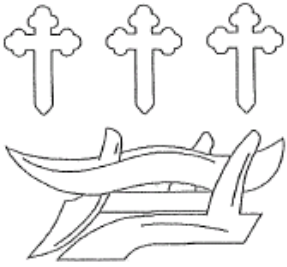




Program Index
“Lord, Teach us to Pray!” Luke 11:1

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So often, especially in the Gospel according to St. Luke, Our Lord spends time alone in prayer. Before any major decision, such as choosing the Twelve, He steps aside from the noise that surrounded Him to reconnect with His Heavenly Father in that deep, personal communion fostered in prayer.

If Jesus had to do this during His public ministry, we who follow Him must do the same. In order to fulfill our mandate to go forth and teach all nations, we must have that constant connection with Our Lord that is fostered in prayer.

However, the world in which we live does not understand this need. In fact, our culture often presents challenges and blocks that prevent us from entering into the quiet solitude of prayer so that we might be able to hear God's still, small voice who calls us to follow wherever He leads.

To this end, we present these materials for *National Vocation Awareness Week 2011*. In our work with young people discerning a call to priesthood and/or religious, developing a life and habit of prayer is essential in discerning any potential call from God; whether that be to priesthood, religious, or married life.

In prayer, our hearts are configured to respond to Mary's command in John's Gospel to 'do whatever He tells you. In prayer, that deep communion of love, the love that inspires the saints to lay down their lives so that others might live, is fostered. In prayer, we come to desire not what I want, but what God wants for me. All of these lead to a deeper and greater happiness than anything else this world can provide; for it is a happiness founded in the Eternal.

Finally, the source for our materials may be a surprise to some: Section Four of the Catechism of the Catholic Church. This concluding section of the Catechism, on prayer in the life of the Church and the individual believer, is a beautiful meditation on this deep communion with Our Lord. May these reflections and programs which we have assembled help your prayer life so that we all might joyfully follow Mary's command to 'do whatever He tells us to do.'

In Christ,

Fr. Kyle Schnippel
Vocation Director
Archdiocese of Cincinnati

Mr. Wayne Topp
Associate Director



VOCATIONS
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School Announcements
“Lord, Teach us to Pray!” Luke 11:1

From January 9 to the 15, the Church celebrates the annual *Vocation Awareness Week*. Following the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord, the Church sets aside this week for the faithful to pray for an increase in vocations to the priesthood and religious life, but to also call to bring forward that we are all called by Christ to a specific, unique mission. In order to discern this mission in life, we must be students of prayer. These announcements explain the types of prayer as found in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, paragraphs 2623-2649. Please use them as you see fit in your school and/or parish. These forms of prayer find their roots in the canonical Scriptures, as well as in the lived Tradition of the Church, dating from the time of the Apostles.

Monday: Blessing and Adoration (CCC 2626-2628)

All true prayer is an ‘encounter between God and man’ and involves a movement of thought and prayer from us up to God and from God down to us. Our prayer of blessing is a response to God’s gifts: ‘because God blesses, the human heart can in return bless the one who is the source of every blessing. In this movement back and forth between us and God, we are drawn deeper into relationship with God and we recognize that God is Creator, wholly Other, yet He desires for us to get to know Him, and we are drawn into Adoration of the great beauty who is God. In Adoration, we sit face to face, as it were, with the Creator of the Universe, so that our hearts might be configured to be more like His.

Tuesday: Prayer of Petition (CCC 2629-2633)

During his Agony in the Garden, Jesus prayed, asking the Father to take the cup of suffering away from him, giving us a model of how to ask God for what we need. A prayer of petition is simply this, to seek to do what God wants us to do, as Jesus completes His prayer in the Garden: ‘Father, not my will be done, but thy will be done.’ In Prayers of Petition, we first recognize that we are sinners and seek God’s grace and healing, and we seek to be messengers of God’s Kingdom, to work with God to make His message known.

Wednesday: Prayer of Intercession (CCC 2634-2636)

‘Intercession is a prayer of petition which leads us to pray as Jesus did.’ In intercession, we pray not for our needs, but for the needs of someone whom we love or who has asked us to pray. Jesus prays in this way when he offers himself on the Cross for our sins. He stands before His Father and asks that the punishment due to us because of our sins should be placed upon his divine shoulders. When we pray to the saints or to our guardian angel, this is the type of prayer we ask them to make on our behalf before God the Father. As the Catechism reminds us, intercessory prayer knows no boundaries: we are called to pray for all the world, friend and enemy alike. Let us live this prayer always.

Thursday: Prayer of Thanksgiving (CCC: 2637-2638)

In Greek, the term 'Eucharist' means 'Thanksgiving,' and as such it is the standard model of prayer for the Church. The prayer of Jesus during the Last Supper and continuing on into his Crucifixion is ultimately a prayer of Thanksgiving in which everything He has been given by the Father is returned to the Father. In the model of Jesus, 'every event and need can become an offering of thanksgiving.' During this day, let us make every act, every moment a prayer of thanksgiving before Our Lord.

Friday: Prayer of Praise (CCC 2639-2643)

The highest form of prayer is the Prayer of Praise. In this prayer, we praise God for the very fact that He is God. This comes not from what He does, but rather that He is. Prayer of Praise before God is an expression of our love for God and our desire that we be united with Him in all things. As such, this is the prayer of the saints and angels in heaven, who stand around the throne of the altar of God continually offering praise to God. Let us make this day a 'continual offering of praise' before God that we might be united with the choirs of heaven while still here on earth.



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Pre-School Lesson Plan
"Lord, Teach us to Pray!" Luke 11:1

Session 1

Purpose:

1. The students will demonstrate understanding of prayer as "focusing all of our attention on God, especially our mind/thoughts and heart."
2. Students will put prayer into words on a personal level.

Supplies:

- Whiteboard or large paper,
- "Prayer ball"
- Coloring sheet of Jesus, the Good Shepherd
- Crayons or watercolor paints.

Discussion:

1. Begin by explaining to students that this is Vocation Awareness Week and explain the meaning of vocation. Specifically discuss the vocation of priest and other religious. Then ask the students if they know what prayer is. Explain/remind them it is focusing all of their attention on God, especially their thoughts and heart. Doing things can also be prayer to God; ask children for examples of things they might do that could be considered prayer (acts of charity done for the Lord, going to Mass-the greatest prayer, etc.)
2. Ask students if they think it is important to pray. Help students to list reasons why we should pray and for whom. List examples of 4 parts of prayer (praise, thanksgiving, petition, contrition). Tell students prayer is something we do everyday! We should pray for our loved ones, but also for our priests and for those who are considering the priesthood and religious life.

Activities:

1. Sit students on the floor in a circle and describe the game of "telephone" to the students. Begin by whispering a short, spiritual phrase to the student to your left, such as "The Lord is my shepherd and I am his little lamb." It is whispered into the ear of each child in turn. The last child says the phrase aloud. Compare what the child says to the original phrase. The teacher explains that it is hard to play the game if there is a lot of noise and easier to play if it is very quiet. The same holds true with prayer - it is much easier to pray and focus on God and hear what He might be trying to tell us when it is quiet.

2. Next show the students a copy of the coloring sheet of Jesus holding the little lamb. Ask them to tell you how they think the lamb feels in the strong and loving arms of Jesus (safe, happy, loved, etc.) Then remind them they are each like a little lamb to Jesus. Ask each child to close his eyes and imagine that Jesus was holding them like that and ask them what they would say to Jesus. Make a list on the board. Explain this is what prayer is and they can imagine themselves like this with Jesus when they pray.
3. Give students the coloring page to color or paint at their seats. If the students are able they may copy their words from the list on the board or the teacher may write them on their paper.

Conclusion:

We are all called to pray and, like anything, we need to practice everyday to learn to pray better. Prayer is focusing our attention on God and works best when it is quiet around us. Thinking of ourselves as a little lamb in the arms of Jesus is a great way to pray!

Session 2

Purpose:

1. To remind the students that Mary is the mother of Jesus and our mother as well, and to introduce the concept that we can ask Mary to intercede for us.
2. To teach students to pray the Hail Mary.

Supplies:

- Statue or picture of the Blessed Mother
- attachment of gestures for Hail Mary prayer
- coloring sheets for Hail Mary booklet
- magazine pictures of Mary
- crayons or paints
- construction paper (large size)
- stapler

Discussion:

Begin by asking the students if they know who Mary is. Explain she is the mother of Jesus and that Jesus wants her to be mother to us all - even a mother to our own Mommies!! So Mary is like a Super Mom! She is very close to Jesus and loves him. We want to learn to be like her so we can learn to love Jesus as much as she does! And just as our own moms love us and pray to Jesus for us, Mary can pray for us, too. Ask the students if they know the special prayer we use when we honor Mary and ask for her to pray for us. (Hail Mary) Recite together if possible. Tell the students that Mary takes special care of all priests and religious.

Activities:

1. Teach students the Hail Mary with gestures. (See attached directions - it may be sung if preferred) Let students lead the class in turn if they would like.
2. Go to a work space and give students the Hail Mary coloring sheets to color/paint. Fold the large construction paper over the coloring sheets to make a cover and write or let

the student copy "Hail Mary" or something similar on the cover. A magazine image of Mary may be cut out and glued on the cover if desired.

Conclusion:

Mary loves us as she loves Jesus and wants us to ask for her intercession. We can pray the Hail Mary each day to grow closer to God. Sing/recite the Hail Mary with gestures at the end of the school day.

Session 3

Purpose:

To introduce students to the Rosary as a way to pray.

Supplies:

- Rosary (large bead, wooden if available)
- Rosary book
- Children's Rosary CD - Joyful Mysteries
- large construction paper with outline of rosary drawn on it
- cheerios in individual baggies
- Elmer's School glue (not gluestick)
- small paper plate
- Q-Tips
- stickers (religious or just dots, cross stickers -optional)

Discussion:

Show students the rosary beads and ask if they know what to use them for. Explain they help us to pray and think of all the wonderful things about the life of Jesus. Briefly describe the mysteries at a level students can understand, using a rosary book if desired. Explain that each bead requires a certain prayer, with most of the prayers being the Hail Mary. Count the beads of each decade to let the students discover how many Hail Mary prayers are said in a rosary (you may include those said in the beginning of the rosary if you wish.)

Activities:

Play the rosary CD in the classroom while the students are working. Pass out construction paper with markings for the rosary. (See example) Give a baggie of cheerios and glue to each student. (A small puddle of glue on a plate with a Q-tip is great for this activity.) Ask students to count out 10 cheerios from their bag. Explain that each cheerio will be glued on the paper to represent a Hail Mary. After dabbing a spot of glue on each dot on the paper, the students may stick a Cheerio on. Repeat for each decade. When they are finished, you may give them stickers to put on between the decades and a cross sticker for the end of the rosary.

Conclusion:

We can pray to ask Mary to pray for us in the Hail Mary. We can pray the Rosary to become closer to Jesus. We can offer these prayers up for our families, friends and for priests and religious, too!



Primary Grades 1-3 Lesson Plan

"Lord, Teach us to Pray!" Luke 11:1

Children's Rosary Workshop

Purpose:

1. Students will be able to design and assemble their own cord rosary.
2. They will be able to explain what prayer is said on each bead, and exhibit a desire to pray.

Time: 90 minutes per class.

Cost: 50 cents to \$1 per rosary, depending upon market prices. Most teachers ask each student to bring in money to cover material costs.

Supplies:

- 8mm faceted plastic beads, bonded cord, 6mm clear rondell spacers, metal center, metal crucifix, knot making tool, fingernail polish, scissors, blackboard, DVD player.
- These, along with instructions, may be obtained at cost from:
Mrs. Marianne Tomlinson at: (513) 681-2086, e-mail: mfaustina@fuse.net.

Pre-Lesson Activities:

1. Invite parents with their younger children and grandparents to attend the Rosary Workshop, to assist students.
2. Educate students on the rosary and its history. (Here is a brief lesson on the origins of the rosary called [Thinking Good Thoughts](#)¹.)
3. Arrange for a priest to bless completed rosaries.

Activity #1: Making the cord rosaries

1. Team of experienced rosary makers (3 or more works well, you may request these helpers when you obtain materials) introduce themselves and explain to students why they do this. Start with prayer: Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be and, if comfortable, a spontaneous prayer asking for God's help in enlivening in us a desire for prayer, especially the rosary.
2. Hold up completed rosary: explain loop, center, tail and crucifix.
3. Draw on blackboard: string with knot while explaining the positioning of 5 decades of 'Hail Mary' and 4 'Our Father' beads that have spacers on each side representing the loop. Ask guessing questions along the way. Example: "Should we start stringing beads on the long or short end of the string? Why? Let students count out each decade as leader draws them on the board.
4. Students select one main 'Hail Mary color' for their rosary from an array of 9 colors. Leader tosses the bag of beads to each individual student as they state their preference.
5. Students select a string color (black or white) and begin putting 10 beads on the string.
6. Students trade 6 of their 'Hail Mary' beads for 6 'Our Father' beads of any color or combination from the 'left over bead' box.

¹ <http://www.hcfm.org/main/rosary-teach-think.php>

Activity #2: Completing cord rosaries

1. When the first student has completed stringing the loop of their rosary, the class is instructed to listen for further instruction.
2. Leader draws on board the center and tail of rosary and teaches students which beads to string: spacer, Our Father, spacer, 3 Hail Mary's, spacer, Our Father, spacer) and directs them to rosary makers for knots. Leader invites discussion as rosaries are assembled. "What's the difference between a cross and a crucifix?"
3. Adults make the appropriate knots for them. Center pieces and crucifixes are attached by knot makers with student involvement. Excess string is cut off and fingernail polish applied as glue. Volunteer helpers (parents, siblings and grandparents) assist knot makers. Many rosaries will be completed before DVD starts, not all. All rosaries will be completed before knot makers leave the classroom.

Activity #3: DVD: *The Day the Sun Danced, The True Story of Fatima* (30 minutes)

1. Teacher assembles students in front of Television to watch DVD.
2. Leader briefly explains history of children of Fatima, Portugal 1916, and emphasizes this story is history and not fiction as evidenced by Sr. Lucia's diary.
3. DVD is shown.
4. When completed, leader answers a few questions students may have regarding the DVD and explains the proper respect for the rosary, a sacramental, not a piece of jewelry. It is not meant to be worn, but to be prayed and kept in pocket, purse or under pillow.
5. Close with a short, heartfelt prayer of consecration to Jesus and Mary, repeated slowly by students.

Evaluation:

1. Students will express their love for Jesus and Mary.
2. Students will carve out more time in their lives for prayer, especially the rosary.

Suggested Follow-Up Activities:

- Priest blesses students' handmade rosaries.
- Teacher will spend time praying a slow and devout decade of the rosary with her/his students during each religion class.
- Web sites on the rosary:
 - www.catholic-church.org/ccos_tn/pdf/rosarylessonplan.pdf
 - www.rosary-center.org
 - www.theholynosary.org/index.html
- Other videos on Roman Catholic Church approved Marian apparitions.
 - [List of Approved Apparitions](http://www.salvemariaregina.info/MarianShrines/MarianApparitions.html)²

² <http://www.salvemariaregina.info/MarianShrines/MarianApparitions.html>



Intermediate Grades (4-6) Lesson Plan

"Lord, Teach us to Pray" Luke 11:1

Purpose:

- Students will demonstrate their understanding of the role of fathers in their everyday lives.
- Students will explore the first two words of the Our Father and the meaning of those words in relation to our identity as Catholic Christians.

Supplies:

- Construction Paper
- Markers
- Magazines with different cultures represented (including "subcultures" such as punk, emo, hip-hop, etc.)

Activity #1: Fatherhood in the World

- Start with a piece of construction paper
- In the middle write the names of the people in your life who are father figures to you
 - Dad
 - Priest
 - Coach(es)
 - Older brother(s)
 - Etc.
- In the space surrounding these names, write:
 - Your relationship to these men.
 - What these men provide for you.
 - How do they fill the role of father in your life?
- Our earthly fathers are there for us everyday. They provide food on the table, a roof over our heads, and a warm place to sleep. They love us and show that love in many different ways: they teach us to do things, they challenge us to be stronger, they sit and read books with us, they play with us, they teach us what is right and what is wrong, etc.

Activity #2: God is our Father

- Being a child of God:
 - God created us.
 - God gives us life.
 - God reveals himself to us through the Son:
 - Jesus says: "No one knows the Father except the son and anyone to whom the son wishes to reveal Him" and "let the little children come to me."
 - Jesus creates for us, through His death and resurrection, the ability to be the sons and daughters of God!
 - The gates of heaven are now open for us to enter back into the Source of our creation - our real father.
 - We must act like sons and daughters of God:
 - God is love, mercy, compassion, forgiveness and goodness.

- To the best of our ability, we must act like we know our Father and how he expects us to act.
 - We can't act like His sons and daughters unless we get to know our Father through prayer and willingly open our minds to what God is asking us to do.
- Look back at the piece of construction paper with the father figures - How do you make these men proud?
 - How do people recognize you as the son or daughter of these men?
 - When we act, people recognize something about our character and ask us where we learned such behavior. We brag that our parents teach us these things. The same is true for God the Father. His Word, the Sacred Scriptures, and, even more alive, Jesus, tell us how to live as God expects. By listening to this, in Church or in our daily prayer with our family, we all learn how to be better sons and daughters of God.

Activity #3: The unity of "Our": A Christian Collage

- Have students cut out pictures from magazines of people who they relate to and people who are different from them.
- On a piece of construction paper, have the students glue the magazine clippings into a shape that symbolizes Christianity or God in some way (e.g. cross, fish, dove, crown of thorns, Bible, candle, Eucharist, etc.)
 - It is probably easier to have the students draw the shape first and fill it in with the pictures they have clipped.
- Somewhere on the paper (around the picture or on the back) have the students write the many differences they see in the people between themselves and those displayed in the picture.
- Discuss with students the meaning of "Our" in the Our Father:
 - Calls us out of our selfishness to recognize and pray in the communion with the Church and all Christians who believe in the one true God.
 - While there are different denominations of Christianity (and other religions who believe in the one true God, such as Judaism), we are all united in our belief in God.
 - In this "Our" we connect with rich and poor, young and old, stranger and friend, enemy and ally in a prayer that recognizes the gift of our one identity as Children of God.
 - We have all been born as creations of God. We all must be treated with dignity.
 - There is ONE fatherhood that connects us all. He is the creator of us all and the source from which we are called to return.
 - We are all part of God's creation and are therefore connected. We are different but we are all the same under God. We are called to unity. Meaning those who don't know of God must hear about God and come to know him, those who turn away from God must be encouraged to turn back to God.
 - Fatherhood on earth divides us into separate communities, but God's fatherhood unites us into one, in Christ as members of one body.
 - The body doesn't work right if one part doesn't work right. We are called to help each other to work right in the Body of Christ.
- At the end of the lesson read this short reflection piece:
 - <http://jmm.aaa.net.au/articles/12648.htm>

Additional ideas/Homework Assignments:

- Continue the discussion of the Our Father by reading *CCC #2777 ff* and *Jesus of Nazareth* by Pope Benedict XVI, pp. 128-168
- YouTube videos – What do they really mean?

- Have students view the following YouTube™ videos at home (remind students to search for exact video title in quotes):
 - “The Christ Side of Life”
 - “Ego – Lego Parody”
 - “Catholic Fiat 500 Commercial Parody”
 - “Real Flower Power” (This video contains images of drug use)
 - “Has “Lost” gotten boring? Try Found”
 - “iConfess – Dancing priest iPod spoof”
 - “iPray + HisTunes: A Catholic iPod style ad”
 - “Holy Fellowship of the Rings”
 - “Sprite or Spirit”
 - “Thirst – Catholic Church”
 - “Matrix – Catholic”
 - “I’m Loving Her – a Catholic McDonald’s rip off”
 - “Star Wars alternative – In hoc signo vinces”
 - “The apple incident – original sin” (uses strong images including drug use, violence, and mass destruction)
 - “iLove – what really counts”
 - “Men in Black – Catholic Priests”
 - “Catholic nun commercial”
 - “Praystation – Playstation”
 - “James Bond intro – catholic priest”
- Each student will then choose one of the videos to report on.
- The report will include the name of the video, a brief description of what actually happens in the video and their initial reaction to the video and why they chose to report on that particular video.
- Ask the students to look deeper into the topic of the video and include in their report what Catholic teaching the video is portraying and why the Church believes that teaching. The report should include references to sources such as the Bible or the Catechism.
- Together as a class, compose a prayer for priests and religious and begin each week with that prayer along with a Hail Mary.
 - Alternatively, recite the Our Father each day at the end of class with emphasis on the parts that have been taught that day/week in class.
- Utilize materials from 2007-2010 Vocation Awareness Weeks throughout the year.



