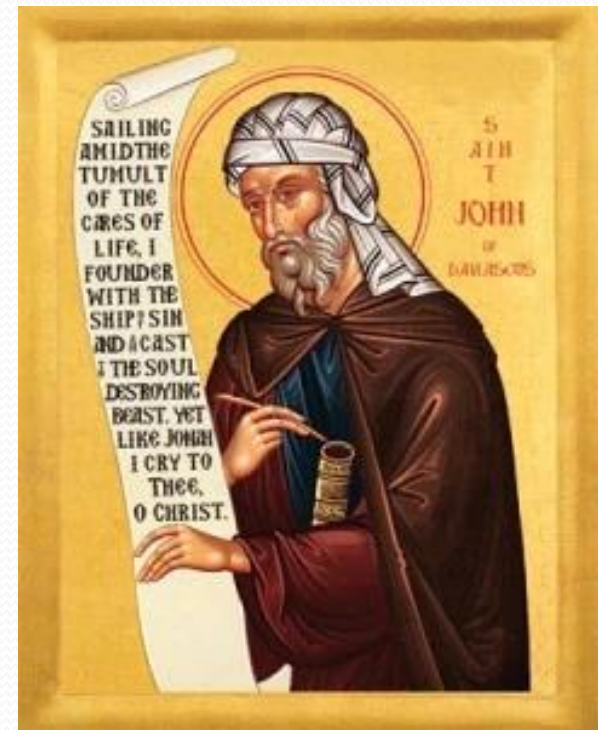




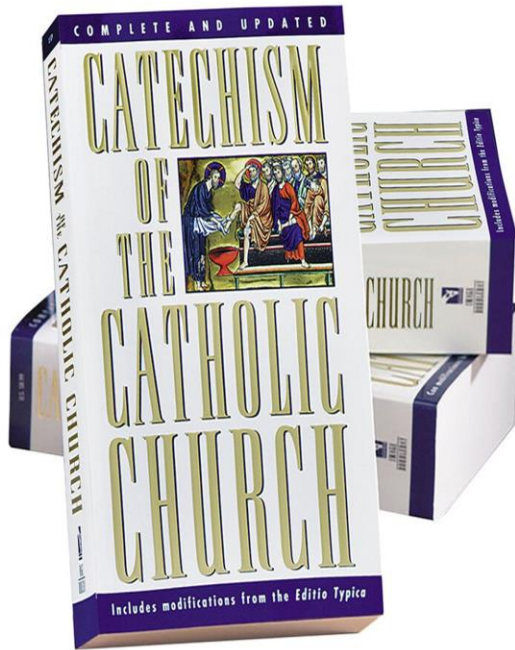
# What is Prayer?

“Prayer is the raising  
of one's mind  
and heart to God  
or  
the requesting  
of good things  
from God”

St John Damascene



# What is Prayer?



- Prayer is the “vital and personal relationship with the living and true God” (CCC, no. 2558).
- Prayer is Christian “insofar as it is communion with Christ” (CCC, no. 2565).
- And a "covenant relationship between God and man in Christ" (CCC, no. 2564).

# What is Prayer?

While we often think of prayer primarily as asking God for something, prayer, properly understood, is a conversation with God or with the saints.

Just as we cannot hold a conversation with another person unless he can hear us, the very act of praying is an implicit recognition of the presence of God or the saints here with us.

And in praying, we strengthen that recognition of the presence of God, which draws us closer to Him.

That is why the Church recommends that we pray frequently and make prayer an important part of our daily lives.

# What is Prayer?

The person who prays strives to be in communication with God, principally to adore him, to praise him, to thank him for his gifts, to make reparation for our offences, and to ask for our various needs, both spiritual and temporal.

Prayer is a form of communication, a way of talking to God or to the saints.

Prayer may be formal or informal.

While formal prayer is an important element of Christian worship, prayer itself is not synonymous with worship or adoration.



# Common Myths

Too many people think they have good reasons why they cannot have a better prayer life.

