



# EVANGELIUM INSTITUTE

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## TEACHING TRUTH - INSPIRING FAITH

EICATHOLIC.ORG • 1210 S 126TH STREET OMAHA, NE 68144 • 402.830.5244

### Session 5: Modes of Prayer

#### Objectives:

1. We will go over modes of prayer
2. We will talk about bad trends in prayer and spirituality
3. We will discuss overcoming difficulties in prayer
4. Time permitting, we will begin unpacking the Our Father

**Key CCC Paragraphs:** CCC 2700-2751

**Key Scripture Verses:** Mt. 11:25-26; Mk. 4:4-7, 15-19; Mk.14:36; Song 1:7, 3:1-4; Lk. 7:36-50, 19:1-10; Jer. 31:33; Eph. 3:16-17

#### Definitions:

- **Vocal Prayer:** The form of prayer which is most readily accessible to all people, it is the use of words (audible and silent) as we praise, worship, petition or thank the Lord.
- **Mental Prayer:** The engagement of thought, imagination, emotion and desire as we meditate on the mysteries of the faith. It is a higher form of prayer than vocal prayer.
- **Contemplative Prayer:** The highest form of prayer, it is a gift, a receiving from the Lord that reveals to us the depth of our relationships with Him. However, though it is a receiving it is not exclusively passive. The soul must still say “yes” to God.
- **Battle of Prayer:** The term used to express the struggle we all share against ourselves, the tempter and the distractions of the world which seek to pull us away from union with God in prayer.
- **Spiritual Dryness:** The lack of feeling, thoughts, memories or desire for the spiritual life but particularly prayer.
- **Acedia:** A form of depression in prayer due to a kind of carelessness about the spiritual life.
- **Filial Trust:** The attitude of the Christian in times of spiritual dryness and acedia.

#### Suggested Reading List:

d'Elée, Jean C.J. *I Believe in Love: A Personal Retreat Based on the Teaching of St. Therese of Lisieux* 1969  
Dubay S.M., Thomas *Authenticity: A Biblical Theology of Discernment* 1977  
Gallagher O.M.V., Timothy M. *The Discernment of Spirits* 2005  
Gallagher O.M.V., Timothy M. *An Ignatian Introduction to Prayer* 2007  
Nault O.S.B., Jean Charles *The Noonday Devil: Acedia, the Unnamed Evil of Our Times* 2013  
Neuhaus, Richard John *Death on a Friday Afternoon: Meditations on the Last Words of Jesus on the Cross* 2000  
Thibodeaux S.J., Mark E. *Armchair Mystic: Easing Into Contemplative Prayer* 2001  
Von Balthazar, Hans Urs *Heart of the World* 1954



## SOME HELPFUL PRAYERS

...for different occasions

### **Prayer for the family**

Heavenly Father, we ask You to bless our family.  
Open our hearts to receive Your love. May our home be another Nazareth,  
so that our family may be a place where Your peace and love abides.  
Open our eyes to recognize the gift and beauty of life,  
so that we may find joy in Your presence among us.  
Grant us pure hearts seeking holiness, generous hearts full of Your love,  
merciful hearts ready to forgive and tender hearts full of kindness.  
May our family be a sanctuary of life and love,  
a beacon of hope  
drawing others to your Son, Jesus Christ. Amen.

Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, Holy Family of Nazareth, pray for us.

### **For sick family members**

Lord, you bless us  
with the gift of family.

We thank you for the love, strength, and  
consolation  
that families give to those who are ill.

Turn your loving gaze upon us  
and protect us each day, and today.

May this difficult moment  
serve to unite the members of this family  
so that each of us begins to be more concerned  
about others  
and becomes capable of more openly showing  
our love for each other  
and our faith in you.

Lord, accompany us on our journey  
and bless us with your grace  
so we feel your closeness and aid  
as we care for our ill family member(s),  
and suffer and rejoice with them. Amen.

From the Bishops of Spain

### **Prayer for discernment and against judging others**

Grant me, O Lord, to know what I ought to know,  
To love what I ought to love,  
To praise what delights You most,  
To value what is precious in Your sight,  
To hate what is offensive to You.  
Do not suffer me to judge according to the sight of my eyes,  
Nor to pass sentence according to the hearing of the ears of the ignorant;  
But to discern with a true judgment between things visible and spiritual,  
And above all, always to inquire what is the good pleasure of Your will. Amen.

Thomas A' Kempis

## SOME HELPFUL PRAYERS

...for different occasions

### **Prayer to Get our Life Back on Course**

O Lord our God, we beseech you, to ask for the gift we need. Steer the ship of our life to yourself, the quiet harbor of all storm-stressed souls. Show us the course which we are to take. Renew in us the spirit of docility.

Let your Spirit curb our fickleness; guide and strengthen us to perform what is for our own good, to keep your commandments and ever to rejoice in your glorious and vivifying presence. Yours is the glory and praise for all eternity. Amen.

St. Basil the Great

### **Prayer for purer speech**

O Divine Wisdom, the eternal Word of the Father. I humbly ask you, by your grace, to purge my lips from all wicked and unprofitable words, that my mouth may never open but to your praise and honor, and to the benefit of others. Amen.