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Junior High Lesson Plan
“Lord, teach us to pray” Luke 11: 1

Purpose: Students will:

- Be introduced to the idea of prayer and its importance in the everyday life of the Catholic Christian;
- Learn about the different formulas of prayer practiced by ancient Christians;
- Utilize the prayer technique of the first Christians as an example to use in their daily lives;
- Be introduced to the three different expressions of prayer as mentioned in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (CCC 2700 ff);
- Show understanding of the importance of prayer and various ways of prayer through writing and completing a quiz on the lives of the saints.

Supplies:

- *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (or copies of the text from #2698-2724 – attached below)
- Bible
- Other Items for Prayer Activity (see below)
- **Religious Saints Quiz**

Topic 1: What is Prayer?

- Prayer is both a sacrifice of the spirit and an act of honoring God. We come to God in prayer humbly offering him our prayer as our sacrifice of our spirit in an attempt to honor Him.
- It involves humility (CCC 2559) and a right heart (CCC 2562).
- In prayer we enter into the Covenant of God where we meet God who yearns to meet us “at the well of our heart.” (CCC 2563)
- Prayer creates a communion with the whole Christian people as it creates a communion with God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit and thus with the entire body of Christ (the Church). (CCC 2565)

Topic 2: Origins of Christian Prayer the first Centuries; Experiencing Ancient Prayer

- Three key authors: Tertullian, Clement of Alexandria and Origen
- All three emphasize the need for both communal and private prayer and give directions on how to pray in private.
- Emphasis on the need to take time to pray at least three times throughout the day in spontaneous fashion.
 - Clement suggests a “two-step” formula: Start with praise and thanksgiving to God and then present your needs. Always keep as your first need, the need to live a good and just life and second that faith, salvation, and knowledge be given to all people so that God might be even more glorified.
 - Origen suggests a “Five-Step” formula: (1) First offer praise, (2) then offer thanksgiving for all that God has given you, (3) then ask for God’s forgiveness for the times you had failed him that day and in the past, (4) ask God for what you need, (5) finish by praising God for his greatness once again.

- One should have a special “prayer place” set aside in one’s home to offer prayer in private.
- **Activity: Experiencing Ancient Prayer (about 20 minutes)**
 - Turn the classroom into a special “prayer place.” Include:
 - An object to focus on: Crucifix, statue of a saint, Bible, etc.
 - Space for teens to get into a favorite prayer position
 - Candles/lighting that is conducive to a prayerful mood
 - Lead the teens in prayer following Origen’s model for prayer
 - Praise – titles of honor for God, recognition of the greatness of God (e.g. Heavenly Father, Wonderful Creator, Merciful Father, Source of our Life, Object of our Desire, etc.)
 - Thanksgiving – ask for thanksgiving intercessions from the teens
 - Examination of Conscience – read from Exodus 20: 1-17 and 2 John 1-6, 8-9
 - Ask teens to think about ways they have failed God/ failed to love God, their neighbors and themselves today and in the past.
 - It is often helpful to have the teens write these down.
 - Ask for God’s forgiveness and resolve to avoid these sins in the future (Act of Contrition).
 - Petition God – Ask teens for intercessions, prayers for virtues, etc.
 - Praise God –Praise God for His mercy, love and fidelity to us His children.
 - At the end of the prayer, ask the teens to write a short reflection on their experience in prayer and why they may or may not continue this in their home.

Topic 3: Expressions of Prayer

- Vocal Prayer (CCC 2700-2704)
 - Exemplified by Christ in giving us the Our Father and His prayer in Gethsemane, it is important in the life of Christians – if Jesus did it, we should also follow His lead.
 - This type of prayer involves both the body and the soul working in union with one another to give complete and proper homage to God.
 - As creatures of both body and soul, we must use our whole being in our sacrifice of prayer:
 - Prayer with words.
 - Both internal and external (words spoken aloud and in the silence of our hearts).
 - Formal and spontaneous (prayers of the Church and Tradition as well as our own words).
- Meditative Prayer (CCC 2705-2708)
 - In this form of prayer the Christian seeks the why and how of the Christian life. Always asking the question, “Lord, what do you want me to do?”
 - It requires no words, but it requires focus which is often aided by the use of external things:
 - Sacred Scripture, especially the Gospels and the teachings of Jesus.
 - Holy icons (For a description, visit www.nazarethstudio.com and click on “Understanding Icons”)
 - Devotional items (Rosary, Crucifix, Stations of the Cross, etc.)
 - Liturgical texts of the day or season
 - Spiritual reading (books written by/about saints, the life of Christ, etc.)
 - Nature’s goodness (a walk in God’s creation)
 - History – the story of our human history as directed by God
 - Meditation focuses on the mysteries of Christ.

- Through meditation we pay attention to the movement of our heart and soul in its response to what we read or experience. We connect our thoughts with reality in a way that directs toward the will of God and towards union with Him.
- Contemplative Prayer (CCC 2709-2719)
 - This is prayer directly focused on the person of Christ.
 - It takes planning to make time for God and takes perseverance to contemplate God despite obstacles to prayer (such as distracted thoughts, or not “feeling anything,” etc.)
 - It is a prayer of self-sacrifice and of recognition of the relationship one has with God the Father as His adopted son or daughter. In this relationship we can recognize our sinfulness and yet also recognize that God loves us and yearn to return that love to Him.
 - It is a silent gaze on the face of Christ.

Topic 4: Website Activities

- How does prayer shape the life of a future priest?
 - On www.cincinnati vocations.org visit the “Meet our Current Seminarians” page.
 - Find three devotional practices that are mentioned more than once by the men.
 - In a 3 paragraph essay write about each of these devotional practices and why you think they were/are so effective in helping these men answer their call.
- Saints Quiz and Prayer in the Life of the Saints:
 - Hand out the **Religious Saints Quiz**.
 - Describe that all saints have lived their lives in accord with the will of God and none could do so without recourse to prayer and the grace of God.
 - Have the students visit www.catholic-forum.com/saints and www.catholic.org/saints to find out which schools of prayer these saints adhered to in their lives.
 - Have each student write a reflection on the saint whose story they enjoyed reading the most and why.

Catechism of the Catholic Church: Expressions of Prayer

2698 The Tradition of the Church proposes to the faithful certain rhythms of praying intended to nourish continual prayer. Some are daily, such as morning and evening prayer, grace before and after meals, the Liturgy of the Hours. Sundays, centered on the Eucharist, are kept holy primarily by prayer. The cycle of the liturgical year and its great feasts are also basic rhythms of the Christian's life of prayer.

2699 The Lord leads all persons by paths and in ways pleasing to him, and each believer responds according to his heart's resolve and the personal expressions of his prayer. However, Christian Tradition has retained three major expressions of prayer: vocal, meditative, and contemplative. They have one basic trait in common: composure of heart. This vigilance in keeping the Word and dwelling in the presence of God makes these three expressions intense times in the life of prayer.

I. Vocal Prayer

2700 Through his Word, God speaks to man. By words, mental or vocal, our prayer takes flesh. Yet it is most important that the heart should be present to him to whom we are speaking in prayer: "Whether or not our prayer is heard depends not on the number of words, but on the fervor of our souls."

2701 Vocal prayer is an essential element of the Christian life. To his disciples, drawn by their Master's silent prayer, Jesus teaches a vocal prayer, the Our Father. He not only prayed aloud the liturgical prayers of the synagogue but, as the Gospels show, he raised his voice to express his personal prayer, from exultant blessing of the Father to the agony of Gethsemani.

2702 The need to involve the senses in interior prayer corresponds to a requirement of our human nature. We are body and spirit, and we experience the need to translate our feelings externally. We must pray with our whole being to give all power possible to our supplication.

2703 This need also corresponds to a divine requirement. God seeks worshippers in Spirit and in Truth, and consequently living prayer that rises from the depths of the soul. He also wants the external expression that associates the body with interior prayer, for it renders him that perfect homage which is his due.

2704 Because it is external and so thoroughly human, vocal prayer is the form of prayer most readily accessible to groups. Even interior prayer, however, cannot neglect vocal prayer. Prayer is internalized to the extent that we become aware of him "to whom we speak." Thus vocal prayer becomes an initial form of contemplative prayer.

II. Meditation

2705 Meditation is above all a quest. The mind seeks to understand the why and how of the Christian life, in order to adhere and respond to what the Lord is asking. The required attentiveness is difficult to sustain. We are usually helped by books, and Christians do not want for them: the Sacred Scriptures, particularly the Gospels, holy icons, liturgical texts of the day or season, writings of the spiritual fathers, works of spirituality, the great book of creation, and that of history—the page on which the "today" of God is written.

2706 To meditate on what we read helps us to make it our own by confronting it with ourselves. Here, another book is opened: the book of life. We pass from thoughts to reality. To the extent that we are humble and faithful, we discover in meditation the movements that stir the heart and we are able to discern them. It is a question of acting truthfully in order to come into the light: "Lord, what do you want me to do?"

2707 There are as many and varied methods of meditation as there are spiritual masters. Christians owe it to themselves to develop the desire to meditate regularly, lest they come to resemble the three first kinds of soil in the parable of the sower. But a method is only a guide; the important thing is to advance, with the Holy Spirit, along the one way of prayer: Christ Jesus.

2708 Meditation engages thought, imagination, emotion, and desire. This mobilization of faculties is necessary in order to deepen our convictions of faith, prompt the conversion of our heart, and strengthen our will to follow Christ. Christian prayer tries above all to meditate on the mysteries of Christ, as in *lectio divina* or the rosary. This form of prayerful reflection is of great value, but Christian prayer should go further: to the knowledge of the love of the Lord Jesus, to union with him.

III. Contemplative Prayer

2709 What is contemplative prayer? St. Teresa answers: "Contemplative prayer [*oración mental*] in my opinion is nothing else than a close sharing between friends; it means taking time frequently to be alone with him who we know loves us." Contemplative prayer seeks him "whom my soul loves." It is Jesus, and in him, the Father. We seek him, because to desire him is always the beginning of love, and we seek him in that pure faith which causes us to be born of him and to live in him. In this inner prayer we can still meditate, but our attention is fixed on the Lord himself.

2710 The choice of the *time and duration of the prayer* arises from a determined will, revealing the secrets of the heart. One does not undertake contemplative prayer only when one has the time: one makes time for the Lord, with the firm determination not to give up, no matter what trials and dryness one may encounter. One cannot always meditate, but one can always enter into inner prayer, independently of the conditions of health, work, or emotional state. The heart is the place of this quest and encounter, in poverty and in faith.

2711 *Entering into contemplative prayer* is like entering into the Eucharistic liturgy: we "gather up" the heart, recollect our whole being under the prompting of the Holy Spirit, abide in the dwelling place of the Lord which we are, awaken our faith in order to enter into the presence of him who awaits us. We let our masks fall and turn our hearts back to the Lord who loves us, so as to hand ourselves over to him as an offering to be purified and transformed.

2712 Contemplative prayer is the prayer of the child of God, of the forgiven sinner who agrees to welcome the love by which he is loved and who wants to respond to it by loving even more. But he knows that the love he is returning is poured out by the Spirit in his heart, for everything is grace from God. Contemplative prayer is the poor and humble surrender to the loving will of the Father in ever deeper union with his beloved Son.

2713 Contemplative prayer is the simplest expression of the mystery of prayer. It is a *gift*, a grace; it can be accepted only in humility and poverty. Contemplative prayer is a *covenant* relationship established by God within our hearts. Contemplative prayer is a *communion* in which the Holy Trinity conforms man, the image of God, "to his likeness."

2714 Contemplative prayer is also the pre-eminently *intense* time of prayer. In it the Father strengthens our inner being with power through his Spirit "that Christ may dwell in [our] hearts through faith" and we may be "grounded in love."

2715 Contemplation is a *gaze* of faith, fixed on Jesus. "I look at him and he looks at me": this is what a certain peasant of Ars in the time of his holy curé used to say while praying before the tabernacle. This focus on Jesus is a renunciation of self. His gaze purifies our heart; the light of the countenance of Jesus illumines the eyes of our heart and teaches us to see everything in the light of his truth and his compassion for all men. Contemplation also turns its gaze on the mysteries of the life of Christ. Thus it learns the "interior knowledge of our Lord," the more to love him and follow him.

2716 Contemplative prayer is *hearing* the Word of God. Far from being passive, such attentiveness is the obedience of faith, the unconditional acceptance of a servant, and the loving commitment of a child. It participates in the "Yes" of the Son become servant and the *Fiat* of God's lowly handmaid.

2717 Contemplative prayer is *silence*, the "symbol of the world to come" or "silent love." Words in this kind of prayer are not speeches; they are like kindling that feeds the fire of love. In this silence, unbearable to the "outer" man, the Father speaks to us his incarnate Word, who suffered, died, and rose; in this silence the Spirit of adoption enables us to share in the prayer of Jesus.

2718 Contemplative prayer is a union with the prayer of Christ insofar as it makes us participate in his mystery. The mystery of Christ is celebrated by the Church in the Eucharist, and the Holy Spirit makes it come alive in contemplative prayer so that our charity will manifest it in our acts.

2719 Contemplative prayer is a communion of love bearing Life for the multitude, to the extent that it consents to abide in the night of faith. The Paschal night of the Resurrection passes through the night of the agony and the tomb—the three intense moments of the Hour of Jesus which his Spirit (and not "the flesh [which] is weak") brings to life in prayer. We must be willing to "keep watch with [him] one hour."

2720 The Church invites the faithful to regular prayer: daily prayers, the Liturgy of the Hours, Sunday Eucharist, the feasts of the liturgical year.

2721 The Christian tradition comprises three major expressions of the life of prayer: vocal prayer, meditation, and contemplative prayer. They have in common the recollection of the heart.

2722 Vocal prayer, founded on the union of body and soul in human nature, associates the body with the interior prayer of the heart, following Christ's example of praying to his Father and teaching the Our Father to his disciples.

2723 Meditation is a prayerful quest engaging thought, imagination, emotion, and desire. Its goal is to make our own in faith the subject considered, by confronting it with the reality of our own life.

2724 Contemplative prayer is the simple expression of the mystery of prayer. It is a gaze of faith fixed on Jesus, an attentiveness to the Word of God, a silent love. It achieves real union with the prayer of Christ to the extent that it makes us share in his mystery.



Know Your Saints and Blessed Quiz

This year's quiz, like last year's, will challenge you to know your saints and their importance in the history of the Catholic Church. By coming to know more fully the life stories of these various saints, it is our hope that you will come to understand the spiritual traditions followed by them and how those traditions shaped their lives.

For each popular saint, choose from the list provided here the corresponding spiritual tradition he or she followed:

A: Benedictine

B: Carmelite

C: Dominican

D: Franciscan

E: Jesuit/Ignatian

- ___ 1. The twin sister of the founder of this order, St. Scholastica was "devoted to Jesus as much as to her brother." She later became the first nun of this same order.
- ___ 2. Born in France, Isaac Jogues was a missionary to the Native Americans. The Mohawks captured, enslaved and tortured him beyond the power of natural endurance, yet he continued to teach the Faith to anyone who would listen.
- ___ 3. Prior to his birth, the mother of this saint had a vision of a dog holding a burning torch that "seemed to set the world on fire." He traveled, preached and encouraged people to say the Rosary. The religious order that is named after him battled the Albigensian heresy.
- ___ 4. St. Pius V was elected pope, but retained his white habit. Since then, all future Popes have worn white. As the Muslim naval fleet threatened to invade Europe, this Pope asked all Catholics to pray the Rosary. The heavily outnumbered Catholic fleet miraculously won the battle of Lepanto on October 7th, prompting the Pope to make it a feast day for Mary called "Our Lady of Victory."
- ___ 5. Blessed Fra Angelico was one of the greatest artists of the early Renaissance. His paintings of Christ in the small cells where his brother monks lived and prayed in Florence, Italy are still visited by thousands of art fans today.
- ___ 6. As the author of *Interior Castle*, St. Theresa of Avila gives the world a description of contemplative prayer, which draws on her own mystical experiences and focuses ones prayer life on entering more and more deeply into his soul. Through this process we come to know God and what he has made us to be.
- ___ 7. A Church historian and Doctor of the Church, St. Bede the Venerable lived a life of simplicity and piety and took great joy in studying the Bible and furthering the teachings of the "Great Fathers" of the Church.
- ___ 8. The founder of the Poor Clares, St. Clare, was moved at a very young age by the words and example of the founder of this order. She had to stand firm to her vow of absolute poverty even as two consecutive popes tried to relieve her and her contemplative sisters of the "burden" of owning no personal or communal property.
- ___ 9. St. Francis of Assisi began his life as the son of a wealthy cloth merchant, but around the age of 20 had a conversion experience which led him to publicly denounce his earthly father and say only from then on, "our father who art in heaven." He went on to begin his own religious order which strives to live perfectly Christ's command to "leave everything and follow me."
- ___ 10. After meeting this order's founder, St. Francis Xavier, he became one of the first missionaries to the Far East and later became known as the Apostle to the Philippines and patron of foreign missionaries for his zeal for preaching and teaching Christ to the natives.
- ___ 11. One of the greatest and most influential theologians of all time, St. Thomas Aquinas was a great student from a very early age and achieved, by the grace of God, the gift of perfect chastity after having to fight against his family's attempts to get him to leave this order. Throughout his priestly life he was offered several positions of honor and recognition, which he always refused.
- ___ 12. St. Benedict was born in a time of great prosperity both in the Church and in Europe, a time when being a Christian was no longer outlawed, but accepted and honored. The people of the time became "lazy" in the practice and commitment to their Faith and so St. Benedict formed this order as an example of how the Faith should be lived and loved. He wrote his *Rule*, focused on prayer with the Bible and prayer in work, and was later followed by several other orders.
- ___ 13. Author of *A Dark Night of the Soul*, St. John of the Cross exemplified this form of spirituality which he learned to rely on during his months of captivity and torture at the hands of his own brother monks. He eventually escaped, but still did not gain any popularity with the members of the order, which he had helped to reform, until he was very near death some 24 years later.
- ___ 14. A member of this order, St. Padre Pio "rebuilt the Church" through the confessional where he would spend several hours a day. He was given the grace to know a penitent's heart and was able to counsel sinners according to what they needed to hear.

- ___ 15. St. Ignatius Loyola was the founder (along with 5 companions) of this religious order. He was a scholarly man who wrote "The Spiritual Exercises" that have, at its root, the need to examine one's conscious every day and to make ever more perfect one's relationship with God.
- ___ 16. A lay brother in this order, St. Martin de Porres was born to a black mother and wealthy Spanish father and apprenticed to become a barber-surgeon. He later entered the order's house as a servant and was given by God the ability to solve difficult Theological problems for the friars that lived in the house.
- ___ 17. A brilliant writer and philosopher in Germany before World War II, St. Edith Stein entered this religious order to contemplate the cross and live in solitude with her sisters. She was later taken by the Nazis to the Auschwitz concentration camp where she was gassed to death, having accepted her own cross with grace.
- ___ 18. After entering this order with 29 other men, St. Bernard of Clairvaux quickly impressed his superiors and was sent to start another convent where he was quickly elected Abbot. He spent the rest of his years growing in holiness and fame as a spiritual counselor and his wisdom gained for him the title of Doctor of the Church.
- ___ 19. St. Bonaventure was cured of a deathly illness as an infant by this order's founder, an order which the saint went on to join and lead as a young man. He later became known as the "Seraphic Doctor" for his beautiful and intelligent philosophical and theological works and for his ability to quell disputes both within his own order and within the Church at large.
- ___ 20. Known as one of the most brilliant theological minds of history of the Catholic Church, St. Catherine of Sienna was a tertiary member of this order at the age of 16 and had no formal schooling. She received mystical visions of Jesus, Mary and the saints and once experienced, and later dictated, a "mystical death" in which she experienced Hell, purgatory and heaven.
- ___ 21. Reluctantly becoming bishop in 1092, St. Anselm of Canterbury went on to improve the position of the Church in England and his opposition could not gain any ground until he was too sick to argue. Although he felt more at home in the monastery of his order, he was a noted theological writer in his time and earned the title of Doctor of the Church.
- ___ 22. Founder of the Immaculata Movement, St. Maximilian Kolbe was a wild child as a youth but, upon receiving a vision of the Virgin Mary, dedicated himself to holiness and the firm witness of the Faith in this religious order. He died a martyr in Auschwitz during WWII.
- ___ 23. A highly educated man of this religious order, St. Robert Bellarmine spent years teaching in colleges and defending the Catholic Church from protestant attack, writing the most complete work of this kind to this day.
- ___ 24. As a beautiful young woman, St. Rose of Lima dedicated herself to a life of chastity and to keep young men from lustful thoughts upon seeing her, she rubbed a combination of lye and pepper on her face to become less attractive. She spent her days as a tertiary of this order sewing and working in the garden to support her family and spending hours in prayer and devotion to our Lord.
- ___ 25. Known as the "Hammer of the Heretics" and a doctor of the church for his eloquent and persuasive preaching, St. Anthony of Padua began his life in this religious order simply wanting to "follow Christ and Him crucified."
- ___ 26. After joining this order, St. Peter Claver became the apostle to the negro slaves landing in Cartagena where he cared for, catechized and baptized nearly 300,000 African-born slaves over 33 years of ministry despite the severe torment from the slave owners and those of the villages in which he ministered.
- ___ 27. St. Therese of Lisieux, affectionately known as the little flower, yearned to enter this order from the time she was a little girl. She followed her four sisters into the order at the age of 15 and became a saint by practicing her "Little Way" of doing "ordinary things with extraordinary love." She is recognized as the youngest doctor of the Church.
- ___ 28. St. Aloysius Gonzaga entered this order at the age of 18 and set to studies very quickly. In his fourth year of theology, a plague broke out in his town. Though he suffered from poor physical stamina, he devoted himself to the care of those who contracted the disease, thus dying of it himself at the young age of 23.
- ___ 29. At the age of 49, St. Frances Xavier Cabrini became a missionary to America where she and her newly found order, the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart, followed this spirituality. She relied on her deep trust in God in establishing 67 hospitals, schools and orphanages throughout 8 different countries, across three continents in just 18 years.
- ___ 30. A woman of great devotion to the Eucharist, St. Mary Magdalene de Pazzi joined this order at a young age and was blessed by ecstatic visions throughout the rest of her life. During these visions, she sometimes received messages which were written down by her sisters and preserved as some of the most influential writings on religious life and the perfection of souls.

