



Prayer

Prayer is the experience of a relationship with God. It is a mysterious, personal and sacred experience, never the same. People are all different and God's relationship with each person is different yet God is at the heart of everything. Prayer is a response to God: a basic openness to and communication with God, within a dialogue initiated by the Creator. Thus, many Christians see prayer as a gift from God and a powerful, effective way to deepen the covenant relationship between a loving God and humankind. The prayerful person is one who freely responds to God's offer of relationship and open communication.

Prayer is communication with God and an awareness of the Creator's powerful and loving presence. Prayer can be silent or verbal, formal or informal, private or communal.

Christian prayer is the personal and loving relationship of the children of God with their Father who is infinitely good, with his Son Jesus Christ, and with the Holy Spirit who dwells in their hearts.¹

Jesus is a model for the prayer life as he teaches how to pray. The Gospel often shows Jesus at prayer, drawing apart to pray in solitude, even at night. He prays before the decisive moments of his mission or that of his apostles. In fact, all his life is a prayer because he is in a constant communion of love with the Father.²

Prayer connects the person of faith with God who communicates with them as they walk together on the faith journey. God is present in all places, at all times and in all activities. Prayer is a way of acknowledging the presence of God in creation. Prayer invites a response in word and action. Prayer connects people with God and with each other. A loving God shows how to care for one other, to live together in harmony and to care for the earth.

One can be alone and pray or can be alone and not pray. Prayer is an action of being in touch with God at the heart of silence or at the heart of words; at the heart of solitude or at the heart of activity.

The Christian life is nurtured by prayer, which can take the following formats:

- Traditional prayers (such as the Our Father, Hail Mary)
- Formal and informal prayers (prayers of praise, thanksgiving, petition and sorrow)
- Meditation (using guided imagery, story, scripture, nature and art)
- Contemplative prayer (through silence, mantras and breath prayer)
- Other methods of prayer (through movement, journal writing and music)

¹ *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2nd ed. Accessed March 26, 2019
http://www.vatican.va/archive/ccc_css/archive/catechism/p1s1c2a2.htm n.534

² *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2nd ed. Accessed March 26, 2019
http://www.vatican.va/archive/ccc_css/archive/catechism/p1s1c2a2.htm n.542