- “I don't need to pray in any 'formal' sense. God knows I love him.”
- “I just can't find the time to pray.”
- “My faith isn't deep enough to get anything out of prayer.”
- “I've tried learning how to pray, but I just don't 'get it'. It's too hard.”



## Common Myths

Don't believe them!

# The Truth About Prayer is Good News

- A prayer life is essential to the Christian life.
- Prayer is "a vital and personal relationship with the living and true God." (Catechism, 2558)
- Prayer is the lifeblood of your faith. Without prayer, your faith will die. (Catechism, 2744)



# The Truth About Prayer is Good News

- Prayer is compatible with everyday life.
  - You do need a small amount of quiet time each day to learn how to pray. But it's not difficult — just 5 or 10 minutes to start is fine.
  - And you'll also make prayer a part of the fabric of everyday life. You can find God in all the normal tasks of daily life. Seek him there!

*"It is possible to offer fervent prayer even while walking in public or strolling alone, or seated in your shop, . . . while buying or selling, . . . or even while cooking."*

*St. John Chrysostom*

# The Truth About Prayer is Good News

- Even the smallest faith will blossom through prayer.
  - Here's a secret: as with faith itself, God does all of prayer's hard work! We get the easy part. And our part is learning how to pray, and then praying every day.

*St. Paul tells us, "The Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes with sighs too deep for words." (Rom 8:26)*

*Catechism says: "The Holy Spirit, the artisan of God's works, is the master of prayer." (#741)*

- With a Master like that, how can you go wrong?
  - Throughout the ages, all kinds of people have learned how to pray.
- Why not you, too?



# Expressions of Prayer

The Church speaks of three modes, or “expressions,” of prayer.

Our exemplar of prayer, Christ himself, taught vocal prayer to his disciples and practiced meditative prayer and contemplative prayer.

All three forms are of great value in the life of a Christian. (Cf. CCC 2701, 2721)

# Vocal Prayer

Vocal prayer is spoken prayer.

An example of this is when we pray in community such as Mass or the Rosary.

We could also recite prayers out loud or have a conversation with God.

Vocal prayer allows us to express through our physical senses what we feel and believe internally, in the depths of our hearts. (Cf. CCC 2701-2704)

# Meditative Prayer

Meditative prayer is ordinarily grounded in spiritual reading. It is a search for understanding and discernment of what God is calling us to do.

By engaging our mind and spirit, we draw closer to Christ. Two popular forms of meditation are the Holy Rosary and Lectio Divina.

The Holy Rosary, which also utilizes vocal prayer, is a meditation on the events of the lives of Christ and his Mother.

Lectio Divina is a meditative reading of Sacred Scripture or other edifying texts such as the spiritual writings of holy men and women. (Cf. CCC 2705-2708)

# Contemplative Prayer

Contemplative prayer is the "listening" part of the conversation we have with God in prayer.

In the silence of contemplative prayer, we experience intimacy with God as we share in his mystery and make ourselves attentive to his voice.

We approach God with great humility and seek complete union with him; it is sometimes described as a "gaze of faith" fixed upon Christ.

By gazing upon his mysteries, we open ourselves up to hearing the Word of God, illuminating our hearts, hearing the Father's voice, and infusing all that we do with his love. (Cf. CCC 2709-2719)

# Forms of Prayer

In the Christian tradition there are multiple forms of prayer for various purposes from worshipping God to asking for forgiveness.

Blessing and adoration (acknowledge)

Petition (asking for what we need, including forgiveness)

Intercession (asking for what others need)

Thanksgiving (for what God has given and done)

Praise (praising God)



# Forms of Prayer



**ACTS**

A: Adoration

C: Contrition

T: Thanksgiving

S: Supplication

# How to Pray



Four Key Points  
When, Where, What, Why

# When to Pray?



Set aside specific times for prayer.

Be intentional in your prayer life.