Answer Key:

1. A..... Benedictine
2. E..... Jesuit/Ignatian
3. C..... Dominican
4. C..... Dominican
5. C..... Dominican
6. B..... Carmelite
7. A..... Benedictine
8. D..... Franciscan
9. D..... Franciscan
10. E..... Jesuit/Ignatian
11. C..... Dominican
12. A..... Benedictine
13. B..... Carmelite
14. D..... Franciscan
15. E..... Jesuit/Ignatian
16. C..... Dominican
17. B..... Carmelite
18. A..... Benedictine
19. D..... Franciscan
20. B..... Carmelite
21. A..... Benedictine
22. D..... Franciscan
23. E..... Jesuit/Ignatian
24. C..... Dominican
25. D..... Franciscan
26. E..... Jesuit/Ignatian
27. B..... Carmelite
28. E..... Jesuit/Ignatian
29. D..... Franciscan
30. B..... Carmelite

Hints:

- You'll notice this list contains 5 Benedictine, 6 Carmelite, 6 Dominican, 6 Jesuit/Ignatian, and 7 Franciscan saints.
- All the saints' biographies can be found at www.catholic.org/saints or saints.sqpn.com.



VOCATIONS
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High School Lesson Plan
“Lord, Teach us to Pray” Luke 11:1

Purpose:

Upon completion of this lesson, students will have a deeper appreciation for:

1. The Universal Call to Prayer as a means of following the Universal Call to Holiness.
2. The understanding and approach to prayer in both the Old and New Testaments.
3. The application of this ‘life of prayer’ in the discernment of their vocation and path in life.

Catechetical:

The *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, in paragraphs 2566-2649, discusses ‘The Revelation of Prayer,’ walking through both the Old and New Testaments to give examples of prayer in the Scriptures, as well as in the ‘Age of the Church,’ in which we currently dwell. As the Catechism states, prayer is foundational for the Christian life, for it is in the life of prayer that we come to know Jesus not as a master, but as a friend. It is through prayer that our hearts are transformed and we desire to be more perfectly united with Jesus, the Lord and Giver of Life. This session walks through this section of the Catechism to give our high school students an insight into the importance of prayer and to help foster in them a life-long love of prayer in the Church.

1. The Universal Call to Prayer (CCC 2566-2567)
 - a. ‘Man is in search of God.’ The *Catechism* begins with this recognition and restatement of St. Augustine’s wonderful insight: ‘We were made for Thee, O Lord, and our hearts are restless until they rest in You!’ All major religious traditions throughout the world have responded to this restlessness, each in their own way, showing that even though the effects of sin are felt, there is still a desire to come to know God, to experience the divine while still on the earth.
 - b. However, this longing finds its origin and source not in the restlessness of the human heart, but in the initial calling of God who calls out to our first parents in the Garden: ‘Where are you?’¹
 - c. Throughout the rest of Salvation History, God’s initiative of calling us, His sons and daughters, has been gradually revealed up to the point where He Himself enters human history with the Incarnation of the Son. This drama of salvation engages the human heart and fosters a desire to be united with God in all things.
2. Prayer in the Old Testament (CCC 2568-2597)
 - a. The revelation of prayer in the Old Testament ‘comes between the fall and the restoration of man,’ that is between God’s initial question seeking Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden until the appearance of the God-Man in Bethlehem. ‘Prayer is bound up with human history, for it is the relationship with God in historical events.
 - b. Creation – Source of Prayer

¹ Genesis 3:9

- i. In the initial chapters of the Scriptures, the ideal of ‘walking with God’ is portrayed by Enoch being taken up to Heaven in contrast to Adam and Eve’s expulsion from the Garden of Eden. Noah’s offering is pleasing to God, who in return, blesses him and through him, all creation. The Catechism notes that ‘this kind of prayer is lived by many righteous people in all religions.’
 - c. God’s promise and the prayer of Faith
 - i. While there is a natural longing of the heart for God, it is with ‘our father Abraham that prayer is revealed in the Old Testament.’ In Abraham, we learn an ‘attentiveness of the heart’ to the will of God, essential elements of a life of prayer. Abraham’s lasting legacy is one of perseverance in the face of trials and tests. His heart remains steadfast even as he is asked to sacrifice his own son, through whom the promise will be fulfilled. We recognize that ‘prayer restores man to God’s likeness and enables him to share in the power of God’s love that saves the multitude.’
 - ii. With Moses, we once again see the initiative belonging to God as He calls to Moses from the midst of the burning bush. ‘This event will remain one of the primordial images of prayer in the spiritual tradition of Jews and Christians alike.’ God reveals that He is the God of the living, not the dead, and that He wants us to live in Him as well. God reveals Himself in order to save us, and raises up Moses as His messenger, revealing a further aspect of the plan of salvation: God works through those whom He has chosen to be His agents, but only after they have accepted that call; God never imposes, He proposes. From Moses, we also learn that as God reveals Himself, He draws us closer to Himself, for God spoke to Moses face to face, as one would speak to a friend. Hence, Moses’ prayer is an example of contemplation, an extended conversation with God. From this ‘extended conversation,’ Moses draws strength and determination to complete the mission which had been entrusted to him and prays not only for himself, but for the people entrusted to his care. In this, Moses gives us an example of intercessory prayer.
 - iii. In David, we see the king ‘after God’s own heart.’ His submission to the will of God, his praise, and his repentance will be a model for the prayer of the people. His prayer is a faithful adherence to the divine promise and expresses a loving and joyful trust in God, the only King and Lord. As the author of many of the Psalms, David is the first prophet of Jewish and Christian prayer and composed many of the prayers Jesus Himself said when He walked among us and which Jesus will reveal a fuller and deeper meaning upon.
 - iv. Elijah, the great prophet whose very name means ‘The Lord is my God,’ comes to call the people to repentance and to school their hearts in the ways of prayer. The rituals of the Temple, which were intended to be models and examples of prayer, ceased to have content and had become empty shells, no longer stirring the heart. In Elijah, as in all the authentic prophets of the Old Testament, we hear that constant echo to turn our hearts to the Lord who will take away our stony hearts and replace them with ones made of flesh. ‘In their ‘one to one’ encounters with God, the prophets draw light and strength for this mission. Their prayer is not flight from this unfaithful world, but rather attentiveness to The Word of God.’ Their prayer is always one of intercession, preparing the people for the coming of the Messiah.
 - v. The Psalms constitute the masterwork of prayer in the Old Testament. At once both personal and communal, they constitute the ritual words used both in Temple and Synagogue and marked the churning of the year in the home. While expressing many types of prayer, the Psalms are both simple and spontaneous,

forming the heart to be faithful to God. These prayers constitute the backbone of the Liturgy of the Hours, the official prayer of the Catholic Church.

3. In the Fullness of Time: Prayer in the New Testament (CCC 2598-2622)
 - a. 'The drama of prayer is fully revealed to us in the Word who became flesh and dwells among us.' To seek to understand how Jesus prayed in the New Testament is to approach Him as Moses approached the burning bush: to contemplate Him in prayer, to hear how He teaches us to pray that we might understand how He hears our prayer.
 - b. Jesus Prays (CCC 2599-2606)
 - i. "The Son of God who became Son of the virgin also learned to pray according to his human heart. He learns the formulas of prayer from his mother, who kept in her heart and meditated upon all the "great things" done by the Almighty.' However, while Jesus fully embraces the traditions of prayer of his people, he brings something distinctly new: his prayer is filial, that of a son to a Father.
 - ii. In the Gospel according to St. Luke, the role of the Holy Spirit is emphasized as Jesus spends time in prayer before any decisive moments of his mission and in sharing his mission with the Apostles. 'Jesus' prayer before the events of salvation that the Father has asked him to fulfill is a humble and trusting commitment of his human will to the loving will of the Father.' 'In seeing the Master at prayer, the disciples of Christ also want to pray. By contemplating and hearing the Son, the master of prayer, the children learn to pray to the Father.'
 - iii. Even though Jesus often prays in solitude, he never prays alone: he includes all people in his prayer, for he has taken on the depth of human nature in his incarnation as man. In this we see that for prayer truly to be Christian, it begins in the prayer of Christ himself, and Jesus draws us to himself in our prayer.
 - iv. The Gospel writers present two specific prayers of Jesus for us to meditate upon in our prayer: the Our Father or Lord's Prayer² and the prayer he utters prior to the Raising of Lazarus³. However, the Great Priestly Prayer of Jesus⁴ has a unique place in the economy of salvation. This is the prayer of our high priest, inseparable from his sacrifice, from his Passover to the Father to whom he is wholly consecrated. In this prayer, everything is united in Christ and returned to the Father. Jesus fulfilled the work of the Father completely, his prayer, like his sacrifice, extends until the end of time.
 - c. Jesus teaches us to pray (CCC 2607-2615)
 - i. 'When Jesus prays he is already teaching us how to pray.' But the Gospels are not content to show us just the model of Jesus' prayer, they also give His direct instruction on how to pray. Like a wise teacher, Jesus gives both the instruction and the example to follow so that he might lead us closer to his Father in Heaven.
 - ii. From the Sermon on the Mount onward, Jesus insists on conversion of heart: reconciliation with one's brother before presenting an offering on the altar, love of enemies, and prayer for persecutors, prayer to the Father in secret, not heaping up empty phrases, prayerful forgiveness from the depths of the heart, purity of heart, and seeking the Kingdom before all else. This filial conversion is entirely directed to the Father. (CCC 2608)
 - iii. Just as Jesus had a certain boldness that came from the deep-felt knowledge that He is God's Eternal Son, he teaches us to have that same boldness in

² cf: Matthew 11:25-27 and Luke 10:21-23

³ cf: John 11:41-42

⁴ cf: John 17 and CCC 2746-2751

prayer: 'Whatever you ask in prayer, believe that you will receive it, and you will.'⁵ He challenges us to overcome our moments of lax or little faith while he praises the evident faith of the centurion and Canaanite woman.

- iv. We see in example of Jesus that it is not enough to just say the words 'Lord, Lord,' but that these words must also change the heart. We must have an ongoing conversion of heart, growing in trust of the Lord and being attentive to The One Who Is.
 - v. In Saint Luke's account of the Gospel, Jesus presents three parables on prayer which give us an insight of how to pray:
 1. The 'importunate friend'⁶ invites us to urgent prayer.
 2. The 'importunate widow'⁷ teaches us to pray without ceasing and to have patience in faith.
 3. The parable of the 'Pharisee and the tax collector'⁸ concerns the humility of heart that prays.
- d. Jesus hears our prayer
- i. Throughout his public ministry, we see Jesus responding to the urgent request of prayer, whether spoken aloud (as in the case of Jairus for his daughter) or kept silent (as with the bearers of the paralytic). The urgent request of the blind man ("Have mercy on us, Son of David!") has been codified in the Jesus Prayer, also known as the Sinner's Prayer: 'Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner.' In the Scriptures, we see that Jesus always responds to a prayer offered in faith: 'Your faith has made you well; go in peace.'
- e. The prayer of the Virgin Mary
- i. In the example of Mary, the Mother of God, we find the perfect example of Christian prayer, for she desires to be wholly consumed by the Word of God, whom she conceives in her heart. 'In the faith of his humble handmaid, the Gift of God found the acceptance he had awaited from the beginning of time.' Mary's role as a mediator of the grace from her Son is summarized in her 'Magnificat,'⁹ the prayer which she offers during the Visitation to her cousin Elizabeth. This is the song of both the Mother of God and of the Church, for it unites and brings together all the themes of salvation history in one song of praise for the marvelous works God is doing in our midst, elevating the poor and bringing down the proud of heart.
4. Prayer in the Age of the Church (CCC 2623-2643)
- a. The Catechism continues to outline five types of prayer which have been hallmarks of the Christian tradition of prayer since the beginning. From the beginning of the Church at Pentecost, prayer has been an essential characteristic¹⁰ of the life of the Church: grounded in the Apostolic Faith, realized by charity and fed by the Eucharist.
 - b. Blessing and Adoration
 - i. All true prayer is an 'encounter between God and man' and involves a movement of thought and prayer from us up to God and from God down to us. Our prayer of blessing is a response to God's gifts: 'because God blesses, the human heart can in return bless the one who is the source of every blessing. In this movement back and forth between us and God, we are drawn deeper into

⁵ Mark 11:24

⁶ Luke 11:5-13

⁷ Luke 18:1-8

⁸ Luke 18:9-14

⁹ Luke 1:46-55

¹⁰ cf. Acts 2:42

relationship with God and we recognize that God is Creator, wholly Other, yet He desires for us to get to know Him, and we are drawn into Adoration of the great beauty who is God. In Adoration, we sit face to face, as it were, with the Creator of the Universe, so that our hearts might be configured to be more like His.

- c. Prayer of Petition
 - i. During his Agony in the Garden, Jesus prayed, asking the Father to take the cup of suffering away from him, giving us a model of how to ask God for what we need. A prayer of petition is simply this, to seek to do what God wants us to do, as Jesus completes His prayer in the Garden: 'Father, not my will be done, but thy will be done.' In Prayers of Petition, we first recognize that we are sinners and seek God's grace and healing, and we seek to be messengers of God's Kingdom, to work with God to make His message known.
- d. Prayer of Intercession
 - i. 'Intercession is a prayer of petition which leads us to pray as Jesus did.' In intercession, we pray not for our needs, but for the needs of someone whom we love or who has asked us to pray. Jesus prays in this way when he offers himself on the Cross for our sins, he stands before His Father and asks that the punishment due to us because of our sins should be placed upon his divine shoulders. When we pray to the saints or to our guardian angel, this is the type of prayer we ask them to make on our behalf before God the Father. As the Catechism reminds us, intercessory prayer knows no boundaries: we are called to pray for all the world, friend and enemy alike. Let us live this prayer always.
- e. Prayer of Thanksgiving
 - i. In Greek, the term 'Eucharist' means 'Thanksgiving,' and as such it is the standard model of prayer for the Church. The prayer of Jesus during the Last Supper and continuing on into his Crucifixion is ultimately a prayer of Thanksgiving in which everything He has been given by the Father is returned to the Father. In the model of Jesus, 'every event and need can become an offering of thanksgiving.' During this day, let us make every act, every moment a prayer of thanksgiving before Our Lord.
- f. Prayer of Praise
 - i. The highest form of prayer is the Prayer of Praise. In this prayer, we praise God for the very fact that He is God. This comes from not what He does, but rather that He Is. Prayer of Praise before God is an expression of our love for God and our desire that we be united with Him in all things. As such, this is the prayer of the saints and angels in heaven, who stand around the throne of the altar of God continually offering praise to God. Let us make this day a 'continual offering of praise' before God that we might be united with the choirs of heaven while still here on earth.

Questions for Reflection/Discussion

- Each Christian disciple is called to holiness, called to greatness in Christ. How can young people of today foster this call to holiness through prayer? What are the obstacles to the universal call to holiness?
- How can we learn from the examples of those who prayed in the Scriptures as we develop our own prayer life?
- We see repeatedly that even Jesus had to pray. What do you think was the content of his prayer, and how does his taking time to pray influence how we should pray?
- The Catechism mentions five different types of prayer. What is the easiest way to pray? What is the hardest? What do you do when you encounter an obstacle in prayer?



Junior High Youth Ministry Plan

“Lord, Teach us to Pray” Luke 11:1

Prayer and Relationship with God (Are You Hot or Cold?)

- Objectives:** By the end of this session, participants will...
1. Value the importance of prayer more in their lives (*affective*)
 2. Better understand some basic elements of living the Christian life (i.e., trust, authenticity, forgiveness) (*cognitive*)
 3. Commit to a daily moment of prayer for at least 3 weeks (*behavioral*)

(This format is based on 90 minutes. It could easily be stretched to 2 hours, particularly with large groups.)

Supplies:

- Bowl of small common objects (see ideas below)
- Three Bibles marked for different passages (see references below)
- Water Bottle
- \$20 Bill
- Something that represents tickets to a concert or sporting event
- Fruit with different outside/inside (apple, orange, banana), fruit or vegetable with same outside/inside (baby carrot) – can use candy with same characteristics (see activity #2)
- Blindfolds
- Pens, pencils, markers or crayons
- **“No Time” Skit**
- **Manger Scene Activity**
- Enough **Ignatian Examen** cards for your group (see template below)
- Spoons
- Objects to carry on spoons
- Hula Hoops (optional)
- Basketballs and cones (optional)

For groups of 60 or less

10 min.	Welcome, Opening Prayer
5 min.	Skit: “No Time”
10 min.	Follow-up discussion on the skit and short presentation on prayer being the key to relationship with God
5 min.	Give instructions for session locations and break into 3 groups. (If total group is less than 15, stay as one group).
45 min.	Rotation of presenters between groups: 15 minutes per group
5 min.	Large group wrap-up and discussion
10 min.	Closing Prayer and Announcements

For groups of more than 60

10 min.	Welcome, Opening Prayer
5 min.	Skit: "No Time"
5 min.	Follow-up discussion on the skit and short presentation on prayer being the key to relationship with God
5 min.	Give instructions for session locations and break into 4 groups.
55 min.	Rotation of presenters between groups: 14 minutes per group
10 min.	Closing Prayer and Announcements

To begin the meeting, pass around a bowl of small, common, everyday objects and ask everyone to take one (your bowl might contain objects like a rubber band, paperclip, post-it pad, pencil, pencil sharpener, thimble, spool of thread, etc.). After everyone has their object, tell everyone to hold on to it throughout today's session, being open to what God might be saying to them through that object, and that we will use it for our closing prayer.

Opening Skit: See Youth Ministry Skit - *No Time*.

Opening Prayer:

To prepare for prayer gather three things: a water bottle, a \$20 bill and something that represents tickets to something popular (like an amusement park, a concert or sporting event).

Also, have three bibles to pass out, each marked with a sticky-note to easily open to the page where you find in one Psalm 42:1; another Psalm 63:2; and in a third, Matthew 16:45-46.

Leader: *Place the three objects in front of you.*

To begin our prayer, I am going to show you 3 objects. I have here a water bottle, a \$20 bill, and tickets to _____. What I want you to do is to rank them in accordance to their importance to you. Rank the most important as #1 and the least as #3.

Give them some time to decide their ranking, then invite everyone who has given the water bottle the #1 ranking to go to the left side of the room, the \$20 bill the back of the room, and the tickets the right side of the room. Once they have all separated:

Oh, I forgot to mention that you will all immediately take your top-ranked item with you on a weekend trip to the desert. All of you who chose water will survive. The rest of you, well, you die.

Give them some time to react, then invite them into some discussion:

- How do you feel about your choice now?
- How does the need for survival change our opinion of the value of something?

