



PRAYING

1. We may think we don't know how to pray properly. But there is no one proper way to pray.
2. Prayer is the raising of our mind and heart to God. It is simply being present to God and allowing God to be present to us.
3. We pray to:
 - a) Praise God for who He is.
 - b) Thank God for what He's done.
 - c) Be sorry for our sins, and ask for forgiveness.
 - d) Ask God for what we need, and for the needs of others.
4. Let "Thy will be done" be in our heart with every prayer we offer.
5. Be humble. When we acknowledge that we don't know how to pray, we are ready to receive freely the gift of prayer.
6. Avoid distractions. If our heart is far from God, the words of prayer are in vain.
7. Pray with sincerity, not to impress others.
8. Pray with faith and confidence. Learn to recognize God's answer as His gift, and not just a coincidence.
9. Be patient and persevere. God's answer to prayer may take time. Sometimes his answer is "wait".
10. Be honest with God. He already knows what's in our heart, so we may as well admit the truth. Even Mark Twain's Huckleberry Finn (a curious model for prayer) had to admit it: "You can't pray a lie - I found that out."
11. Pray constantly (Ephesians 6:18), in common with others (Acts 2:42), and in song (Colossians 3:16). (Some listen to recorded religious music as a way to lift mind and heart to God.)
12. Memorize brief prayers found in the Bible, like that of the distraught father, "I do believe, help my unbelief." (Mark 9:24), and of Bartimeus, "Jesus, son of David, have pity on me." (Mark 10:48).
13. Be comforted to know that even when we find it hardest to pray, when we feel abandoned or overwhelmed or at the very threshold of death, Jesus helps us to pray.
14. A life of prayer is the habit of being in the presence of God and in communion with him.

God Speaks to Us

Prayer "happens" when we open our senses, minds, wills, and hearts to the many ways God speaks to us. God communicates to us in all these ways, and more.

- ◆ God speaks to us by giving us life. God gives life to each of us and so invites us to respond to divine creative love.
- ◆ God speaks to us through created things. Every good and beautiful thing is a word spoken to us by the Creator.
- ◆ God speaks to us through the events in our lives, by providential care.
- ◆ God speaks to us through the Bible.
- ◆ God speaks to us through Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit, and people like the prophets.
- ◆ When we are quiet, we can hear God speak to us by recalling memories, by stirring up emotions, by stimulating thoughts and images, and by encouraging us to make wise decisions and to do good deeds. When these messages are of God, they will be in accord with the teachings of Scripture and the Church, and will produce the good fruits of love, service, generosity, and peace.



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