

People of Prayer



'Pilgrims of Hope' 2025

Prayer is all about our relationship with God - God brings something to the relationship, and I bring something to the relationship. We come to prayer, we bring ourselves, our loved ones, our daily concerns, hope, joys and struggles.

Pope Francis expresses Prayer as an intimate dialogue with the Creator, a dialogue that starts from the human heart and reaches the merciful heart of God. Prayer should be the spiritual breath of life that never ceases and without which it is impossible to have an intimate relationship with the Father. Prayer must permeate every facet of our lives in the ordinariness of every action.

Through prayer, we can see the face of Christ in others. We learn to listen as well as to speak with God. Prayer is the bridge between heaven and earth, a meeting place where the human heart and the heart of God intertwine in an unceasing dialogue of love.

"We discover how much we are loved by God, and this discovery gives us the hope and courage to live each day, so that the problems we face are no longer obstacles to our happiness but invitations from God, occasions for our encounter with Him." (Pope Francis) It is only in prayer that we can really discover the Father's mercy for it is through humble prayer that God's compassion is felt and creates a new heart in us. Prayer is a key that can open God's heart, a heart full of love and mercy.

Sign of the Cross

Lighting of Candle

As we honour your name, open our minds to know your voice.
Open our hands to do your work.
Open our hearts to hold your Spirit.

Prayer

God of loving relationships,
You call us to be people of prayer,
Inviting us to share with you our joys and hopes;
our sorrows and anxieties.
Be with us as we strive to recognise our need for you.
We ask this in the name of Jesus.
Amen.



Scripture

In the morning, long before dawn, he got up and left the house and went off to a lonely place and prayed there. (Mk 1:35)

Silent reflection

The news of him kept spreading and large crowds would gather to hear him and to have their illnesses cured. But he would go off to some deserted place and pray. Lk 5: 15-16)

Silent reflection

Now it happened in those days that he went onto the mountain to pray; and he spent the whole night in prayer with God. (Lk 6:12)

Silent reflection

He took with him Peter, John and James and went up the mountain to pray. And it happened that, as he was praying, the aspect of his face was changed and his clothing became sparkling white. (Lk 9: 28-29)

Silent reflection

When Jesus received the news about John the Baptist, he withdrew by boat to a lonely place where they could be by themselves. (Mt 14:13)

Silent reflection

Now it happened that he was in a certain place praying, and when he had finished, one of his disciples said, 'Lord, teach us to pray as John taught his disciples.' He said to them, 'When you pray, this is what to say: Father, may your name be held holy, your kingdom come; give us each day our daily bread, and forgive us our sins, for we ourselves forgive each one who is in debt to us. And do not put us to the test.' (Lk 11:1-4)

Silent reflection

Then he withdrew from them, about a stone's throw away, and knelt down and prayed. (Lk 22:41)

Silent reflection

Father, into your hands I commend my spirit. (John 19:30)

Silent reflection

Breaking open the Word

For Jesus, prayer was a life-giving necessity – even in the midst of demanding crowds. The Gospels are full of examples of Jesus taking the time to pray. We don't need to look any further than Jesus to see what a relevant, integrated and sustaining prayer life looks like. His deep and nurtured connection to God was his centre; his heart.

Response

Jesus never prays to an "almighty" God or a remote "cosmic" God. He prays to a loving father God, and he encourages us to do the same.

The Gospel reveals to us that God wants to be with us. This certainty is the source of our hope, which we find enshrined in the 'Our Father.'

The Lord's Prayer

When we feel insignificant and have lost our sense of worth, Lord, teach us to pray:

Our Father, who art in heaven

When we want to withdraw from involvement in work to be with you in prayer, Lord, teach us to pray:

Hallowed be thy name

When we think of the future as fixed and impossible to change, Lord, teach us to pray:

Thy kingdom come

When we evade life's deep demands by saying they are too idealistic, Lord, teach us to pray:

Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven

When we are satisfied and forget that others are hungry, in need, homeless, deprived, Lord, teach us to pray:

Give us this day our daily bread

When we allow bitterness and resentment into our lives, Lord, teach us to pray:

Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.

When we are faced with pressures that are likely to be too much for us, Lord, teach us to pray:

Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. Amen

Prayer is the Church's greatest strength and with these sentiments in mind, the faithful are invited to be on a path of discovering God's mercy, strength and love and to transform 2024 into a great symphony of prayer.

Symphony of Prayer and Praise

*God of blessings,
in this year ahead,
give us a spirit of listening,
of openness to your word
and longing for your kingdom.*

*As we journey toward the Jubilee,
a time of new beginnings,
we pray for help and strength,
to heal our relationships with each other
and all creation.*

*Sing your song of love over us,
renewing our faith and courage,
so we may join our voices together,
discovering new harmonies of hope,
new melodies of reconciliation*

*Attentive to the Spirit,
and awake to the needs of the world,
may we seek your life-giving presence,
as we join as one global family,
in a great symphony of prayer and praise.
Amen.*

Missioning Prayer

As we go about our day, O God;
As we strive to walk with Jesus as people of Prayer.
Help us to follow his prayerful example:
Turning to you as a friend;
Sharing our sorrow and anxieties; our joys and our hopes.
May your grace, mercy and peace,
Bless us, keep us and transform us all,
This day, now and forever.
Amen

