

## Prayer: Your Connection to God: Prayer—God—self knowledge—freedom—salvation

### Vocal Prayer—Using words to pray

1. **The Holy Mass**—The best form of prayer focused around the Eucharist. Almost all types of prayer are used in the Mass: readings, music, spoken prayers, meditation, psalms, quiet reflection, preaching, penance, Our Father, Sign of Peace, and Eucharist.
2. **Our Father**—Spoken in brief phrases with each phrase being meditated upon.
3. **The Sacraments**—All of the Sacraments are forms of prayer, especially the Eucharist and reconciliation.
4. **The Rosary**—A classic and a good mantra to help meditate on the mysteries of faith.
5. **PPT**—Short for Praise, Petition, and Thanksgiving. Most use this prayer for asking God for help, but in this version the asking for help is accompanied with a respect for God. First, in praising God for life, gifts, etc. Second, asking for help for the many challenges that we face in life. Third, giving thanks to God for answered prayers, what we have, family, friends, etc.
6. **Office/Liturgy of the Hours**—There are prayers for every hour of the day! A formalized way of prayer usually used in religious communities. Involves a call and response of psalms, scripture, and prayers.
7. **Prayer Groups/Faith Sharing**—Usually involves critical evaluation of Scripture, singing and praying for each other.
8. **Music!**—In all of its various forms, sing with others or by yourself. “If you sing you pray twice”—St. Augustine.
9. **St. Dominic’s 9 Ways of Prayer**—Use your body to move into different positions to help you pray(arms outstretched, kneeling, walking,..etc.)
10. **Litanies**—Repetition of petitions to invoke the Saints, “St. Ignatius pray for us... St. Francis pray for us...etc.”
11. **Stations of the Cross**—Usually done during Lent but can be inserted year round if desired. Meditating on the 14 stations of the Cross(the last stages of Jesus’ life.)

### Meditation—Praying with Images

1. **Journaling**—Writing down prayers, ideas, reflections in a focused way towards God.
2. **Service to Others**—Living your prayer life by helping out others. Your service might take place over a long period of time or in just one brief instance but you will know in your heart when your actions are meditative and truly prayer.
3. **St. Ignatius Examen of Conscience**—five steps to pray over your day, 1. give thanks for our life, 2. ask for grace to know and root our sins, 3. review day in order of thoughts, words and actions—where was God? When were we loving God or not loving God?, 4. ask for pardon and reconciliation for when we have failed, 5. Ask for the Grace to change in the future. Only a part of the “Spiritual Exercises.”
4. **Lectio Divina**—Also known as Divine Reading. Meditation on a passage from Scripture, read passage once, silent meditation, read a second time and put yourself in the “action”, and read a third and fourth time looking for key words or phrases and how God is “speaking” to you.
5. **Adoration**—Spending time in front of the Exposed Blessed Sacrament, can be accompanied with the “Jesus Prayer”—“Lord Jesus Christ have mercy on me a sinner.”
6. **Spend time OUTSIDE!**—Simply enjoy the beauty of God’s creation in its various forms.
7. **Guided Meditation**—Go through a series of mental images to meditate upon (e.g. on the beach, peaceful, Christ comes and visits you...etc.)
8. **Centering Prayer**—Meditate on one word by simply repeating the word mentally over and over when distracted and place your will in the Spirit. Can also use “inward gaze” or focus on breathing or enter the “Cloud of Unknowing.” (e.g. God, Peace, Christ, Salvation...etc.)
9. **Meditate on the Trinity**—Placing yourself within the deepest Christian mystery, also useful for the Sacred Heart of Jesus, Eucharist...etc.
10. **Meditate on a Specific Question or Petition**—or Affective prayer, sit with your concern in prayer and “listen” for where God leads you.

### Contemplation—Praying without images

1. **The GOAL**—union with the Trinity in everything you do. A metanoia of heart and change of perspective towards life. This is the goal of all vocal and meditative prayer, to simply sit in the presence of God, in silence and BE.

Catholic Spirituality for Parents  
Fr. Bryan Dolejsi

- I. Scriptural Foundations
  - a. Gn 1: 27-28 “in the divine image he created them; male and female he created them. God blessed them, saying to them ‘be fertile and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it.’”
  - b. Ex 20:12 “honor your father and your mother, that you may have a long life in the land which the Lord, your God is giving you.”
  - c. Jacob, Samuel, Solomon, David, Prophets
  - d. Sarah, Book of Judith, Book of Esther, Book of Ruth
  - e. Advice in Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Wisdom (personified as female)
  - f. Song of Songs love poem between lovers.
  - g. NT: Holy Family, faith of the parents saves children.
  - h. NT letters: Constant efforts towards building a right community and baptizing households (Rms, Cor, Eph, Col, 1Tim, Hb)
  
- II. Married Saints
  - a. Joseph and Mary, Isidore and Maria were married couples. Sts. Peter, Monica, Frances of Rome, Margaret of Scotland, Perpetua and Felicity, Bridget of Sweden, Elizabeth of Hungary, Elizabeth of Portugal and Elizabeth Ann Seton were married, as were St. Thomas More, St. Stephen of Hungary, St. Henry and St. Edward the Confessor.
  