Invite volunteers to read these scriptures aloud directly from a Bible:

Psalm 42:1: *As a deer longs for running streams of water, so my soul longs for you, O God. My being thirsts for God, the living God.*

Psalm 63:2: *For you my soul thirsts. Like a land parched, lifeless and without water*

Leader: How is prayer and relationship with Jesus like water?
(JH may need some help with this. Be patient with the discussion, inviting them to understand how prayer is to our souls as water is to our bodies.)
Invite a volunteer to read this last scriptures aloud directly from a Bible:

Matt 16:45-46: *Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant searching for fine pearls. When he finds a pearl of great price, he goes and sells all that he has and buys it.*

Further discuss how important time in prayer is, and how vital it is to finding true happiness. Wrap up with a simple prayer to help us be open to learning more about the importance of prayer and relationship with God and improving attitudes toward prayer. Close with an appropriate common prayer like the Our Father or Hail Mary.

Adapted from *10-Minute Devotions for Youth Groups, Volume III*, Group Pub., 1993.

Activity #1: Theme - Trusting God

The Activity: Give half of the kids blindfolds. Allow the other half to lead them outside and around some objects. Then have them switch places and allow the people initially blindfolded to lead the others back.

The Teaching: Our journey with God requires trust. Sometimes we are asked to do things we would rather not do. Sometimes we have to make decisions before we know what the outcome will be. Sometimes we pray for things that seem good to us, but we don't get them. It requires great trust in God to take that leap of faith and allow God to move in our lives. We need to let go of control and allow God to lead us wherever He wants. It is not easy, but God knows better than we do what will make us happy.

Activity #2: Theme - Authenticity

The Activity: You need a piece of fruit for everyone that is different on the outside (banana or apple) and a baby carrot. (Or candy with a shell and candy that is of one material, like Good and Plenty vs. Starburst)

Distribute the fruit or candy and ask them to eat it. As they eat it, discuss these questions:

- How does the color on the outside compare to the color on the inside?
- How does the taste on the outside compare to the inside? (like with an apple core, or how the thick skin on the outside is different from the fruit on the inside.
- What do we call a person who seems one way on the outside but is different on the inside?

Ask someone to read aloud Matt 23:25-27.

Say: Holiness can be difficult, but all Christians are called to live holy lives.

Pass out the carrots (or candy) and ask them to eat them. As they eat them, discuss:

- How does the color on the outside compare with the color on the inside?
- How does the taste on the outside compare with the taste on the inside?
- What do you call a person who is the same on the inside as on the outside?

The Teaching: God wants us to be like a carrot. A carrot is the same color and taste from outside to inside.. Instead of looking like a prayerful person on the outside but continuing to conform to evil desires on the inside, we can strive to be holy on the inside as well as the outside, by committing to God through prayer.

Activity #3: Theme - Doing as Christ Does

The Activity: Play Simon says. Try to whittle it down to one winner if possible.

Hints: Use methods like: starting by doing the same thing you say, then try to trick people by doing something different from what you say. (Kids will copy your action rather than do what you say).

To get the last ones, say, "You guys are too smart for me. We'll have a race to determine our winner. On the count of 3, the first one to give me a high five wins. 1, 2, 3...go!". When they all race toward you, say, "But I didn't say Simon Says".

The Teaching: It is easy to be distracted by the world and do what everyone else does. But we must stick to God's word and the Church in order to live faithfully as disciples of Christ. Prayer helps us to do that.

Additional Options

Activity #1: Theme - Using prayer to keep us on track

Materials needed: Complete manger scene (projected on screen or printed out large enough for all to see); large printout of the incomplete manger scene, pencils or fine markers. Further instructions are included with the pictures.

The Activity: Each group gets the task of drawing the same manger scene. Each person has an opportunity to draw one object in the picture (or help someone else), but with differing handicaps. Each person should spend only 1 ½ to 2 minutes on his/her drawing (depending on how many people you have and time). One person should strictly keep time to keep things moving.

*Note: Included in this packet is a picture of the entire manger scene, as well as three options for the starting reference. This allows you to use this activity for small groups of 5-9 people. If you have 10 or more, split into two sub-groups. **Instructions for the activity are on the drawings.***

The Teaching: Those who had the opportunity to stop and take the blindfolds off most often drew better pictures. Those who allowed someone else to direct them verbally and even take their hands and draw for them did even better. In the same way, the more often we stop to take account of where we are in our relationship with God and refocus the direction of our lives accordingly, the more closely we will be able to live our lives as Jesus calls us. Ultimately, we are called to turn over the reigns completely and allow God to move us. Only then will our lives most fully become what God intended us to be.

Suggested Small Group Questions:

1. How difficult was it for the person who had to draw completely blind? Was it considerably easier for those who had the opportunity to stop and see where they were before continuing on?
2. How is this like what we do when we pray? (Hopefully they will get this on their own, but particularly with JH, you may need to help by asking, "Can stopping to look at our lives and pray help us to live more like Jesus?")
3. How was the one who had to take direction from someone else, or even had his hand guided, like our walk with Christ? (We need to listen to God in our lives through prayer)
4. Is it hard to let God lead when we can't see where he is leading us?
5. What does it mean to allow God to take over our lives?

Activity #2: Theme - Forgiveness (use the handout on St. Ignatius' Examen for this)

Materials needed: Examen handout below; spoons; objects to carry on spoons; tape; perhaps hula hoops

The Game: Set up two paths to walk through (perhaps mark with tape), and give each participant a spoon and any object that can be balanced on the spoon and walked with but with some difficulty. If they drop the object while going through, they must carry a second spoon in the other hand with a second object on it and continue. If they drop one of those they need to carry a third spoon in their mouth. A fourth will go back into another hand, and etc. Have a race or relay to see which individual or team completes first. (If it is too easy, add keeping up a hula hoop). After playing awhile, give new rules to one team. When that person drops an object, that person picks up another spoon and object but gives it to the moderator and does not have to carry a second one. Obviously, the one who does not have to carry his or her own mistakes will be able to complete the task much more easily.

Materials needed for alternative: Examen handout below; orange cones; basketballs; hula hoops.

Alternative Game: Set up two rows of cones like a path to walk through and balance basketballs on them. Make them close enough together to be difficult (but not impossible) to walk through without bumping a basketball. Make two paths to have a race. Give each participant a hula hoop and tell them they have to keep the hoop twirling and walk through the path to the other side. If they knock a basketball off the cone they have to carry it the rest of the way. They may end up having to carry more balls than they are able. Make it a race to see who can finish the course first (if anyone can.) After playing awhile, give new rules to one person. When that person knocks a ball off, he or she needs to pick it up but can then give that ball to the moderator and does not have to carry it. Obviously, the one who does not have to carry his or her own mistakes will be able to complete the task much more easily.

The Teaching: Life is a journey with Christ. If we try to carry the burdens of our sin around, we will have a difficult time of it. By giving our sins to Christ we can make our journeys easier. And, once we give our sins to Christ they are gone and we no longer need to worry about knocking them over or carrying them all.

Closing Prayer:

Preparation: Have the Scriptural passages below printed out on pieces of paper to be read by youth.

If possible, have all the youth gather in one circle, sitting on the floor. Use a candle to help set the mood. Invite everyone to take the object they were given at the beginning of the session and hold it in front of them.

Leader: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

All: Amen

Leader: Let us listen to some images of God in Scripture:
(Have youth from random places in the circle read the following quotes from Scripture. Have them also read the reference. Allow for some seconds of pause between verses)

- **Psalm 18:2:** *The Lord is my rock, my fortress...my shield.*
- **Psalm 121:5b:** *The Lord is your shade at your right hand*
- **Isaiah 40:11:** *Like a shepherd he feeds his flock; in his arms he gathers the lambs*
- **Isaiah 66:13:** *As a mother comforts her son, so will I comfort you*
- **Hebrews 12:29:** *For our God is a consuming fire*
- **John 15:5:** *I am the vine, you are the branches.*

Leader: God is so awesome and powerful that we cannot begin to fully comprehend him, and so we often find the use of metaphor to help us understand certain aspects of God to help us grow in relationship. We have looked today at some examples of why and how to pray. But like a lighthouse that guides ships, we often need lights in our lives, things to help remind us of God's constant presence and of the constant need to pray. We can learn more about God even by looking at simple objects we encounter every day.

Go around the circle and invite everyone to share how the object they have reminds them of God. If you have a large group, you may simply invite volunteers and stop when you have used up the time you have. One example might be like this: "My object was a paperclip. It is

really just a long wire, but in this case it has been shaped for a specific purpose of holding paper together. Shaped differently, it could be used to reset my laptop, or hang an ornament on a Christmas tree. This reminds me to be open to be shaped by God for his calling in my life.

Leader: Studies say it takes 21 times to repeat an action to form a habit. I invite you to take that object you have home with you and either carry them around for the next three weeks, or place them somewhere where you will see it many times per day (like in front of a mirror in the bedroom) to help remind you to pray. Commit to a specific pause at the beginning or end of each day for those three weeks to ask God what God is inviting you to change in your life through the symbolism you see in that object.

Lord, we thank you for helping us to see you in everyday things. Help us always to persevere in prayer and have the courage to continually change our lives to be in accordance with your calling for us. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen

If there is time, the leader may additionally close with an Our Father or other group prayer.

Special thanks to Bob Wurzelbacher of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati Office of Youth and Young Adult Ministry for preparing this meeting plan.

Examen of Consciousness

Based on St. Ignatius' Examen from the Jesuit Tradition



Step 1: Be aware of God's presence: No matter where you are, God is there with you. Stop for a moment, become aware of your breathing, quiet yourself, and be mindful of the truth of God being there with you.

Step 2: Review the day with gratitude: Walk through the past day, hour by hour, solely with the purpose of thanking God for everything you encountered that you can see as a gift that day, both big and small.

Step 3: Review your feelings and emotions: Take note of any strong feelings you had during the day, good or bad. Most days, memorable moments will quickly emerge.

Step 4: Pray from the strongest moment: Choose the moment that stood out to you as the most memorable, positive or negative. Your own reaction toward it is the sign that it is the most meaningful. Then simply express to God the prayer that surfaces concerning it (praise, cry for help, thanksgiving, etc.) You will find the Holy Spirit knocking on the door of your heart.

Step 5: Look toward tomorrow: Think about things coming up in your life (in the coming day or week). Take note of your feelings again: excitement, worry, fear, regret, etc. Turn to God one more time and share that feeling.

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Step 5: Look toward tomorrow: Think about things coming up in your life (in the coming day or week). Take note of your feelings again: excitement, worry, fear, regret, etc. Turn to God one more time and share that feeling.



High School Youth Ministry Plan

"Lord, Teach us to Pray" Luke 11:1

Prayer and Relationship with God (Are You Hot or Cold?)

- Objectives:** By the end of this session, participants will...
1. Value the importance of prayer more in their lives (*affective*)
 2. Better understand some basic elements of living the Christian life (i.e., trust, authenticity, forgiveness) (*cognitive*)
 3. Commit to a daily moment of prayer for at least 3 weeks (*behavioral*)

(This format is based on 90 minutes. It could easily be stretched to 2 hours, particularly with large groups.)

Supplies:

- See Activities for list of Supplies
- **"No Time" Skit**
- **Manger Scene Activity**
- Enough **Ignatian Examen** cards for your group (see template below)

For groups of 60 or less

- | | |
|---------|---|
| 10 min. | Welcome, Opening Prayer |
| 5 min. | Skit: "No Time" |
| 10 min. | Follow-up discussion on the skit and short presentation on prayer being the key to relationship with God |
| 5 min. | Give instructions for session locations and break into 3 groups. (If total group is less than 15, stay as one group). |
| 45 min. | Rotation of presenters between groups: 15 minutes per group |
| 5 min. | Large group wrap-up and discussion |
| 10 min. | Closing Prayer and Announcements |

For groups of more than 60

- | | |
|---------|--|
| 10 min. | Welcome, Opening Prayer |
| 5 min. | Skit: "No Time" |
| 5 min. | Follow-up discussion on the skit and short presentation on prayer being the key to relationship with God |
| 5 min. | Give instructions for session locations and break into 4 groups. |
| 55 min. | Rotation of presenters between groups: 14 minutes per group |
| 10 min. | Closing Prayer and Announcements |

Opening Skit: See Youth Ministry Skit - *No Time*.

Opening Prayer:

To prepare for prayer, choose 6-8 places teens might go (willingly or unwillingly). You might use things such as: school, the mall, the movies, the dentist, an amusement park, etc. Feel free to use specific places well-known in your area. Do not include church in your list.

Also, have two bibles to pass out, each marked with a sticky-note to easily open to the page where you find in one Psalm 122:1 and the other Psalm 42:4-6a.

Leader: To begin our prayer, I am going to give you a statement, and I would like all of you to simply respond with an appropriate exclamation (“Yay!” or “Augggh!” or even a mediocre “Whatever”) with as much or as little added emphasis and you truly feel. Ready?

Then read all of your places using this format:

Today, we are going to go to _____. *Give time for the group’s response.*

Now, I am going to ask you all to remain quiet and keep your comments to yourself, but consider honestly what your reaction would be to these:

Today, we are going to go into the Church for adoration and prayer time.

Today, (pastor’s name) is coming over and we will celebrate mass together.

After giving everyone time to think about their responses, lead them in a short discussion with these or similar questions:

- What criteria did you use to decide whether you want to give a positive or negative reaction about where you are going or what you are doing? Is it about recreation vs. work? Or excitement vs. boredom?
- How did you feel about your reaction to the last two? (Invite people to share their reaction, why they felt that way and whether they are happy/surprised with their reaction)

Invite two volunteers to read these two scriptures aloud directly from a Bible:

- Psalm 122:1: *I rejoiced when they said to me, “Let us go to the house of the Lord”. And now our feet are standing within your gates, Jerusalem.*
- Psalm 42:4-6a: *My tears have been my food day and night, as they ask daily, “Where is your God?” ...When I went in procession with the crowd, I went with them to the house of God, amid loud cries of thanksgiving, with the multitude keeping festival. Why are you downcast, my soul?*

Leader: How did each of these two psalmists feel about entering the house of God?

Why do you think each may have felt this way?

Do you think God wants us to feel a certain way about going to Church?

- *Be sure in your discussion to make the distinction between being honest with God about sharing our feelings both negative and positive (not suggesting we have to always pretend to be happy when we are genuinely sad or angry), and coming to Church with the proper attitudes of being open to God’s love and grace.*

Invite everyone to close out this prayer time with a simple prayer to help us be open to learning more about the importance of prayer and relationship with God and improving attitudes toward prayer. Close with an appropriate common prayer like the Our Father or Hail Mary.

Adapted from *More 10-Minute Devotions for Youth Groups*, Group Pub., 1992.

After prayer, pass around small sheets of paper and a pencil/pen. The sheet of paper simply has three lines on it numbered 1, 2 and 3 (or four lines if you are using the 4 groups option). They will use this at the end of each of the three (or four) activities.

Activity #1: Theme - Being Open to God's Plan Through Prayer

Materials needed: A Bible; material in various stages of malleability: molding clay, pudding, sand, ice, block of wood, rocks, marshmallows and toothpicks, etc.

Game: Give one type of material described above to each person. More than one person can receive the same type of material.
Ask them all to make a sculpture of themselves, of who they would like to become. It can be literal or symbolic. Obviously some will get very frustrated very quickly, but try to encourage them to figure out any way they can to do what they want to do for a few minutes.

Teaching: Then read Sirach 33:13. Discuss how God feels trying to mold us, and how we are sometimes more like rocks or sand or water than clay.

Commitment: Spend the last 2 minutes inviting everyone to consider one small thing in their lives that is inhibiting their relationship with God, write it down, and commit to changing it. It can be very small. (i.e., ignoring an unpopular person in school, wearing a particular article of immodest clothing they like, watching an popular but inappropriate TV show, spending less time on the internet, etc.)

Activity #2: Theme - Positive Attitude Toward Prayer

Materials needed: A Bible; a hat (or other object to pull papers from); slips of paper; pencils; a chalkboard or similar thing to write team scores on for all to see.

Game: Explain that they will all play a game, similar to "What's My Line". Everyone writes down something that could happen to them that would cause them to have a bad day (keep it light, no death in the family, etc.), and no more than 5 words. (Examples could be: fail a test in school, broke a leg, etc.). All pieces of paper are put in a hat.

Divide into teams. One person comes up from one team and takes something from the hat. They have 5 seconds to look at it, and 15 seconds to get their team to mime it and get their team to say it (charades). When you are explaining the rules, say "If your team gets the clue within 15 seconds you are awarded 1000 points. At the end I will declare the winner."

Move very quickly, giving the next team 5 seconds to send someone else up and pull a piece of paper, then 15 seconds to mime it. The game ends when every person has a chance to do the miming for their team.

At the end though, instead of the winning team being the one with the most points, choose a team based on who you feel had the best attitude throughout the game (hopefully it is a different team). Give candy to that team.

Teaching: Read Romans 8:31-39 on adversity and our relationship with God. Talk about how everyone felt about awarding the team with attitude the candy, instead of the most points. Lead a discussion on the importance of a positive attitude in coming together in prayer and worship at Mass. One can be joyful not just in the good times, but also under adversity with trust that God still loves us.

Commitment: Spend the last 2 minutes inviting everyone to consider one simple thing that bothers them on a regular basis, and make a conscious effort to change their attitude toward it.

Activity #3: Theme - Spending Time with Jesus in Prayer

Materials needed: A large painting; a quiz based on visual details in that painting; a stopwatch.

The Game: Hold up a painting and show it to the teens for 20 seconds. Give a test (verbal or written) on things about it. Hold up the painting again for 2 minutes. Give another test on it. The kids will of course do much better on it the second time. Another way to do this is to divide them into teams facing the painting. Have the first team turn around after 20 seconds, the second team turn around after 1 minute and the third team keep looking at the painting for 2 minutes. The team that looks the longest should do best on the test.

The Teaching: The more time we spend in prayer the better we will know Christ. There is no quick way. It requires time to build a relationship with Christ. Also discuss practical ideas (read each night a line or two of scripture, journal, come to mass a few minutes early to pray, read the Sunday gospel in advance each week, make a conscious effort to listen at mass for one thing God is saying to you and write it down, etc.)

Commitment: Spend the last 2 minutes inviting everyone to consider one small change they can make in their lives to pray more or improve their prayer time, and have them write it down on their paper.

Additional Options

Activity #1: Theme - Forgiveness (use the handout on St. Ignatius' Examen for this)

Materials needed: Examen handout below; spoons; objects to carry on spoons; tape; perhaps hula hoops

The Game: Set up two paths to walk through (perhaps mark with tape), and give each participant a spoon and any object that can be balanced on the spoon and walked with but with some difficulty. If they drop the object while going through, they must carry a second spoon in the other hand with a second object on it and continue. If they drop one of those they need to carry a third spoon in their mouth. A fourth will go back into another hand, and etc. Have a race or relay to see which individual or team completes first. (If it is too easy, add keeping up a hula hoop). After playing awhile, give new rules to one team. When that person drops an object, that person picks up another spoon and object but gives it to the moderator and does not have to carry a second one. Obviously, the one who does not have to carry his or her own mistakes will be able to complete the task much more easily.

Materials needed for alternative: Examen handout below; orange cones; basketballs; hula hoops.

Alternative Game: Set up two rows of cones like a path to walk through and balance basketballs on them. Make them close enough together to be difficult (but not impossible) to walk through without bumping a basketball. Make two paths to have a race. Give each participant a hula hoop and tell them they have to keep the hoop twirling and walk through the path to the other side. If they knock a basketball off the cone they have to carry it the rest of the way. They may end up having to carry more balls than they are able. Make it a race to see who can finish the course first (if anyone can.) After playing awhile, give new rules to one person. When that person knocks a ball off, he or she needs to pick it up but can then give that ball to the moderator and does not have to carry it. Obviously, the one who does not have to carry his or her own mistakes will be able to complete the task much more easily.

Teaching: Life is a journey with Christ. If we try to carry the burdens of our sin around, we will have a difficult time of it. By giving our sins to Christ we can make our journeys easier. And, once we give our sins to Christ they are gone and we no longer need to worry about knocking them over or carrying them all.

Commitment: Spend the last 2 minutes inviting everyone to consider how they will make receiving the sacrament of reconciliation a more regular part of their lives (like once per month, or twice per month)

Activity #2: Theme: Using prayer to keep us on track

Materials needed: Complete manger scene (projected on screen or printed out large enough for all to see); large printout of the incomplete manger scene, pencils or fine markers. Further instructions are included with the pictures.

Activity: Each group gets the task of drawing the same manger scene. Each person has an opportunity to draw one object in the picture (or help someone else), but with differing handicaps. Each person should spend only 1 ½ to 2 minutes on his/her drawing

(depending on how many people you have and time). One person should strictly keep time to keep things moving.