Decide specific times in your day for prayer, perhaps first thing in the morning, noon time and before you go to bed.

# Where to Pray?

A quiet place and time to pray.

Set up a dedicated place for prayer, maybe in your bedroom or a quiet place somewhere in your house.

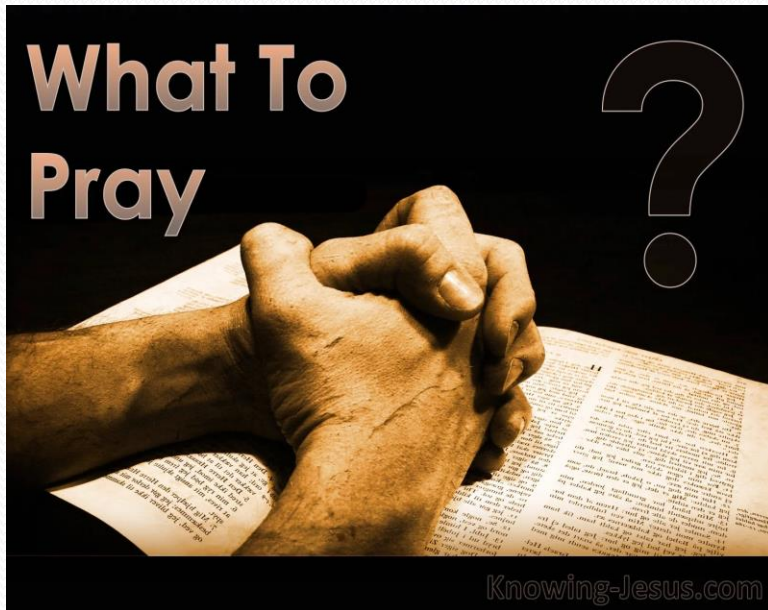
Having a crucifix, a statue or religious picture there, will help you focus on God.

This is your time and place of encounter with God.

"Be still and know that I am God." Ps 46:11



# What to Pray?



- Make a plan.
- Plan ahead and know what you want to do during your prayer time.
- Perhaps you might read a little from the Bible or pray a Rosary.



# Why to Pray?

- Start small and build up - growing in relationship with the true living God takes time and effort.
- HE IS worth your time and effort.
- Your first goal is to pray to God for the grace to be able to pray everyday!
- If you have never prayed before, start praying 5-10 minutes during your specified time.
- After you are consistently praying for a month, you could add 5-10 more minutes and then continue to build up your prayer time.



# What if you don't feel like praying or forget to pray?

**Don't  
Give  
Up!**

Yes, it happens to everyone!

Praying doesn't always come easy at first.

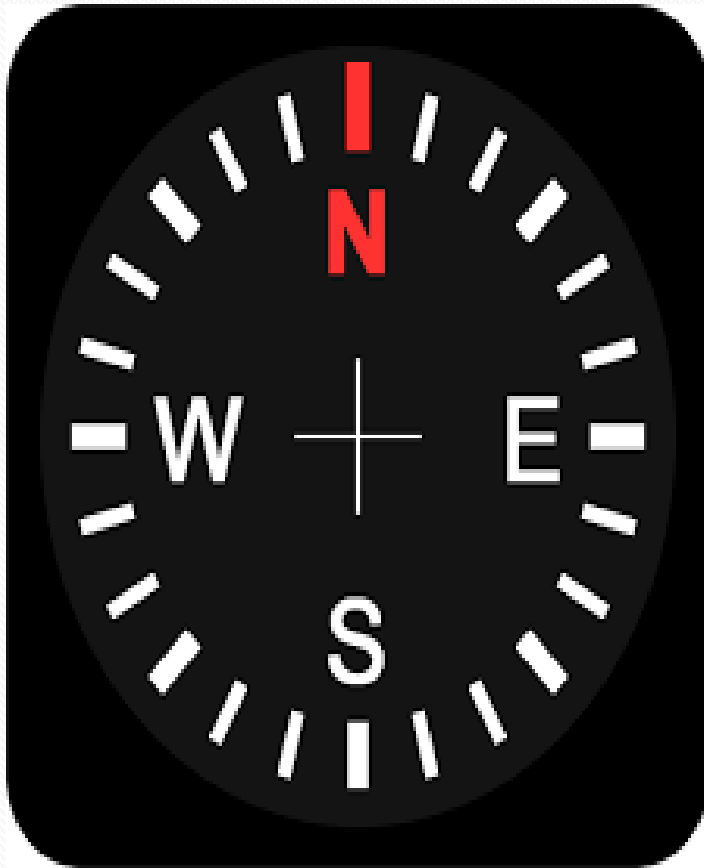
It takes time and practice to build a habit of praying.