- III. Teachings of the Church
  - a. Vatican II (Domestic Church)
  - b. [www.usccb.org](http://www.usccb.org) (marriage, parenting, and family life)
  
- IV. Current Situation/Pastoral Advice
  - a. Reality of society/pressures/blessings
  - b. Marriage: integrity with flexibility, communication on myriad of issues
  - c. Children: blessings and challenges
  - d. Pastoral Advice
    - i. Distinguish between Hope and Expectations
    - ii. Hold the balance of spouse and parent, individual and communal.
    - iii. “God, show me how to love right now in my life”
    - iv. OK to say you are feeling ‘overwhelmed’
    - v. Ask for God to provide models and help
    - vi. Pray, ask for help of others, focus on today
    - vii. Live life for Christ in prayer, community, formation, and service
    - viii. Trust the Holy Spirit at work in you as Priest, Prophet and King
  
- V. Next step?
  - a. Pray and ask God to help guide you
  - b. Provide support for others and ask for help
  - c. Constantly study and reflect on life

★ [www.foryourmarriage.org](http://www.foryourmarriage.org)

## General Instruction of the Liturgy of the Hours

Fr. Bryan Dolejsi

Resources:

The Liturgy of the Hours: 4 Volume set

Magnificat (app and webpage: [magnificat.com](http://magnificat.com))

iBreviary (app and webpage: [ibreviary.com](http://ibreviary.com))

1. Prayer as ministry of the Church: "Public and common prayer by the people of God is rightly considered to be among the primary duties of the Church."
2. Praise and Petition: "The Liturgy of the Hours, or Divine office is principally a prayer of praise and petition. In fact, it is the prayer of the Church with Christ and to Christ."
3. Model of Jesus in Prayer: "The work of each day was closely bound up with his (Jesus) prayer, indeed flowed out from it. Jesus commanded us to do as he did and pray."
4. Trinitarian: "Prayer to God, through Christ, and in the Holy Spirit."
5. Prayer in and through Jesus: "He unites to himself the whole community of mankind in such a way that there is an intimate bond between the prayer of Christ and the prayer of the whole human race."
6. Baptismal Priesthood: "The priesthood of Christ is also shared by the whole body of the Church, so that the baptized are consecrated as a spiritual temple and holy priesthood through the rebirth of baptism and the anointing by the Holy Spirit." "He prays for us as our priest, he prays in us as our head, he is the object of our prayer as our God. Let us then hear our voices in his voice, and his voice in ours."
7. Consecrate time to God: "We consecrate all time to God by praying day and night."
8. Prepares us spiritually: "It is an excellent preparation for the celebration of the Eucharist itself, for it inspires and deepens in a fitting way the dispositions necessary for the fruitful celebration of the Eucharist: faith, hope, love, devotion, and the spirit of self-denial."

9. Dialogue between God and humanity: “Our sanctification is accomplished, and worship offered to God in the Liturgy of the Hours in an exchange or dialogue between God and man in which God speaks to his people and his people reply to him in song and prayer.”
10. Praise to God with His Words: “We use God’s word to offer him praise in the psalms, readings, etc.”
11. Join with Saints/Angels: “We unite ourselves to the heavenly praises of God sung in heaven (with all the saints)” “In the liturgy of the Hours we proclaim this faith, we express and nourish this hope, and we share in some degree the joy of everlasting praise and of that day which knows no setting.”
12. Prayer as service to others: “The church exercises a true maternal function in bringing souls to Christ, not only by charity, good example and works of penance but also by prayer.”
13. Holding the balance in our humanity: “We are to be visible yet endowed with invisible realities, fervent in action yet devoted to contemplation, present in the world, yet a pilgrim and a stranger.”
14. Major Hours: “Morning and Evening Prayer form the “hinges” of the day, most important. Also, there is Office of Readings, Midday prayer, and Compline/Night prayer”
15. Common Prayer preferable: “It is a conversation by God and man and the celebration in common reveals more clearly the ecclesial nature of the Liturgy of the Hours, preferred to private prayer of the Office.” “May give a short reflection after the reading.”
16. Psalms express range of human emotions: “In praying the psalms we should open our hearts to the different attitudes they express, varying with the class of writing to which each belongs (grief, gratitude, trust, etc.), they express accurately the pain and hope, the unhappiness and trust of people of every age and country and celebrate especially faith in God, revelation and redemption.” “The person who prays is not so much for themselves but for the church, in the person of Christ himself. You can add periods of silence for meditation. Singing encouraged.”