Note: *Included in this packet is a picture of the entire manger scene, as well as three options for the starting reference. This allows you to use this activity for small groups of 5-9 people. If you have 10 or more, split into two sub-groups. **Instructions for the activity are on the drawings.***

Teaching: Those who had the opportunity to stop and take the blindfolds off most often drew better pictures. Those who allowed someone else to direct them verbally and even take their hands and draw for them did even better. In the same way, the more often we stop to take account of where we are in our relationship with God and refocus the direction of our lives accordingly, the more closely we will be able to live our lives as Jesus calls us. Ultimately, we are called to turn over the reigns completely and allow God to move us. Only then will our lives most fully become what God intended for us.

Suggested Small Group Questions:

6. How difficult was it for the person who had to draw completely blind? Was it considerably easier for those who had the opportunity to stop and see where they were before continuing on?
7. How is this like what we do when we pray? (Hopefully they will get this on their own, but you may need to help by asking, "Can stopping to look at our lives and pray help us to live more like Jesus?")
8. How was the one who had to take direction from someone else, or even had his hand guided, like our walk with Christ? (We need to listen to God in our lives through prayer)
9. Is it hard to let God lead when we can't see where he is leading us?
10. What does it mean to allow God to take over our lives?

Commitment: Spend the last 2 minutes inviting everyone to consider committing to doing the simple examen below on a regular basis (every night, once per week).

Closing Prayer:

Preparation: Have the Scriptural passages ready and marked for 3 youth to read. If possible, have all the youth gather in one circle, sitting on the floor. Use a candle to help set the mood. Invite everyone to take the object they were given at the beginning of the session and hold it in front of them.

Leader: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

All: Amen

Leader: Let us listen to some words of Jesus on prayer, as found in the Gospel of Luke:

Youth 1: *Luke 11:5-8*

And he said to them, "Suppose one of you has a friend to whom he goes at midnight and says, 'Friend, lend me three loaves of bread, for a friend of mine has arrived at my house from a journey and I have nothing to offer him', and he says in reply from within, 'Do not bother me; the door has already been locked and my children and I are already in bed. I cannot get up to give you anything.' I tell you, if he does not get up to give him the loaves because of their friendship, he will get up to give him whatever he needs because of his persistence."

Youth 2: And I tell you, ask and you will receive; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks, receives; and the one who seeks, finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened.

Youth 3: What father among you would hand his son a snake when he asks for a fish? Or hand him a scorpion when he asks for an egg? If you then, who are wicked, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him?

Leader: *(Just a suggestion...feel free to use your own words)*

Our Lord promises us in this gospel that consistent, persistent—in essence, daily—prayer, will be answered by God even more assuredly than a friend would answer a request just to be able to get back to bed...and, then turns the image of that friend to that of a loving father, who would give his child everything we need and more. If we don't receive what we ask in prayer, perhaps we are in essence asking for scorpions—things that would actually harm us—and the Lord is answering with fish and eggs, things good for us. But let us take this Scripture to heart and remind ourselves that God is a loving God who is anxious to give us what we need, and that persistent daily prayer is the key not only to receiving God's gifts more fully, but to more fully understand what it is we truly need.

You made 3 simple commitments in your activities today. Studies show that it takes about 21 repetitions of a new activity for it to become a habit. I would like to invite you all to pause for a moment to recall those three commitments and silently ask God to help you commit to them each day for the next 3 weeks. *(If your group is small, you could pass around the candle and invite everyone to do this privately as the candle is passed to them).*

(After that time is passed).

Lord, we thank you for helping us to commit to knowing you better these next three weeks. Help us always to persevere in prayer and have the courage to continually change our lives to be in accordance with your calling for us. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen

If there is time, the leader may additionally close with an Our Father or other group prayer.

Special thanks to Bob Wurzelbacher of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati Office of Youth and Young Adult Ministry for preparing this meeting plan.

Examen of Consciousness

Based on St. Ignatius' Examen from the Jesuit Tradition



Step 1: Be aware of God's presence: No matter where you are, God is there with you. Stop for a moment, become aware of your breathing, quiet yourself, and be mindful of the truth of God being there with you.

Step 2: Review the day with gratitude: Walk through the past day, hour by hour, solely with the purpose of thanking God for everything you encountered that you can see as a gift that day, both big and small.

Step 3: Review your feelings and emotions: Take note of any strong feelings you had during the day, good or bad. Most days, memorable moments will quickly emerge.

Step 4: Pray from the strongest moment: Choose the moment that stood out to you as the most memorable, positive or negative. Your own reaction toward it is the sign that it is the most meaningful. Then simply express to God the prayer that surfaces concerning it (praise, cry for help, thanksgiving, etc.) You will find the Holy Spirit knocking on the door of your heart.

Step 5: Look toward tomorrow: Think about things coming up in your life (in the coming day or week). Take note of your feelings again: excitement, worry, fear, regret, etc. Turn to God one more time and share that feeling.

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VOCA TIONS
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Youth Ministry Skit
“Lord, Teach us to Pray” Luke 11:1

NO TIME: A skit about making time for God

Characters: **A teen** (both intelligent and athletic)
Robin (the superhero, if you have a costume, all the better)
Pres. Obama (again, costumes add to the fun)
Steve Jobs (CEO of Apple)
Coach Marvin Lewis (or coach of the local football team)
Pope Benedict (again, costumes add to the fun)

Stage: This can be very simple. What is needed is two chairs (Robin is the only one who sits down with the teen at the end). A door for people to knock on and enter the stage would be helpful, but could be mimed (it can also be the door to the room you are in). The teen also looks at a television, but that could be something unseen as the teen stands essentially right in front of the audience. Some characters also must be heard from off stage when calling the teen on his cell phone (although all are seen at some point).

Props: A phone, a handheld device with headphones for listening to the radio, a handheld device for playing a video game (they can all be one cell phone, but it often works best if the phone is not a handheld type so it is very visible when the teen hangs up on someone).

Teen: Wow, a free evening. Not too much to do, just a chance to sit around and do nothing. Let's see what's on TV.

(Phone rings.)

Teen: Hello?

Robin: This is Robin.

Teen: Robin who?

Robin: You know, from Batman and Robin.

Teen: Ok. So, uh, why are you calling me?

Robin: I wanted to get together with you because I've heard a lot of great things about you and think you could be a great help in solving a crime I'm working on right now. We've narrowed it down to the Joker, the Penguin or the Riddler.

Teen: Isn't it always one of those three?

Robin: Anyway, can I come over sometime this evening?

Teen: You know, I'm pretty busy this evening. My favorite show is on tonight.

Robin: Oh. This is kind of important. How about after the show?

Teen: Ummm, I have some things after that too. I have to, um, trim my toenails.

Robin: Oookaaay. Um, sounds like you're real busy. How about I just give you the scoop over the phone?

Teen: Look. You'll have to call me back later. The show just came on. Bye. *(he hangs up)*.

(Knock at the door.)

Teen: Come in!

Obama: Good evening! This is Pres. Obama.

Teen: Well, have a seat if you want. I'm watching TV right now.

Obama: No thanks. The reason I've called is you got perfect scores on your PSAT, SAT and ACT.

Teen: *(Not really paying attention.)* Oh, this scene is so funny. I've seen this one before.

Obama: And I've learned that you did a school project designing a computer program that can scan a 1,000 page book in 2 minutes and print out a 10 page essay on it.

Teen: This is SOO funny. Have you seen this one?

Obama: You also managed to hack into the budget program on the Pentagon mainframe, ordered one thousand donuts from Krispy Kreme dot com and had them delivered to a weight watchers meeting in Des Moines, Iowa.

Teen: I must have seen this a hundred times, and its still funny!

Obama: Well, anyway, you seem to have just the intelligence and skill we're looking for, so I'm here to offer you a position on my new anti-terrorism intelligence team.

Teen: *(Finally turns to look at Obama.)* Oh! You're Obama! As in the president! *(Stands up to shake his hand.)* I'm sorry, I just wasn't thinking.

Obama: So, I want to start you at \$100,000 per year plus expenses...

Teen: *(Interrupts)* Look, say no more. You're the president! I want you to know that I already know what you want. You want me to do what every patriotic American would do.

Obama: Well, yes!

Teen: *(He puts his hand over his heart and recites **very quickly** the entire Pledge of Allegiance)* I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of American and to the republic for which it stands one nation under God with liberty and justice for all. There! OK! Thanks for stopping by. See you later! *(Pushes him out as Obama objects. Then returns to his seat.)* Well, I'm glad I've got that out of the way! Now, what should I do next?

(Phone rings)

Teen: Hello?

Steve Jobs: Yes, is this _____?

Teen: Yes. Who's this?

Jobs: This is Steve Jobs, CEO of Apple.

Teen: OK. You know, I just met with the president so I'm pretty important. This better be worth my time.

Jobs: Well, I've heard some good things about you.

Teen: Yeah. You're not the first one today.

Jobs: I heard you have a real knack for innovation and technology. We've chosen a select few students nationwide, and I'm inviting them over to the mansion for a dinner. I also have a gift I want to give everyone.

Teen: *(Excited)* Oh really? Sure, I can make it. Where is it?

Jobs: Well, I'd fly you out to California.

Teen: Sorry, Steve. That would be a lot of trouble. Can you move it to Cincinnati? Why don't you have it at my neighbor's house across the street? Then I wouldn't have to go so far.

Jobs: I'm not sure I can do that.

Teen: Sure you can! So, when is it?

Jobs: Well, I was planning on Friday.

Teen: Sorry. Fridays' no good. Can you make it Tuesday?

Jobs: Well, there are other people who are already planning to be there as well.

Teen: Well, you can call them and have them reschedule. I'm sure they won't mind since it's such an honor to be invited to dinner with you. What time will it be?

Jobs: 7:00...but...

Teen: Nope. My favorite show is on then. We'll have to make it 8:00.

Jobs: Tell you what. Just in case you can't make the dinner, why don't I just come to your house to make sure you get your gift?

Teen: Well, that would be super. But, we'll leave it Tuesday at 8:00.

Jobs: I'm not sure I can make that work. Why don't we try for...

Teen: Great! 8:00 it is then! *(Hangs up.)* You know, it was nice of him to invite me to dinner, but I can't believe he expected me to come all the way to California for it! My time is important! *(Looks at his watch).* Speaking of time, the game is on the radio! *(He picks up his ipod and puts plugs in his ear to listen to the game.)*

(Knock at the door.)

Teen: Come in!

Coach Lewis: Hello! This is Coach Lewis from the Cincinnati Bengals.

Teen: Uh huh. *(Keeps listening the game.)* OK, make the right call here.

Coach: *(Not realizing he is listening to the game.)* Uh, right. I've heard your team made it to the state championship game last year.

Teen: Yes! Ok, keep the drive alive.

Coach: Right! Good luck with that. I understand that you are 100% on field goals so far this year. You even kicked one from 58 yards! Pretty impressive!

Teen: Just ten more yards...

Coach: Oh, I'm sorry. 68 yards? Well, even better! So anyway, we could use a little more help in that area, so I wanted to offer you a contract for \$500,000 per year.

Teen: *(Yelling at the refs on the radio)* What kind of a call is that? Come on! Are you blind or just stupid?

Coach: Ummm...ok. Did I say per year? I meant per game. \$500,000 per game.

Teen: *(Standing up)* Yessssssssss! Touchdown!

Coach: So, then, sounds like we have a deal?

Teen: What? Out of bounds? I can't believe this! *(Sits back down.)*

Coach: You know, you're right. I am a little out of bounds here. After all, you're still in high school. Ummm, would you rather come into my office with your parents and discuss things at a better time?

Teen: We are **never** gonna score!

Coach: I really think we could reach an agreement if you just...

Teen: So, now you're going for a field goal. *(to Coach)* Look, I can't talk now, ok? I'm trying to hear the game. Talk to you later! *(Pushes him out the door.)* Aaaaauuggghh! He missed! Less than 20 yards and he missed! I could do better than that! Why doesn't someone offer me a contract? *(Takes the plugs out of his ears to stop listening to the game.)*

(Phone rings.)

Teen: Hello?

Robin: Hey, its Robin again.

Teen: Robin who?

Robin: *(A little annoyed.)* You know. From Batman and Robin. So, your show is probably over by now. Is this a good time to discuss...

Teen: *(Interrupts)* I'm sorry, Spiderman, but I have to, uh, try to beat my high score on this new version of snake. Sorry! *(Hangs up and starts playing snake on his cell phone.)*

(Knock at the door.)

Teen: *(Keeps playing)* Come in!

Pope: Hello! My name is Pope Benedict.

Teen: Uh huh. (*Not really paying attention.*) Aaaa! My snake is sooo slick!

Pope: I'm so sorry, perhaps my English is not so good. I said, "My name is Pope Benedict."

Teen: Oh! (*Putting down the snake game.*) Well, sit down then! You know, the president was just by here too. Its been a pretty happening day around here!

Pope: I understand you were at our most recent World Youth Day.

Teen: Yes, I was. Pre-tty coooooool.

Pope: Yes. I have heard good things about you...

Teen: You know, it seems a lot of people have been hearing things about me.

Pope: Yes, well, I was hoping you would be willing to speak at the next World Youth Day in (Spain)...

Teen: (*Interrupting*) I'm glad you mentioned that. Accommodations for my last World Youth Day were not too good.

Pope: Oh?

Teen: We had to sleep on a classroom floor most nights, then trek for miles carrying everything on our backs, only to sleep outside in the rain the last night!

Pope: It IS a pilgrimage, which means that...

Teen: For the next World Youth Day I want you to fly me and 20, no, **40** of my closest friends out there, first class. Then we should be put up in some five star hotel, right in the heart of what is going on, so I don't have to walk so far. And there should be a Jacuzzi in the room too...

Pope: Um, I don't think...

Teen: You know, while you're at it, it would be great if I could borrow the pope mobile to get to school. I hate waiting for the bus. And I'll take the motorcade and some of the Swiss Guards too so I don't have to wait for traffic.

Pope: Well, actually...

Teen: And could you write a letter to my priest about giving shorter homilies? I get so bored at Mass!

Pope: I really don't think that...

Teen: And since you're so good at writing, could you just shoot a letter off to my principal as well, telling him that I only have to go to school 3 days a week? I mean, I've got a busy life!

Pope: Perhaps you shouldn't be speaking at World Youth Day after all...

Teen: You know, I could go on, but I think that's enough to work on for now. You're probably kind of tired anyway. (*Getting up*) Let me show you to the door. Thanks for stopping by though! (*Shoves him out the door.*) (*To himself*) You know, I must be pretty important. The pope came all the way out here just to see me. Maybe I should have asked for more?

(*Phone rings.*)

Teen: Hello?

Robin: Hey, its Robin again.

Teen: Robin who?

Robin: *(More annoyed.)* You know, from Batman and Robin?

Teen: You know, I think another one of your superhero friends called me earlier today.

Robin: Well, I really need to meet with you to try and solve this case.

Teen: Ok, ok! Put a guilt trip on me! I'll try to squeeze you in at 11:45 right before I go to bed. I may have about 5 minutes then. *(Hangs up.)*

(Knock at the door.)

Teen: Come in!

Steve Jobs: Hi David. Its Steve Jobs.

Teen: I thought we were meeting Tuesday.

Jobs: Well, you were obviously very busy, so I decided to hop on my jet and fly out here as soon as possible to make sure you got my gift.

Teen: *(Stands up)* Great! Is it your latest i-whatever? Maybe an i-robot that can do all my chores for me? That would be really cool!

Jobs: Well, no. But I think you'll be happy with this too.

Teen: Ok. What is it?

Jobs: Well, it's a key. *(Hand him a key.)*

Teen: *(Annoyed.)* I had to spend this time with you for a key?

Jobs: But its not just any key. Its...

Teen: *(Not listening)* You know, Mr. Gates, I'm really busy now. Thanks for stopping by.

(Starts shutting door)

Jobs: It operates the brand new i-bot...*(Door shuts on him.)*

Teen: *(To himself)* A key. I wonder if its worth anything? I guess I could have it remade to fit my bike lock. At least then it would be useful to me. *(Looks at watch.)* Oh boy. It IS getting late. I think I'll watch a little TV. *(Sits down.)*

(Knock at the door.)

Teen: Come in!

Robin: Hey. Its 11:45. I'm here to discuss the crime I need you to help me with.

Teen: Oh, that's right. *(Yawning)* Well, make it quick.

Robin: Well, last night at Gotham city Bank...

Teen: *(Starts snoring and falls asleep.)*

Robin: Maybe I should have told him there was a million dollar reward for any help in solving the mystery and capturing the one who did this. Oh well. I guess I'll just have to ask someone else! (*Exits.*)

Note to Youth Leader for leading discussion on skit:

The primary themes coming out of this skit are:

- Robin: Scheduling prayer the last minute before you go to bed, when you are about to fall asleep.
- Obama: Simply reciting rote prayers.
- Jobs: Feeling like going to Church is such a hassle and should entirely accommodate your schedule, and not appreciating the gift of the Eucharist for what it is.
- Coach Lewis: Not taking the time to stop and listen to God.
- Pope Benedict: Using prayer only to ask for things.

Ask for feedback on what themes the young people noticed emerging from the skit. Talk a bit about what they think each character represented. They may see things you did not, but also point out above themes that may have been missed.

Sprinkle in quotes from the Catechism (i.e., 2559: "Prayer is the raising of one's heart and mind to God"; 2744: "Prayer is a vital necessity...How can the Holy Spirit be our life if we are far from him?"; or 2745: "Prayer and Christian life are inseparable".

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Close by mentioning that "we will be entering into some activities that teach us more about prayer." Invite them to, while having some fun with it, keep in mind that we are trying to learn more about prayer and be attentive to what God may be saying to us in each activity.



Youth Ministry Manger Scene Activity

Open this on your computer and project it as the model for all to see. Or print it out if the group is small.

See instructions on each of the following pages depending on the size of your group (5-6, 7-8 or 8-9).

Alternative to each set up instructions: Instead of having each person draw a different character, you could print out the above cartoon and have them color it. Use the same handicaps described below, but have each person color their characters. In that case, you do not need to project the complete image to everyone. All you need to do is print out the drawing for the group.



For 5 or 6 people (Print out this page on cardstock for people to draw on):

- Person 1: Draws the King closest to Mary. S/he must complete the entire drawing with a blindfold on; however, s/he may place the marker in the proper starting place on the paper before putting the blindfold on.
- Person 2: Draws the center King. S/he can only move the pen with a blindfold on, but can stop drawing and look at how s/he is doing **one time** during the process. S/he can also place the pen in proper position before beginning.
- Person 3: Draws the last King. Same as above, except s/he can stop drawing and look at how s/he is doing **2 times** during the process.
- Person 4: Draws the shepherd closes to St. Joseph. S/he wears a blindfold the entire time, but person 6 or the group leader assists by verbally telling the person where to move the marker.
- Person 5: Draws the shepherd with the hook. S/he wears a blindfold, but the group leader holds his/her hand and helps him/her to draw.



For 7 or 8 people (Print out this page on cardstock for people to draw on):

- Person 1: Draws the camel. S/he must complete the entire drawing with a blindfold on; however, s/he may place the marker in the proper starting place on the paper before putting the blindfold on.
- Person 2: Draws the King closest to Mary. S/he can only move the pen with a blindfold on, but can stop drawing and look at how s/he is doing **one time** during the process. S/he can also place the pen in proper position before beginning.
- Person 3: Draws the center King. Same as above, except s/he can stop drawing and look at how s/he is doing **2 times** during the process.
- Person 4: Draws the last King. Same as above, except s/he can stop drawing and look at how s/he is doing **3 times** during the process.
- Person 5: Draws the shepherd closes to St. Joseph. S/he wears a blindfold the entire time, but person 6 assists by verbally telling the person where to move the marker.
- Person 7: Draws the shepherd with the hook. S/he wears a blindfold, but person 8 or the group leader holds his/her hand and helps him/her to draw.



For 8 or 9 people (Print out this page on cardstock for people to draw on):

- Person 1: Draws the lamb. S/he must complete his/her part of the drawing from start to finish with a blindfold on. The drawer may not be touching the paper in any way before putting the blindfold on.
- Person 2: Draws the camel. S/he must complete the entire drawing with a blindfold on; however, s/he may place the marker in the proper starting place on the paper before putting the blindfold on.
- Person 3: Draws the King closest to Mary. S/he can only move the pen with a blindfold on, but can stop drawing and look at how s/he is doing **one time** during the process. S/he can also place the pen in proper position before beginning.
- Person 4: Draws the center King. Same as above, except s/he can stop drawing and look at how s/he is doing **2 times** during the process.
- Person 5: Draws the last King. Same as above, except s/he can stop drawing and look at how s/he is doing **3 times** during the process.
- Person 6: Draws the shepherd closes to St. Joseph. S/he wears a blindfold the entire time, but person 7 assists by verbally telling the person where to move the marker.
- Person 8: Draws the shepherd with the hook. S/he wears a blindfold, but person 9 or the group leader holds his/her hand and helps him/her to draw.