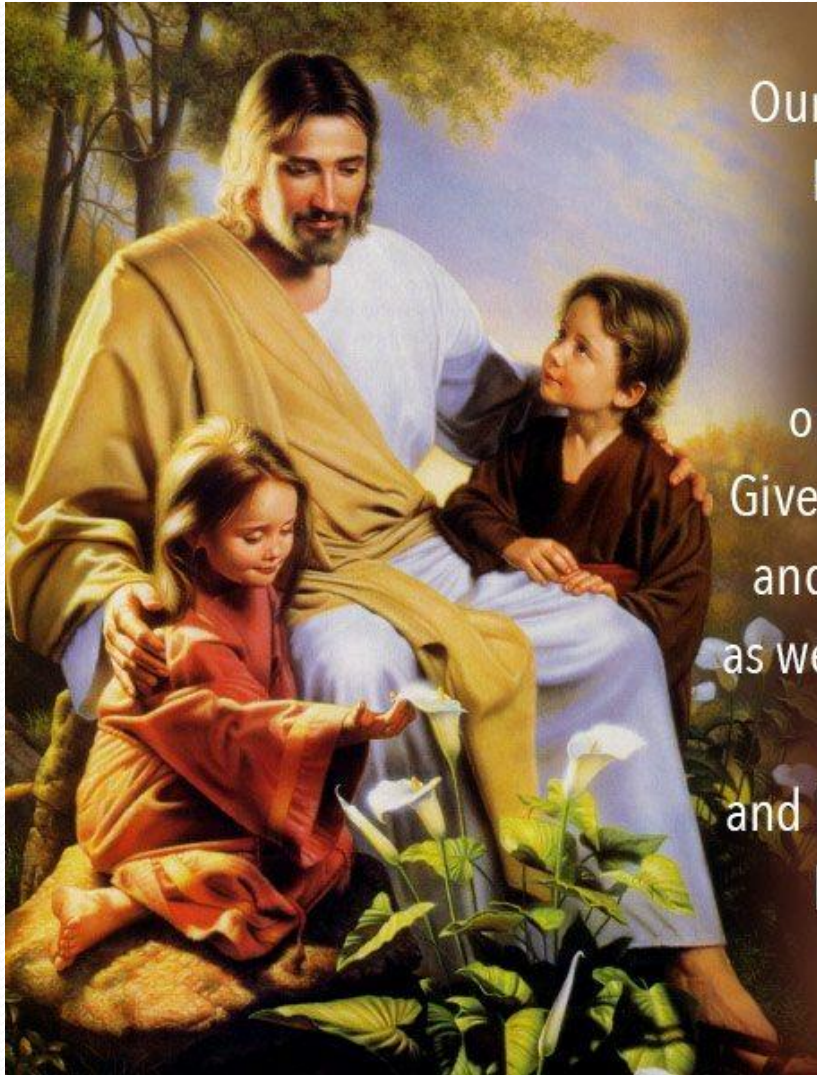
Just like studying, or sports or learning an instrument.

Time you put in is time well spent.

Now when it comes to God, time you put in has ETERNAL consequences!


# What if you don't feel like praying or forget to pray?





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.'



Holy  Spirit Church

God Bless  
You