### **Prayer before Communion**

As the wearied hart thirsts after the fountains of water, so does my soul pant after you, my Savior, my Lord, and my God. It ardently longs to drink of those fountains which your love hath opened for its comfort and relief. Tired with my own evil ways, I return hungry and thirsty, crying out aloud. Have mercy on me, O Son of God, and permit me to taste of your banquet, that my soul may be refreshed. Oh, that my soul did truly hunger after you, the bread of angels, the food of blessed souls, and that all that is within me might be delighted with the taste of your sweetness! I desire forever to renounce my folly and weakness, and from my heart request that, for the future, my joy, my relief, my treasure, and rest, may be entirely centered in you. May I never desire anything besides you; and may all things seem as nothing without you, O my God.

From the *Golden Manual*

### **Prayer for Those Awaiting the Return of One Serving in the Armed Forces**

God of all goodness,  
Look with love on those who wait  
for the safe return of their loved ones  
who serve in the armed forces of their country.  
In faith and hope, we turn to you for comfort.  
Grant that we may trust in your mercy  
and send an angel to sustain us as we await their safe return.  
We ask this through Christ our Lord.

## SOME HELPFUL PRAYERS

...for different occasions

### **Prayer for Those Serving in the Armed Forces**

Almighty and eternal God,  
those who take refuge in you will be glad  
and forever will shout for joy.  
Protect these soldiers as they discharge their duties.  
Protect them with the shield of your strength  
and keep them safe from all evil and harm.  
May the power of your love enable them to return home  
in safety, that with all who love them,  
they may ever praise you for your loving care.  
We ask this through Christ our Lord.

From the Bishops of the United States

### **Prayer for When We Are Frustrated**

God of our life,  
There are days when the burdens we carry  
chafe our shoulders and weigh us down;  
when the road seems dreary and endless,  
the skies grey and threatening;  
when our lives have no music in them,  
and our hearts are lonely,  
and our souls have lost their courage.

Flood the path with light,  
turn our eyes to where the skies are full of  
promise;  
tune our hearts to brave music;  
give us the sense of comradeship  
with heroes and saints of every age;  
and so quicken our spirits  
that we may be able to encourage  
the souls of all who journey with us  
on the road of life,  
to your honor and glory.

St. Augustine

### **Prayer for When We Are Suffering**

Let the crucifix be not only in my eyes and on my breast, but in my heart.

O Jesus! Release all my affections and draw them upwards.

Let my crucified heart sink forever into Thine and bury itself in the mysterious wound made by the entry of the lance.

St. Bernadette of Soubirous

## SOME HELPFUL PRAYERS

...for different occasions

### Prayer for Difficult Moments

Be at peace

Do not look forward in fear to the changes of life;  
rather look to them with full hope as they arise.

God, whose very own you are,  
will deliver you from out of them.

He has kept you hitherto,  
and He will lead you safely through all things;  
and when you cannot stand it,  
God will bury you in his arms.

Do not fear what may happen tomorrow;  
the same everlasting Father who cares for you today  
will take care of you then and every day.

He will either shield you from suffering,  
or will give you unfailing strength to bear it.

Be at peace,  
and put aside all anxious thoughts and imagination.

St. Francis de Sales



### Prayer to Our Lady Undoer of Knots

Virgin Mary, Mother of fair love, Mother who never refuses to come to the aid of a child in need, Mother whose hands never cease to serve your beloved children because they are moved by the divine love and immense mercy that exist in your heart, cast your compassionate eyes upon me and see the snarl of knots that exists in my life. You know very well how desperate I am, my pain, and how I am bound by these knots. Mary, Mother to whom God entrusted the undoing of the knots in the lives of his children, I entrust into your hands the ribbon of my life. No one, not even the evil one himself, can take it away from your precious care. In your hands there is no knot that cannot be undone. Powerful Mother, by your grace and intercessory power with Your Son and My Liberator, Jesus, take into your hands today this knot.

[Mention your request here]

I beg you to undo it for the glory of God, once for all. You are my hope.

O my Lady, you are the only consolation God gives me, the fortification of my feeble strength, the enrichment of my destitution, and, with Christ, the freedom from my chains.

Hear my plea. Keep me, guide me, protect me, o safe refuge!

Mary, Undoer of Knots, pray for me.

## Meditation

Read the following slowly by yourself. Read it a couple of times maybe. Then answer some of the reflection questions at the bottom.

<sup>5</sup>“When you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, who love to stand and pray in the synagogues and on street corners so that others may see them. Amen, I say to you, they have received their reward. <sup>6</sup>But when you pray, go to your inner room, close the door, and pray to your Father in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will repay you. <sup>7</sup>In praying, do not babble like the pagans, who think that they will be heard because of their many words. <sup>8</sup>Do not be like them. Your Father knows what you need before you ask him.

<sup>9</sup> “This is how you are to pray:

Our Father in heaven,  
hallowed be your name,

<sup>10</sup>your kingdom come,  
your will be done,

on earth as in heaven.

<sup>11</sup>Give us today our daily bread;

<sup>12</sup>and forgive us our debts,  
as we forgive our debtors;

<sup>13</sup>and do not subject us to the final test,  
but deliver us from the evil one.

<sup>14</sup>If you forgive others their transgressions, your heavenly Father will forgive you. <sup>15</sup>But if you do not forgive others, neither will your Father forgive your transgressions.

Matthew 6:5-15

To whom do you think Jesus is referring in vs. 5?

What do you think Jesus mean by “babble like the pagans” in vs. 7?

Keeping in mind that the early Church did not celebrate daily Mass, what do you think Jesus meant by “daily bread” in vs. 11?