Youth Ministry Discussion Guide

“Lord, Teach us to Pray!” Luke 11:1

Purpose:

To train young people to imitate Christ while discerning their vocation.

“Husbands love your wives as Christ loved the Church and gave himself up for her, that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of the water with the word, that he might present the Church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish.” Ephesians 5: 25 – 27

In order to discern a vocation, one must have a heart of prayer, a heart connected to Christ. Through prayer, through a willingness to offer oneself for others; one’s vocation starts to be made manifest. But *how* to pray, how to strive for virtue can be lost in the midst of the chaotic world in which we live. Based on Ephesians 5, these five steps will help to shape the prayer life of the teens in your parish, helping them to recognize that God truly is calling them to greatness, and only by responding to this call will they experience true happiness.

To foster this life of prayer, challenge your teens to the following five commitments.

The Commitments:

1. **Prayer** – Meditating on the Word of God (through Lectio Divina or Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius) for 15 to 30 minutes a day or meditating with the Rosary.

Objectives:

- a. Teach teens to learn how to meditate on the Word of God through the ancient prayer of Lectio Divina¹. The five steps: Lectio (Listening), Meditatio (meditation), Collatio (Sharing), Oratio (prayer), Communio (Communion).
 - b. Learning to work through the three stages of prayer: Purgative, Illuminative and Unitive; teens are to learn their call to be in communion with God.
 - c. Final objective is to bring glory to God in everything they do.
2. **Sacraments** – Frequenting the Sacraments: Confession once a month, Sunday Mass (this is a precept of the Church) devotion to daily Mass and Adoration.

Objective:

¹ For more information on *Lectio Divina*, see the “Adult Faith Formation” section of this program.

- a. Providing the means necessary for their salvation and transformation in Christ, by participating in his Divine Life.
 - b. Teaching the youth how to pray the Mass².
3. **Sacrifice** – There are two sacrifices that are made. 1.) Once a week, on Friday, they are to make sacrifice, by giving something up that is a good (some examples: chocolate, Facebook, texting). The intention of this sacrifice is for their future spouse (either the Church as priest or consecrated, or marital spouse). 2.) Once a month communal sacrifice for a communal intention (ex. bread and water for the hungry).
Objective: The main point of these sacrifices is two-fold:
- a. To learn to pray when they offer a sacrifice. When this becomes a prayer, we unite our suffering to the suffering of those for whom we sacrifice.
 - b. To learn the meaning of redemptive suffering.
4. **Chastity**—Promise to live purity and follow the teaching of the Church on human sexuality.
Objective: Teaching them that a “no” to sexual activity outside of marriage is a “yes” to the gift of the marital act in marriage. In the meetings the young people go through the Theology of the Body Program³ in order to better understand the meaning of sexuality and God’s plan for it.
5. **Service**- Promise to participate in a Work of Mercy that Jesus calls us to in Matthew 25.
Objective:
- a. Teaching the teens to serve others because of our love for Christ; our service to others flows forth from our love for Christ.
 - b. To realize true compassion. True compassion is not enlightened self-interest but rather a longing to ease the suffering of others.
 - c. Our concern is not to just feed bellies but to bring Christ to the needy.

The goal of this outline, which would take place even over a number of years, is for the youth minister to mentor groups of young people in their prayer, to help them see that their prayer ultimately guides the decisions that they make in discerning a vocation as well as guiding how that vocation plays out in the reality of their life. Finally, it is hoped that the teens recognize that ultimate happiness and fulfillment comes not in the fleeting pleasures of this world, but in a striving for virtue and holiness, union with God in all things.

² An excellent resource, which explains many of the Biblical references in the Mass, is Jeff Pinyan's *Praying the Mass*, which can be found here: <http://www.prayingthemass.com/>

³ For more on Theology of the Body for Teens, visit: <http://www.tobforteens.com/> or call Ruah Woods at 513-407-8672 or www.ruahwoods.org.

Structure of Meeting: Two curriculums for study and prayer – TOB FOR TEENS and a VIRTUE Curriculum

- Meeting starts in Chapel
- Opening Prayer – Scripture Reflection
- 5 minute meditation
- Reflection period on passage
- Teaching on the virtue
- Commitment check
- Closing Prayer

A note of thanks to Courtney Brown, Theology of the Body Educator at Ruah Woods, Cincinnati, for outlining this program. He used it to great success while teaching in a high school in New Orleans. However, it should be noted that this program is not for everyone, some will not be able to respond to the demands of this program. It is suggested that you be selective in forming the first group to begin this formation. For more information, contact Courtney through Ruah Woods: www.ruahwoods.org.



VOCATIONS
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Family Faith Formation
“*Lord, Teach us to Pray!*” Luke 11:1

Introduction:

As it is mentioned in several Church documents, the home is the domestic church and the original source of faith for all of us. It is the duty of the parents to pass along their faith to their children and to raise their children to know, love and serve the Lord.

An important aspect in fostering a love for the Lord, however, is not just telling them about Him, but introducing them to Him by fostering a life of prayer in your children. This is how God will speak to them in calling them to a particular vocation in life, how He will lead them through their pilgrimage of faith. While there are many laudable ways to pray together as a family (Adoration, Rosary, Liturgy of the Hours, etc.), we propose this program centered around an ancient form of prayer known as *Lectio Divina*, or ‘Divine Reading.’ This prayer, based in the Scriptures, allows one to be immersed in the world of the Scriptures and to have the words of Our Lord come to light around us.

Lectio Divina is not Scripture study, nor should it take the place of such exercises. It is a way to pray the Scriptures, to deepen our relationship with God, and to know the Scriptures better.

There are four basic stages. To begin, a passage from the Scriptures needs to be chosen. It should not be too long, the daily Gospel reading or one of the readings for the upcoming Sunday are good choices. Those praying should take a moment to relax, perhaps saying a few Hail Mary’s to ask for Our Lady’s intercession and guidance during this time of prayer, and try to set the concerns of the outside world aside, as one would do when preparing for the celebration of the Mass.

Stages of *Lectio Divina*:

1. *LECTIO* or READ

- a. The passage is read slowly and purposefully, allowing those present to listen for a word or phrase that catches their interest or stirs the heart.
- b. All sit for a moment with their word or phrase.
- c. Just that word or phrase is shared with the others without commentary or explanation.

2. *MEDITATIO* or REFLECTION

- a. The text is read again.
- b. Listen again for the Word to catch your heart, it may be the same as the previous read or it may have changed.
- c. Sit with it for a while.
- d. Share what was said TO YOU through the Scripture. It is not a sermon for others to hear, but what was said to you.
- e. Say a sentence or two about it.

3. *ORATIO* or PRAY

- a. The same text is read again.
- b. Sit with it
- c. Offer a spontaneous prayer in answer to the Scripture speaking to you, either in silence or aloud, one at a time.

4. *CONTEMPLATIO* or REST

- a. The text is read again.
- b. Sit quietly and contemplate or pray over the text.
- c. If done in a group, the leader can end by softly beginning the Our Father or another prayer.

Certainly, for smaller children, it will take some time for them to become used to this type of prayer. However, beginning with small sections and allowing them to express their thoughts in their own words can bring tremendous insight, for Our Lord reminds that we are to come to Him with hearts like little children.

For aspects of prayer in the Scriptures, see **High School Lesson Plan**.

For aspects on the 'battle of prayer,' see the **Young Adult Discussion Guide**.

The following two links are YouTube™ clips of Archbishop Michael Collins of Toronto discussing *Lectio Divina*:

- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aqRf8-M0-I&feature=related>
- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LWttGblH10&feature=related>



Young Adult Discussion Guide

“Lord, Teach us to Pray!” Luke 11:1

Purpose:

Walk into any bookstore in the United States these days and you’ll find a huge section on prayer, spirituality and other related topics. It seems that the demand for spiritual health and wholeness has never been greater. Our world has become exceedingly complex and intense, making profound demands on our time and energy. No wonder so many people are looking for meaning in all the busyness of their lives.

As young adults, you are particularly in tune with the pace of life in the 21st century. The amount of time you spend connecting with one another in person and on social network sites like Facebook™ says that you value meaningful relationships. At the same time, you and many of your peers also may be looking for ways to connect more deeply with God. Some of you who are reading this may already be seasoned “pray-ers”; some of you may not pray as often as you wish. Others of you may not know how to pray. Still others may be feeling that you’ve entered a dry-spell where prayer is very difficult and God seems very distant.

We hope that this discussion guide helps you take a second look at prayer as a way to help you find meaning and deepen your relationships with each other and with God in this cyber-driven world. This guide can be used individually or in a group setting.

What is prayer?

Quite simply, prayer is talking and listening to God. It’s a personal relationship of mutuality. We speak; God listens. God speaks; we listen. But many of us know or suspect that there’s something more to it than that. St. John Damascene calls it “the raising of one’s mind and heart to God...” St. Thérèse of Lisieux calls it “a surge of the heart; a simple look toward heaven, it is a cry of recognition and of love, embracing both trial and joy.”

“Prayer is both a gift of grace and a determined response on our part. It always presupposes effort.” (CCC #2725) When we pray, the intended outcome is that our hearts and minds are focused solely on God. We bring our whole being into the presence of God—all our joys and sorrows, victories and challenges, gratitude and sin. In prayer, we stand naked in front of an all loving and merciful God who wants nothing more than to be at the center of our existence so that God’s love can be the center from which we “live and move and have our being.” (Acts 17:28) And, it takes persistence, effort and practice. All solid relationships do.

Why pray?

“Prayer is the life of a new heart.” (CCC #2697) Prayer has the uncanny ability to change *everything*, if we are persistent in doing it. Prayer doesn’t change God, it changes us. Having a regular pattern of prayer is a sure way to increase our capacity to love, because, in prayer, we come to know the unfathomable depth of God’s love toward us. God’s love becomes so powerful a force in our lives that we have no other proper response than to return that love as gift to God. And, since God’s love in our lives is the grounding from which know our true selves and through which we enter into the world, we are able to respond to the world with Divine love. Having a consistent prayer regimen allows us to tap into the love of God, to know how deeply we are loved, and to share that love with others. Prayer makes us better Catholic Christians, better servants to each other, better friends to our friends, better listeners of God’s will for us. Ultimately, prayer helps us bring God’s presence to a world that

desperately needs God's love. Prayer is all about relationships and there's nothing that God wants more than to be in relationship with you and your world.

Obstacles to Praying:

We often expect prayer to come easy; after all, many of us started praying as soon as we could talk. In fact, prayer is supposed to come naturally to us since prayer is an action of the Holy Spirit. We are hard-wired to pray. That's how God made us. You could say that it's in our DNA to be pray-ers. Nevertheless, many people seem to find prayer to be one of the most difficult things to do. There are a few reasons why this is so:

- We live in a media-saturated, cyber-driven culture that claims much of our time, interest and energy, resulting in distracted minds and divided hearts and, more insidiously, causes us to believe that being entertained is the highest good;
- We live in a culture that values industry (doing) and efficiency over “wasting time;”
- We live in a culture that projects the attitude that “this is all there is so you better enjoy life while you can.” We're told that pleasure and entertainment are the only good and that everything else is bad for us;
- We live in a culture that is suspicious of altruistic intentions, that the personal preference of the individual trumps the common good;
- Sometimes, we are the obstacle:
 - We don't make the time to pray; or
 - We give up too easily when we don't get the desired response as quickly as we think we should; or
 - We think we've prayed by just showing up at Mass; or
 - We treat God like he is some kind of Divine Butler who is supposed to cater to our needs but, other than that, we have little use for him;
 - We think of prayer as an added “extra”—it's nice to have, but it's not necessary—kind of like wallpaper—and, therefore, can be separate from all other aspects of our lives;
 - Sometimes our minds wander to things left undone (laundry, shopping, etc.) or to worries (economic difficulties, broken relationships, work, etc.) that distract us from being present to God.
- Sometimes it's not anything at all that we can identify. It is not uncommon for those of us who have a consistent pattern of prayer to hit a wall, to enter a dry-spell where God's voice is silent despite all our efforts. All the things we did to help us enter into prayer and stay focused don't seem to be working anymore. And, we are left with heartbreaking silence. Don't be alarmed. This eventually happens to everyone who is serious about prayer. Everyone. Even Blessed Mother Teresa of Calcutta.

What You Can Do?

For these and other reasons you can probably name, the Catechism of the Catholic Church calls these kinds of struggles “the battle of prayer.” (CCC #2725ff) Whether the difficulties come from outside or from within ourselves, prayer can be a battle. There's always something or someone that wants to get in the way of our prayer. When you're besieged by distractions or can't seem to “get anywhere” in prayer, try some of these ideas:

- **If you find yourself distracted during your prayer time:**
 - When you find that your mind wandered off a bit, just gently come back to being in God's presence, acknowledging God is ever present, loving you no matter what.
 - Remember who God is: not a Divine Butler, but as the living all-powerful and all-loving Father of Jesus Christ who is calling you into relationship with him.

- Try a different way of praying than your usual way. Some people prefer to pray with images or guided meditation. Others delve into scripture through [lectio divina](#)¹. Still others find the [Examen of St. Ignatius Loyola](#)² helpful.
- Create a space in your home that is reserved for prayer. Put a small table in a corner with some icons or statues, the bible, a candle, and other items that help you tune into God. Even if you have no space for a permanent spot in your house, lighting a candle beside your favorite chair can create a sacred space for prayer. If you get distracted, gaze at the candle to remind you where you are and Whose you are.
- Attend a retreat to begin or strengthen your prayer life and habits: <http://www.jesuitspiritualcenter.com/Retreats/Default.aspx>
- **If you've entered a dry-spell in your prayer life:**
 - Begin to cultivate a posture of humility. Ask God (and keep asking!) to give you a heart that is able to hear what God wants to tell you. Humility helps us to put ourselves in right relationship with God—that we are dependant upon God for everything—and helps us to remember that God deeply wants to give us his peace.
 - Begin to cultivate gratitude in your life. Even if we cannot seem to hear God, at the very least we can find things in our lives every day to be grateful to Him for. And remember that gratitude begets joy and joy is an infallible sign of the presence of God.
 - Begin to understand that not only can you be in prayer when you're praying, but that everything you do can be a prayer to God. St. Paul tells us to “pray without ceasing.” (1Thes. 5:17) Begin to offer up everything you do and say throughout the day as a prayer to God. St. Thérèse of Lisieux brought forward her ‘little way’ of offering little acts of love before the Father as her way of praying always. She holds that one can offer greater glory to God by sweeping the floor than by preaching a fine homily, simply because the former is done with great love. Be intentional about everything you do as an act of love toward God.
 - Mix it up! Try different types of prayer forms: lectio divina, Taize prayer, Liturgy of the Hours. Spend some quiet time in front of the Eucharist in adoration. Spend an afternoon in nature—bring your Bible with you. Go to Mass. Take a mini-pilgrimage to a local shrine or monastery. Go shopping at a local Catholic bookstore.
 - Don't give up! Even the most “expert” pray-ers hit a dry patch every now and then. Sometimes it takes a long time to move through it. And the only way to move through it *is to move through it*. Remember that God hasn't abandoned you. Just as you had a hard time learning Spanish or French (or math or music), God might be trying to teach you a new language of love. Listen...Eventually you will hear. And don't be afraid to try new ways of praying. Something that didn't work for you before might stir your heart now.
- **Difficulty in finding time to pray:** Take advantage of some of these MP3s, podcasts or online retreats.
 - Liturgy of the Hours (aka The Divine Office): www.universalis.org
 - Daily prayer for your iPod: <http://pray-as-you-go.org>
 - Taize prayer podcasts: http://www.taize.fr/en_article681.html
 - Daily video prayer online: <http://sacredspace.ie>
 - To receive prayerful support from others or to offer support to others: <http://www.other6.com>
 - To see what other young adults are thinking about and doing to enhance their prayer lives: <http://www.bustedhalo.com/category/religionandspirituality>

¹ http://wau.org/resources/article/the_practice_of_lectio_divina/

² <http://ignatianspirituality.com/ignatian-prayer/the-examen/>

Putting prayer First:

There's another way to look at "prayer as a battle." Sometimes in the movies or on TV we hear, "The only thing left now is to pray," the prevailing sentiment being: When all else fails, pray. In other words, "if you've done everything humanly possible and nothing worked, then maybe prayer might work...but we doubt it." This reveals another challenge by our culture: that God is distant and unconcerned about us. The belief that prayer is a really only marginally effective as a last resort keeps us from tapping into the greatest force on earth from the get go. If only we were able to remember to pray first—to call on God always and everywhere—maybe there'd be fewer and fewer reasons to call on him as a last resort. Prayer is the front line of defense in the face of struggles, challenges, dangers and sin, not an extraneous add-on. Our relationship with God through prayer is the beginning of miraculous events, not the result of last ditch efforts (although God can pretty much do any miracle he likes at any time. That's his prerogative.).

Bottom line: for the Christian, it is impossible to live without a regular pattern of prayer! Set times of adoration and praise before God (in the presence of the Eucharist or not) so that the rest of the day may be turned into a constant act of love before God. To do so requires a heart under constant purification and refinement, for only such a heart is able to love God so deeply that every act of the will is an expression of praise before God, the Father.

Discussion Questions:

1. The Catechism outlines several common 'objections' to prayer in our modern world (see CCC #2725ff) some of which are mentioned above. What are some of the objections you have heard from your peers? What are some of the objections that you have faced yourself? What are ways to overcome these objections, either personally or in helping others overcome their objections?
2. What are the ways you have found most helpful in battling distractions in prayer?
3. In movies, we often hear: 'The only thing left now is to pray.' How does the Catechism correct this mistaken interpretation of the role of prayer in the life of a Christian? How does beginning the day with prayer set a different tone for the day, rather than turning to prayer as a last resort?
4. How have you responded when it seems that God is silent? What lesson might you be able to share from that experience?
5. The Disciples asked Jesus to teach them how to pray. Jesus responded by giving them the Our Father. How might we see in both this prayer and in the example of the prayer life of Jesus models for our prayer life? (See CCC #2759ff)
6. Discouragement is perhaps the greatest struggle to a deeper prayer life. Facing difficulty in prayer, we are often tempted to turn away all together. Where do you find the strength to continue?

Additional Resources:

- *Blessed Are the Bored in Spirit: A Young Catholic's Search for Meaning* by Mark Hart; Servant Books © 2006.
- *God in the Moment: Making Every Day a Prayer* by Kathy Coffey, Orbis Books © 2005.

- *Everything Belongs: The Gift of Contemplative Prayer* by Richard Rohr, Crossroad Publishing Co., © 2003.
- *The Ignatian Workout—Daily Spiritual Exercises for a Healthy Faith* by Tim Muldoon, Loyola Press, © 2004.
- *Lights, Camera...Faith! A Movie Lectionary Cycle A* by Peter Malone, MSC, and Rose Pacatte, Pauline Books & Media © 2001.
- *Praying As Jesus Taught Us: Meditations on the Our Father* by Cardinal Carlo Maria Martini, S.J., Sheed & Ward © 2001.
- *Seeking the Heart of God: Reflections on Prayer* by Blessed Mother Theresa, HarperCollins © 1993.
- *Spirituality at Work—10 Ways to Balance Your Life on the Job* by Gregory F.A. Pierce, Loyola Press © 2001.
- *Transforming Our Days—Finding God Amid the Noise of Modern Life* by Richard R. Gaillardetz, Ligouri Publications © 2007.

Special thanks to Andrea Parker of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati Office of Youth and Young Adult Ministry for preparing this discussion guide.



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Adult Faith Formation
“Lord, Teach us to Pray!” Luke 11:1

Purpose:

Prayer in the Catholic Church follows a routine cycle of seasons and a regular return of events as we progress through our pilgrimage of life and strive for entrance into the life to come. As is so often the case in Catholic practice, the origins and roots of this cycle of prayer are grounded in the experience of salvation history found in the Old Testament, but reflected upon by Christians in the New Covenant. In this cycle of prayer, there is a melding of three cultures and concepts: Jewish, Greek and Roman; that over time, have shaped the scope of Christian prayer in the modern world.

In this section, we will:

1. review the development and history of prayer in the Catholic Church,
2. trace the Liturgical Calendar, and
3. have a short introduction to the Liturgy of the Hours as the official prayer of the Church.

Development of Prayer in the Catholic Church

In the earliest days of the Church, as recorded in the Acts of the Apostles, the only specifically Christian prayer was Sunday morning, what quickly developed into Mass as we know it today. While the Temple in Jerusalem still stood, daily prayer continued to be located in the Temple or local synagogue. However, with the destruction of the Temple in AD 70 and the resulting split between the Jewish Community and the nascent Christian community; Christian prayer started to take on its own personality and flavor. Over the first few Christian centuries, parts of the Mass became standard, but great leaps in order and routine would not be accomplished until the 315 AD *Edict of Milan* of Constantine, legalizing Christianity and allowing Christians to build specific places of worship for the first time.

With these specific houses of prayer, daily liturgies began to be incorporated into the life of the Church, and the first inklings of a liturgical calendar began to be formed. During these first centuries of legalized Christianity, the date of Christmas and the rendering for the date of Easter were formalized. Celebrations dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary started to appear, especially the Feast of the Dormition of Mary, known in the West as the Assumption; which has its roots in the 4th Century.

With the legalization of Christianity, there were some who desired the intense spiritual fervor that existed during the times of persecution and had waned with the large influx of new members. St. Benedict of Nursia followed the example of St. Anthony of the Desert and started to gather followers who desired the more ascetical life and western monasticism began to grow and flourish over the next 1,000 years. As Monasticism grew and they looked to Christianity’s Jewish roots, a desire to pray the same prayers that Jesus himself prayed eventually formed and developed into the Liturgy of the Hours, which helped monks to regularize the day into specific times of prayer versus work, allowing them to sanctify each part of the day and the work that they completed during the day so that all could be for

the greater glory and honor of God. As this prayer routine developed, the 150 Psalms were organized into 'Hours' of the day, giving a rhythm to life in the monasteries and a pattern of prayer for the monks.

During the Middle Ages, the laity were able to experience this rhythm of life as they worked near Monastic communities of both men and women. Desiring their own regular prayer routine that was still connected with the monastic rhythm, two popular devotions began to spread: praying the Angelus at six in the morning, noon and six in the afternoon. These hours reflected when the monasteries were called to prayer by the ringing of bells, and the laborers in fields and villages around the monasteries stopped what they were doing to connect their prayers with those in the chapels. As is often the case in Christian spirituality, numbers also grew to have a special meaning. As the monks and nuns would pray the 150 Psalms throughout the week, the people had a desire to pray in imitation of them. Hence the rosary developed, with three sets of five mysteries (a fourth set was added by Pope John Paul II in 2002 in his Apostolic Letter *Rosarium Virginis Mariae*¹), with each mystery containing ten recitations of the Hail Mary. The laity could pray their own version of hours as they recited the 150 Hail Mary's to go with the monastic recitation of the 150 Psalms.

During this same period, devotion to the Eucharist grew tremendously. While initially remnants of the Eucharistic Species was reserved solely for communion to the sick, the homebound or imprisoned; as Christianity became legalized and established, a 'cult' of Eucharistic Adoration slowly began to spread, reaching a high point of devotion during the Middle Ages. Just prior to the Reformation, there is growing evidence of a thriving Eucharistic devotion among the people. Rood Screens that still survive in England give evidence of holes drilled through them so that the laity could glimpse the Eucharistic Species as it was elevated just after the Consecration at Mass. While reception of Communion was not as common then as it is today, the people gave evidence of a strong belief in the True Presence of Christ in the Eucharist. Evidence suggests that it was during the later Middle Ages that the practice of 40 Hours Devotion grew and spread, as the people desired to spend the 40 hours that Jesus was in the tomb as a time of prayer and fasting. Corpus Christi Processions and devotions also thrived during these times, often giving rise to mid-summer festivals and traveling carnivals that featured morality plays, bringing the stories of the Bible alive to a largely illiterate culture.

With the Protestant Reformation and the Catholic Counter-Reformation at the Council of Trent, many of these organic developments ceased to grow. The Latin Rite of the Catholic Church existed as it was from the sixteenth to the twentieth centuries after Christ, when a new liturgical renewal program started within the Church. Culminating in Vatican II's 'Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy,' the Council recognized that expressions of prayer in the Latin Rite were always marked by a 'Noble Simplicity,' which, frankly, had been lost in the centuries of accretions being added to the Mass. Hence the liturgical reforms called for a return to vernacular languages, which also keeping Latin in pride of place as the mother tongue of the Latin Rite. With these reforms, the Liturgy of the Hours was simplified from a single one week cycle where all 150 Psalms would be prayed during that one week, to a four week cycle, spreading the psalms out over a an extended time. The Mass was adapted as well, primarily with a great increase in the amount of Scripture proclaimed during the Mass, moving from a one-year cycle of mostly the Gospel of Matthew, to today's three year cycle (for Sundays), with a year dedicated to each of the three synoptic Gospels, while the Gospel of John is interspersed throughout the three year cycle. It was hoped that this renewal would be just that: a renewal leading to an increased fervor of prayer on the part of both priest and people alike. The connections between Scripture and prayer were highlighted and strengthened, which will be only clearer during the upcoming re-translation of the Missal for Advent of 2011.

¹ http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/apost_letters/documents/hf_jp-ii_apl_20021016_rosarium-virginis-mariae_en.html

What this history of prayer in the Latin Church teaches us spans across several aspects: 1) All prayer is Scriptural, from the very beginning the proclamation of both the Old and New Testaments was seen as a constitutive element in Christian prayer; 2) there has always been a mix of private, personal prayer with public, liturgical prayer, the two form a set of lungs, so to speak, that allow each Christian disciple to drink deeply from the wellspring of Christ in prayer; and 3) there has always been a distinction between the prayer of laity versus the prayer of clerics and religious; but again there were always connections and interplay between the two. All of these dimensions allow the Catholic Christian to be what it has been called to be by Christ: His living representatives in the world that is in need of redemption.

The Liturgy of the Hours

The official prayer of the Church, surprisingly, is not the celebration of the Eucharist. Rather, it is the daily recitation of the Liturgy of the Hours, frequently known as either the Breviary or the Divine Office. Following the Liturgical Season, which will be discussed in the third section of this outline, the Divine Office is the way which priests and religious sanctify their day by stepping aside from the obligations of this world to pray the prayers that Jesus himself said. Prior to the reforms of the Second Vatican Council, the Liturgy of the Hours covered all 150 Psalms in a weekly cycle, praying seven times a day, every day. The Hours consisted of Vigils, Lauds, Terce, Sext, None, Vespers and Compline. In the reforms of the Council, the three middle hours were combined and the longer Psalms were broken down into segments, so that now the 150 Psalms are prayed over the course of four weeks instead of one. However, some Psalms were retained on specific times every week, Psalm 51 every Friday morning, for example. The results of the reform are that the Liturgy of the Hours now consists of the Office of Readings (Vigils), Morning Prayer (Lauds), Midday Prayer (Terce, Sext, or None), Evening Prayer (Vespers), and Night Prayer (Compline).

The Office of Readings is the longest of the hours and can be done either in anticipation the night before or first thing in the morning of the assigned day. (Some Monasteries do continue to pray this hour as a vigil in the middle of the night, rising at three or four in the morning to gather for prayer.) If it is done in the morning, an introductory Psalm (usually Psalm 94) is prayed prior to entering the Hour. After the Greeting, a song is sung by the community and three psalms are either recited or chanted. Following the recitation of the Psalms, an extended passage of the Scriptures are proclaimed, usually in sequence following from previous days, so that one will read from the same book over a period of a week or two before beginning a new book of the Bible. An extended reading from the writings of a saint (especially on the feast day of that saint), a document of the Church, or some other spiritual writing will accompany and follow the Scriptural passage. Each extended reading has an accompanying responsory, or short refrain for a gathered community to recite together. On the highest feast days and Sundays, the *te deum*, is sung prior to the closing prayer, blessing and dismissal.

Morning and Evening Prayer have a parallel structures that hinge the beginning and the end of the work day. Again, the Hour begins with a hymn sung as a community before praying two Psalms and a Canticle (a poetic section of Scripture outside of the Psalms, Philippians 3:1-11, for example), either by chant or recitation. A short reading from Scripture is followed by a response and praying together a specific canticle from the Gospel of Luke: the Canticle of Zechariah in the morning, the Canticle of Mary in the evening. Petitions and the Our Father follow, with a prayer and concluding blessing closing out the Hour. Morning Prayer has a particular focus of thanking God for the rest of sleep and bringing us to a new day and asking for a blessing to be upon the upcoming day. Evening prayer offers the work of the day to the Father and asks that God might bring rest over the evening hours.

Midday Prayer is simply a hymn, three psalms, a verse or two from Scripture and a closing prayer and blessing.

Night Prayer has a particular focus on mortality and protection in the event of death. Instead of a four week cycle, Night Prayer has only a one week cycle, and is shorter than the other hours. Instead of beginning with the hymn, it is customary to perform a short examination of conscience to reflect upon one's day, the ways in which we recognized God's invitation, the ways in which we missed hearing God's voice, etc. A penitential rite similar to that at Mass leads the community to the hymn. Instead of three Psalms, there is usually only one (or two short Psalms) recited and a verse or two of Scripture, again calling for protection during the nighttime hours and alertness of the prowling and temptations of the Devil. The Canticle of Simeon from the Gospel of Luke is recited prior to the closing hymn and a unique blessing for Night Prayer. It is customary to end either Evening Prayer or Night Prayer with a hymn to Our Lady, asking for her motherly care and protection over the nighttime watch.

While the Liturgy of the Hours may seem unwieldy at first, especially if one picks up the four volume set (as opposed to the simpler 'Christian Prayer' single volume), there are wonderful new tools available to the lay Catholic in our age of technology. Those who have an iPhone or iPad are able to download the iBreviary app which sorts through the myriad of options for the Liturgy of the Hours and places it all at your fingertips. (Universalis also has an app from Apple products.) These apps also include the daily readings for Mass, as well as apps for many of the standard Catholic prayers, such as the Rosary, that can take a bit of time to develop the habit of prayer. For those who have not embraced the technological age with vigor, 'Magnificat' is a monthly subscription magazine with a simplified version of Morning and Evening Prayer, as well as the daily readings and prayers for Mass. These all provide wonderful options for the lay Catholic who wishes to tap into these ancient forms of prayer in the Catholic Christian tradition. See the 'Web Resources' page from Our Sunday Visitor, included with this program, for many more easy resources to find and use.

The Liturgical Year

As mentioned at the beginning of this paper, the Church celebrates a liturgical year in which we cycle back through the same mysteries year after year, reentering them as we make our pilgrimage of faith on this earth hoping to find a place prepared for us in Heaven. The Liturgical Year is what makes salvation real for us, played out in a continuous cycle.

The Liturgical Year begins with the First Sunday of Advent. While Advent is a time of preparation, it is not just about preparing for Christmas. The initial days of Advent are, rather, about preparing for Christ's coming again in glory. (Advent is Latin for 'coming.') In looking towards his original coming as a child in Palestine, we examine the prophecies about what the Day of the Lord will look like, and we hear John the Baptist's call echo down through the years: 'Prepare the way of the Lord! Make straight His paths!' These initial days help us to reflect on the question as to if I have lived my life with a constant readiness and anticipation of Jesus coming again in glory. If not, there is a chance of repentance.

For the last seven days of Advent, the tone shifts to an anticipation of Jesus' coming as a child at Bethlehem. Here is where we hear the stories of the Infancy Narratives from the Gospels of Matthew and Luke, the crèches start to make an appearance, and the final preparations for Christmas start to take place.

The anticipation of Advent gives way to the excitement and joy of Christmas. Celebrating the joy of Christ's coming as a child at Bethlehem, we recognize and make present the fact that God is

intervening in human history in a unique and special way, so that Salvation History may come to pass. The Feast of the Incarnation helps us to realize that God truly is with us, always and until the end of time: the same child who was born unto us at Bethlehem is now present to us in the Tabernacle and in the Eucharistic Species of the Mass!

But God's intervention in history is opposed by the forces of evil. Shortly after the great feast of Christmas, we commemorate the sacrifices of the Holy Innocents, those children who were born in Bethlehem near the time of Jesus whom Herod slaughtered to prevent his kingdom from being overthrown. While we know that God will ultimately be the victor, the battle for souls will continue on until the final judgment.

The Christmas Season continues through the Feasts of Epiphany and the Baptism of the Lord. In that intervening week, we transverse the hidden years of Jesus where, just like us, he learned to pray, plied a trade, and was taught to love God with his whole heart, mind and soul.

At our Baptism, we are formed in the same way, hence the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord begins *National Vocation Awareness Week*, for at our Baptism we are called first and foremost to holiness: living in right relationship with God. Through the grace of this Sacrament, we are able to live out the daily joys and tribulations of this world, hopefully growing in wisdom, age and grace before God and men throughout our life.

After this short period of Ordinary Time following the Christmas Season, we enter into the great season of Lent. Beginning with a mark of repentance at Ash Wednesday, this season is the Church's penitential time of fasting, prayer and almsgiving. During Lent, we journey with Our Lord during his forty days of fasting and prayer in the desert, facing the temptations that haunt us and mastering the will to bring it in line with the Will of our Father. Lent is a time to let all those things that have accumulated over the past year, on our hearts and souls, fall away and return to God with all of our heart, mind and soul.

At the conclusion of Lent, we enter into our High Holy Days: the Easter Triduum celebrating Our Lord's Last Supper, His Passion, Death and Resurrection, ultimately completed by His Ascension to the Father in Heaven. These three days should be set aside by every Catholic, if at all possible, to relive and reenter into the great mystery of our redemption: through these events, Christ broke the chains of death and restored us not just to an earthly paradise, but to a heavenly one! Hence, at the Easter Vigil, we can call Adam's sin a 'happy fault' because it merited us so great a Redeemer!

The joy of Easter is so great that it cannot be contained to one day! Easter itself is celebrated for a week's octave, and recalled for the fifty day season of Easter, where we continually focus on God's great gift of Salvation wrought for us by Jesus Christ. This is the proof that God loved us so much that those who believe in Him might not perish, but have Eternal Life!

The Easter Season ends with Christ taking the ancient Jewish Feast of Pentecost and elevating it to a new and higher status. On that first Pentecost, fifty days after His Resurrection, Jesus pours out the Holy Spirit upon the first band of the Apostles. It is the Spirit who commissions the Twelve to go forward and make disciples of all nations, transforming them from a small group of men afraid for their lives to, eventually, a worldwide force continually calling the world to repentance and forgiveness. It is the Spirit who drives us forward to become Christ's hands and feet in the world, the same gift of the Spirit received at Baptism and Confirmation who makes each Christian disciple a soldier in the army of the Lord, no longer sent to force conversion by the sword, but to testify to the great mystery of salvation by the offering of self.

Pentecost transitions into that daily living out of life in the world. This is where true faith shows its merit. It is easy to stay true when we are experiencing the great joy of Easter morning or the quiet intimacy of the Christmas manger. It is during the long drawn out summer and fall months when we can face the temptation to backslide in our fervor of faith, grow lax in our spiritual practices, and move from that fire of faith to the lukewarm. Jesus' challenge in the Book of Revelation that he abhors the lukewarm should continually challenge each Christian disciple to grow constantly in understanding of the Faith and to see in facing the daily trials and tribulations of life with joy the greatest form of penance and devotion to God. In this way, we reserve not just a place around God's altar here on earth, but ultimately around the true Altar of God in His Heavenly City, the New Jerusalem.

Questions for Reflection:

- What are some of the prayer routines that you have inherited from your family of origin? How have you adapted them to your own family?
- Throughout the Church's liturgical year, there is a cycle of prayer, often revisiting similar topics. How do these cycles of prayer reflect the nature of life in our modern world?
- How does the very structure of Catholic Prayer Life reflect the daily cycle of living and dying in this world?
- With the upcoming change in the Translation of the prayers we use for Mass, a goal was to make the connections between the Scripture and the Mass more apparent. What are some of the connections you know? How does this lead to a deeper awareness and/or appreciation of what we celebrate every Sunday?



Bulletin Announcements

"Lord, Teach us to Pray!" Luke 11:1

From January 9th to 15th, the Church celebrates the annual *Vocation Awareness Week*. Following the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord, the Church sets aside this week for the faithful to pray for an increase in vocations to the priesthood and religious life, but to also call to bring forward that we are all called by Christ to a specific, unique mission. In order to discern this mission in life, we must be students of prayer. These announcements explain the types of prayer as found in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, paragraphs 2623-2649, and are designed to lead into a deeper experience of prayer during National Vocation Awareness Week.

November 28, 2010: Teach us to Pray!

In order to respond to a vocation, whether to priesthood, consecrated or married life, one must be schooled in the art of prayer. It is in prayer, a deep conversation with the Lord, that we hear our true calling in life. The Catechism of the Catholic Church, in paragraphs 2626-2643, describes five types of prayer (Blessing and Adoration, Petition, Intercession, Thanksgiving, and Praise) which we will examine as we approach *National Vocation Awareness Week*, celebrated from January 9-15, 2011. May we all come to a deeper level of prayer during this Advent and Christmas season.

December 5, 2010: Prayer of Blessing and Adoration

While all prayer is an encounter between God and man, the Prayer of Blessing and Adoration highlights this encounter as the center of this type of prayer. The prayer of blessing is an acknowledgement that all true blessings come to us from God and we return that blessing to the One from whom it comes. Adoration is a quiet, yet active contemplation of the very mystery of who God is. In Adoration, we sit face to face before God who peers into the depth of the soul so that we might be configured to him. As we journey with Mary and Joseph toward the Nativity of Jesus, let us also contemplate that God has sent His Son to be our Savior.

December 12, 2010: Prayer of Petition

As Mary received the Angel's message that she was to be the Mother of the God's Son, the Scriptures record that she asked for clarification. She did not ask out of doubt, but rather that she might understand God's will for her at a deeper level. As we grow in wisdom, age and grace before God, we, too, often seek that same understanding from God. This 'prayer of petition' is not to change God's will, but rather to seek out the strength to carry out God's will in our lives. For those who are not yet in committed vocations within the Church, ask that God might give you the strength and clarity to follow where He leads. For those who are already in committed vocations, ask for the strength to live that vocation to its fullness.

December 19, 2010: Prayer of Intercession

A simple request in a time of need to 'pray for me' can seem to be such a small favor, yet this prayer of intercession is, in fact, very much based in the prayer of Jesus and is the prayer of the Angels and saints in heaven for us who remain. In prayer of intercession, we pray not for our needs, but for the needs and prayers of others. In a very real way, we offer our very selves for the other, as Jesus offered Himself for us as He hung upon the Cross. As we draw near to Christmas, let us all pray for those who are being called to a unique vocation in the Church. Just as Mary and Joseph had the grace to respond wholeheartedly to God's invitation, may our young people also be joyous in following Christ today.

December 26, 2010: Prayer of Thanksgiving

A particular theme for the Christmas Season is one of gratitude for the gift of the Son who came so that we might have life in His name. The Christian response to this great gift is one of thanksgiving which gives a particular focus to all Christian Prayer. As we have seen in previous weeks, this mode of prayer is again founded in the very prayer of Jesus, who gives thanks to His Father in Heaven for revealing to us, His little ones, the great gift of faith. As we journey through this Christmas Season, let us always give thanks to God for the gifts that we have received in this life. Let us offer them back to Him that He might use them for the building of the Kingdom of Heaven.

January 2, 2011: Prayer of Praise

As we near *National Vocation Awareness Week* and come to the conclusion of this short series on prayer, we come to the highest form of prayer, that of Praise. This final form of prayer is directed to the God Who Is. It is an expression of our deep love for God and our desire that we be united with Him in all things. As such, it is the prayer of the Angels and Saints, who stand before God's Altar in Heaven in one continual song of praise. As they do, so should we. This week, as we close out the Christmas Season and begin our journey into Ordinary Time, let us strive to make our lives a continual song of praise before God.

January 9, 2011: The Call is Heard in Prayer

The Church sets aside the week following the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord as *National Vocation Awareness Week*. In preparation, we have walked through various forms of prayer as outlined in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*. A vocation to the priesthood and/or consecrated life can only truly be heard and answered by one who has a deep connection with Our Lord and fostered by a strong life of prayer. For more information, visit www.catholiccincinnati.org/vaw.shtml.



Catholic Prayer Traditions

“Lord, Teach us to Pray!” Luke 11:1

The prayer of the Catholic Church is far more than the memorized vocal prayers, devotional prayers (such as the Rosary) or the prayers we say together at Mass. For over a thousand years, the Church has developed rich prayer forms such as contemplative prayer (Christian meditation), Liturgy of the Hours, prayer using scripture, and prayer using nature, to name a few. For centuries, only priests, monks and cloistered nuns participated in many of these prayer forms, but today we recognize the value these spiritual practices have for lay people.

In a culture where New Age spirituality can be attractive to many people, including youth and young adults, it is important to note that the Catholic Church has its own beautiful treasury of prayer – ways to draw closer to God that are perhaps less familiar, but not difficult. Below is a brief introduction into just a few of the larger “schools of prayer” found in the Catholic tradition: Benedictine, Carmelite, Dominican, Franciscan and Ignatian. (See Quick Summaries below.)

Some General Resources on Catholic Spirituality & Prayer:

- *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, Part 4: “Christian Prayer”.
- International Commission on English in the Liturgy, *Christian Prayer: The Liturgy of the Hours*, Catholic Book Publishing Co., 1986.
- Jeep, Elizabeth McMahon, *Children’s Daily Prayer* (annual) Liturgy Training Publications
- Lane, George A., S.J. *Christian Spirituality: A Historical Sketch*, Loyola Press, 2004.
- Mathson, Patricia, *Bless This Day: 150 Everyday Prayers for Grades 1-5*, Ave Maria Press, 2002.
- Odell, Catherine & Margaret Savitskas, *Loyola Kids Book of Everyday Prayers*, Loyola Press, 2002.

SOME GENERAL ONLINE RESOURCES

- Loyola Press: www.findinggod.org: hover over “Our Catholic Faith,” then over “Prayer” – includes online retreats, multiple links on how to pray, etc.
- Word on Fire: <http://wordonfire.org/Home.aspx> - Fr. Robert Barron, SJ teaches Catholicism through the use of videos, a blog, articles and more.
- Praying Each Day: <http://www.prayingeachday.org/prayersites.html> - Various Resources on Prayer and Catholic teachings from the De La Salle Brothers in Great Britain.
- Catholic Encyclopedia: www.newadvent.org/cathen - Articles on all types of spirituality, religious orders, and prayer.

QUICK SUMMARIES OF MAJOR PRAYER TRADITIONS

1. Benedictine Prayer & Spirituality

Benedictines are best known for communal living according to the Rule of St. Benedict, its founder, in which the two main principles are manual labor and communal prayer. Recently, there has been a movement for lay people to live elements of the Rule as well. The Rule can be simplified as: Commitment, Balance and Relationship. Lay Oblates live the Rule and receive ongoing spiritual guidance.

The communal prayer of the Benedictines is the **Liturgy of the Hours**, a structured liturgical prayer consisting of psalms, prayers, songs and readings, following the rhythm of the times of day and of the Church Year. Lay people are encouraged to use the simplified version found in *Christian Prayer*, and includes Morning and Evening Prayer.

Benedictine tradition includes a simple form of prayer using scripture – **Lectio Divina** (holy reading) – that facilitates understanding what God may be saying to a person through a reading. The four steps are:

- 1.) *Lectio*: read or listen to the text, paying attention to any words or phrases that stand out.
- 2.) *Meditatio*: meditate on what speaks to you, repeating it to yourself and allowing it to interact with your thoughts hopes, memories and desires.
- 3.) *Oratio*: pray, entering into loving conversation with God, allowing the word you have heard and meditated on to touch and change you.
- 4.) *Contemplatio*: simply rest in the presence of God and accept His loving embrace. In silence, let go of your own words and simply enjoy being in the presence of God.

The contemplative tradition of the Benedictines is best known from the Trappist monks, who observe a strict rule of silence. Their form of contemplation was recovered from the ancient tradition of meditation based on the desert Fathers and Mothers, the fourth movement of *Lectio Divina*, and the mystical tradition of *The Cloud of Unknowing*. This prayer form is called **Centering Prayer**, or **The Prayer of the Heart**. Famous 20th Century American Trappists include Thomas Merton, Thomas Keating, Basil Pennington, William Meninger, and even Henri Nouwen, who spent a year as a “part-time” Trappist.

Some Resources on Benedictine Spirituality:

- Benedictine Order international website: www.osb.org
- Casey, Michael, OCSO, *Sacred Reading: the Ancient Art of Lectio Divina*, Triumph Books, 1995
- Pennington, Basil, *Lessons from the Monastery that Touch Your Life*, Paulist Press, 1994. See also
- <http://www.ldysinger.com/> - Overview and in depth information on Benedictine Spirituality
- www.masteryfoundation.org , click on “Interfaith.”
- St. Procopius Abbey, Lisle, IL – website: www.procopius.org - local information and resources
- Stewart, Columba, OSB, *Prayer and Community: the Benedictine Tradition*, Orbis Books, 1998.

2. Carmelite Prayer & Spirituality

The earliest Carmelites were hermits who stayed on the slopes of Mount Carmel near the end of the twelfth century. They lived in poverty and sought solitude on the mountain where Elijah the prophet had made his home, while meditating on God. Today, they look to the mountain, to Elijah, to Mary, and that tradition of solitude as their spiritual wellspring. The symbol of Carmel stands for the intimate encounter that God brings about between the person and God in the midst of all that is most ordinary in life. The expression and source of this encounter, contemplation and prayer, are the very heartbeat of the interior journey of transformation of the Carmelite today, whether vowed religious or layperson.

The symbol of Elijah is central to Carmelite spirituality. He is seen as a man on a journey who hid in the desert in a time of dryness and journeyed back to meet God in new and unexpected ways. This symbol is operative in a key concept of Carmelite spirituality from St. John of the Cross: the “dark night of the soul” -- a period of spiritual dryness where God seems not to be present to the seeker. Mary is associated with the rain of God’s Grace that ends the dryness, like the little cloud Elijah sees in 1 Kings 18:44.

Key concepts in Carmelite spirituality are 1) allegiance to Christ, 2) openness to Scriptures, 3) a sense of silence and solitude, and 4) the undivided heart. The primary Carmelite prayer forms are **solitude and meditation**. The Carmelite mystics, Teresa, John of the Cross, and Therese of Lisieux expanded the original vision, writing about new ways to understand the soul's continuous longing for union with God and the daily struggles of the journey to reach it. Their writings and poems help lead us into visionary prayer.

Some Resources on Carmelite Spirituality:

- Egan, Keith J. *Carmelite Prayer: A Tradition for the 21st Century*, Paulist Press, 2003.
- Order of Carmelites, Rome – website: www.ocarm.org
- Discalced Carmelites – www.ourgardenofcarmel.org
- St. Edith Stein, *Edith Stein: Essential Writings*, John Sullivan, ed. Orbis Books, 2002.
- St. John of the Cross, writings, especially *The Ascent of Mt. Carmel*, *The Dark Night* or *Spiritual Canticle*
- St. Teresa of Avila, writings- especially *The Way of Perfection* and *The Interior Castle*
- St. Therese of Lisieux, *Story of a Soul*
- Welch, John *The Carmelite Way: An Ancient Path for Today's Pilgrim*, Paulist Press, 1996.

3. Dominican Prayer & Spirituality

St. Dominic was a spirit-filled man raised up by God to answer the pressing need of the Church for a continuous body of trained preachers.(Father William A. Hinnebusch, O.P.) He founded the first apostolic Order (Order of Preachers) in 1216.

Nearly eight hundred years after the foundation of the Order, the Dominican way of life still offers the individual, and the world, a unique path to holiness. The Order can be characterized as *contemplative*, rooted in a strong prayer life; *apostolic*, determined in its work for the salvation of souls; *liturgical* in its life centered in the celebration of the Eucharist and choral recitation of the Liturgy of the Hours; *sacrificial*, consecrated to God through the vows and always mindful of the life of penance; *doctrinal*, dedicated to study, teaching, and the defense the Faith; and *fraternal*, lived in community and bound together with one heart and one soul in God. St. Dominic's genius was a way of life that blended the contemplative and active, a life that remained faithful to the monastic practices of contemplative orders, but not limited by them.

What the Dominican Order has given to the Church in past centuries, and what it can offer her in the future is vital and necessary, because its mission—the mission to proclaim the Gospel—touches her own origins and inner being. Preaching the Word of God and proclaiming the name of the Lord Jesus throughout the world will always be needed by the people of God. (Father William A. Hinnebusch, O.P.)

Some Resources on Dominican Spirituality

- Borgman, Eric, John Bowden (translator) *Dominican Spirituality: An Exploration*, Crossroads, 2001.
- Order of Dominicans international website: www.op.org
- OP Sources: Resources for promoting the Dominican Charism – <http://opsources.edgewood.edu>
- The Providence of St. Joseph (Eastern Providence with a house in Cincinnati, OH): <http://www.op-stjoseph.org/> - Lots of great articles by Dominican Friars and other links.
- Tugwell, Simon, *Early Dominicans: Selected Writings*, Paulist Press, 1982.
- Woods, Richard, OP, *Mysticism and Prophecy: the Dominican Tradition*, Orbis Books, 1998.
- "The Nine Ways of Prayer of St. Dominic:" <http://www.fisheaters.com/stdominic9ways.html>

4. Franciscan Prayer & Spirituality

Franciscan prayer is definitely in and of the world, at the same time it is an experience of God. Francis did not speak about spirituality so much as he lived his prayer - as Celano (an early biographer of Francis) said "He became prayer" and in the intimacy of his relationship with God he would have his followers join him. "Hold back nothing of yourself for yourself, so that he who gives Himself totally to you may receive you totally," Francis said. Franciscans seek God through an incarnational approach – God is our loving Father and all we have is gift; Christ is our Brother and the Spirit of that love lives in us. The Franciscan approach is Trinitarian, not static. Again Francis was practical - the Crib, the Cross, the Eucharist were his way to God, and finally his relationship to the Triune God led to an intimacy and familiarity with all wonders of creation so that he could address them as Brother/Sister - all are members of the one family.

Features of Franciscan spirituality are community and solitude, prayer and penance, humility and poverty. Prayer can be **vocal prayer, prayer using nature as its source and inspiration** (see Francis' Canticle as an example – text is in popular hymn "Canticle of the Sun"), **contemplation**, or **Lectio Divina**. The contemplative dimension often focuses on union with God, and experiences of divine love. Yet, Franciscans are active contemplatives who find their mission in social justice ministry, and they are often found helping the poor, the elderly and the sick in homeless shelters, nursing homes and hospitals.

Some Resources on Franciscan Spirituality

- Bodo, Murray, *The Way of St. Francis: The Challenge of Franciscan Spirituality for Everyone*, St. Anthony Messenger, 1995.
- Delio, Ilia, OSF, *Franciscan Prayer*, St. Anthony Messenger, 2004
- Foley, Leonard, *To Live as Francis Lived: A Guide for Secular Franciscans*, St. Anthony Messenger, 2000.
- Talbot, John Michael, *The Lover and the Beloved: A Way of Franciscan Prayer*, Crossroads, 1985.
- Franciscan Order (worldwide) www.ofm.org - click on "Franciscans" for English
- Franciscan Web Page – a directory of links, including saints, etc. www.wtu.edu/franciscan
- "Franciscan Spirituality" by Valentin Breton, OFM: <http://www.ewtn.com/library/SPIRIT/FRANSPIR.txt>
- Providence of St. John the Baptist in Cincinnati, OH: <http://www.franciscan.org/default.aspx>
- Short, William J. OFM, *Poverty and Joy: The Franciscan Tradition*, Orbis Books, 1999.

5. Ignatian Prayer and Spirituality

Ignatian spirituality is intellectual, visual and eminently practical. It aims to assist people to know God, understand their interior struggles, and discern what God is asking. St. Ignatius Loyola developed the *Spiritual Exercises* and founded the Jesuit Order as a way to teach others to do all of this. The role of a spiritual director as a compassionate listener/advisor is key to Ignatian spirituality. Ignatian prayer forms include **visual meditation, examination of conscience, prayer of discernment, journaling** and more.

The **steps of Ignatian prayer** in the *Spiritual Exercises* are

- 1.) Quieting oneself
- 2.) Naming a desire one has – the reason for the prayer
- 3.) Exercising the imagination through a visual meditation on a Scripture story

- 4.) Applying the senses – savoring the parts of the experience that provoked the strongest reactions

Afterwards, there should be a *colloquy* – a prayer conversation with a member of the Trinity or with Mary, relating the experience back to the desire. This step may continue later with a spiritual director. Ignatian visual meditation begins with Composition of Place – placing oneself in the scripture story, by imagining how it looks, feels, smells and sounds. This can be done by oneself after reading a Scripture, by viewing a painting of a

Scripture story subject, or can be guided by a leader and conducted in groups.


The Ignatian **Examen, or examination of conscience**, has five steps:

1. Quiet oneself.
2. Pray for the grace to see clearly, understand accurately and respond generously.
3. Review in memory the history of the day (week, month) looking for concrete instances of the presence and guidance of God, and the activity and influence of evil. (Pay attention to strong feelings associated with experiences and encounters).
4. Evaluate those instances in which we have either cooperated with God or yielded to the influence of evil. Express gratitude and regret.
5. Plan and decide how to collaborate more effectively with God, and how, with God's help, to avoid or overcome the influence of evil in the future.

Some Resources on Ignatian Spirituality

- St. Ignatius of Loyola, *Spiritual Exercises* –any edition.
- Lonsdale, David, *Eyes to See, Ears to Hear: An Introduction to Ignatian Spirituality*, Orbis Books, 2000.
- Silf, Margaret, *Inner Compass, An Invitation to Ignatian Spirituality*, Loyola Press, 1999.
- Society of Jesus, USA www.jesuit.org
- The White House Retreat: <http://www.whretreat.org/index.aspx> - retreat house in St. Louis, MO with links to other Jesuit resources.
- Sacred Space: www.sacredspace.ie - a daily online interactive Ignatian prayer, posted by the Irish Jesuits, also includes links to Sacred Heart Novena, commentary on the daily Mass readings, and more.

Adapted with permission from “Catholic Prayer Traditions for the Catechist” written by the Religious Education Office of the Diocese of Joliet, IL. Original document found here: <http://www.dioceseofjoliet.org/reo/currProject/AppendixL-PrayerTraditions.pdf>.



VOCATIONS
ARCHDIOCESE OF CINCINNATI

Holy Hour Program
“Lord, Teach us to Pray!” Luke 11:1

Introduction:

A Vocation is heard in the silence of prayer, especially in prayer before the Blessed Sacrament. During Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, we are offered the opportunity to prayerfully reflect on and respond gratefully to Christ's complete sacrifice for our salvation. It is here, gazing into the loving eyes of the Redeemer, that one is able to recognize the 'small voice of silence' that spoke to Elijah and continues to speak to Christ's disciples down through the ages. This program is designed to guide the prayer and devotion of the faithful, who have been commissioned by Jesus Himself, to pray for an increase of laborers for His fields as well as those who might be discerning a vocation to the priesthood and/or religious life.

Entrance of the Ministers

Exposition

Incensation and Opening Hymn:

*O Salutaris Hostia
Quae caeli pandis ostium:
Bella premunt hostilia,
Da robur, fer auxilium.*

*Uni trinoque Domino
Sit sempiterna gloria,
Qui vitam sine termino
Nobis donet in patria. Amen.*

O Saving Victim, op'ning wide
The gate of heav'n to us below!
Our foes press on from ev'ry side:
Your aid supply, your strength bestow.

To your great name be endless praise
Immortal Godhead, One in Three;
O grant us endless length of days
When our true native land we seek. Amen.

Greeting:

Praised be God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who in his great mercy gave us new birth into a living hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. Blessed be God for ever.

All: Blessed be God for ever.

Opening Prayer:

Almighty and eternal god,
In Christ your son
You have shown your glory to the world.
Guide the work of your Church:
Help it to proclaim your name,
To persevere in faith
And to bring your salvation to people everywhere.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Scripture Reading and Reflection: (Luke 11:1-13)

Jesus was praying in a certain place, and when he had finished, one of his disciples said to him, "Lord, teach us to pray just as John taught his disciples."

He said to them, "When you pray, say: Father, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come. Give us each day our daily bread and forgive us our sins for we ourselves forgive everyone in debt to us, and do not subject us to the final test."

And he said to them, "Suppose one of you has a friend to whom he goes at midnight and says, 'Friend, lend me three loaves of bread, for a friend of mine has arrived at my house from a journey and I have nothing to offer him,' and he says in reply from within, 'Do not bother me; the door has already been locked and my children and I are already in bed. I cannot get up to give you anything.' I tell you, if he does not get up to give him the loaves because of their friendship, he will get up to give him whatever he needs because of his persistence. "And I tell you, ask and you will receive; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks, receives; and the one who seeks, finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened. What father among you would hand his son a snake when he asks for a fish? Or hand him a scorpion when he asks for an egg? If you then, who are wicked, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the Father in heaven give the holy Spirit to those who ask him?"

Homily and Silent Reflection

(A Homily may be given by either a priest or deacon followed by a period of silence for reflection.)

A Litany For Vocations:

Lord, have mercy.

Christ, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.

Christ, hear us.

God the Father of heaven,

God the Son, Redeemer of the world,

God the Holy Spirit,

Holy Trinity, One God.

Holy Mary,

Holy Mother of God,

Holy Virgin of Virgins,

St. Michael, leader of the heavenly host,

St. Gabriel, messenger of God's divine plan,

St. Raphael, companion of the journey,

All you holy Angels and Archangels,

St. Joseph, protector of the Holy Church,

St. John Vianney, patron of parish priests,

St. Aloysius Gonzaga, patron of youth,

St. Alphonsus Liguori, patron of vocations,

St. Charles Borromeo, patron of seminarians,

St. John Berchmans, patron of altar servers,

St. Maria Goretti, patron of teenagers,

St. Francis de Sales, primary patron of the Archdiocese,

All you holy men and women.

Be merciful,

Be merciful,

Through your mercy,

Through Your kindness,

Through the fervent prayers and sacrifices of Your people,

Through the power of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass,

Through the intercession of all the Saints and Angels,

Through the sanctification of the family,

Through parents being generously open to life,

Lord, have mercy.

Christ, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.

Christ, graciously hear us.

Have mercy on us.

Have mercy on us.

Have mercy on us.

Have mercy on us.

Pray for us.

Pray for us.

Pray for us.

Pray for us.

Pray for us.

Pray for us.

Pray for us.

Pray for us.

Pray for us.

Pray for us.

Pray for us.

Pray for us.

Pray for us.

Pray for us.

Pray for us.

Pray for us.

Spare us, O Lord.

Graciously hear us, O Lord.

Send workers into Your harvest, O Lord.

Send workers into Your harvest, O Lord.

Send workers into Your harvest, O Lord.

Send workers into Your harvest, O Lord.

Send workers into Your harvest, O Lord.

Send workers into Your harvest, O Lord.

Send workers into Your harvest, O Lord.

Through the example of priests and religious striving for holiness,
 Through a renewed sense of fidelity to our Catholic Faith.
 That young people might seek to live the truth of Christ,
 That young people might seek God's will for them in their lives,
 That young people might hear the call to give their lives for the mission of the Church,
 That all priests and religious might be renewed in the spirit of the new evangelization,
 That Bishops might be strengthened to be courageous shepherds,
 That we may always zealously pray for and promote vocations,
 That those who are being called to be priests and religious might respond generously,
 Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world,
 Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world,
 Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world,

The harvest is great but the laborers are few.

Let us pray: O God, who chose the Apostles to make disciples of all nations and who by Baptism and Confirmation has called us to build up Your Holy Church, we earnestly implore You to choose among us, Your children, many priests and religious who will love You with their whole heart and will gladly spend their entire lives making You known and loved by all. We ask this through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

The Lord's Prayer

Silent Reflection

Benediction:

*Tantum ergo Sacramentum
 Veneremur cernui
 Et antiquum documentum
 Novo cedat ritui:
 Praestet fides supplementum
 Sensuum defectui*

*Genitori Genitoque
 Laus et jubilation,
 Salus, honor, virtutes, quoque
 Sit et benedictio:
 Procedenti ab utroque
 Compar sit laudatium*

Closing Prayer:

Lord our god,
 Teach us to cherish in our hearts
 The Paschal Mystery of your Son
 By which you redeemed the world.

Send workers into Your harvest, O Lord.

Send workers into Your harvest, O Lord.

O Lord of the harvest, graciously hear us.

O Lord of the harvest, graciously hear us.

O Lord of the harvest, graciously hear us.

O Lord of the harvest, graciously hear us.

O Lord of the harvest, graciously hear us.

O Lord of the harvest, graciously hear us.

O Lord of the harvest, graciously hear us.

Spare us, O Lord.

Graciously hear us, O Lord.

Have mercy on us.

Beg the harvest Master to send out laborers for His harvest.

Watch over the gifts of grace
Your love has given us
And bring them to fulfillment
In the glory of heaven.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

The Divine Praises:

Blessed be God.
Blessed be His Holy Name.
Blessed be Jesus Christ, true God and true Man.
Blessed be the Name of Jesus.
Blessed be his most Sacred Heart.
Blessed be his most Precious Blood.
Blessed be Jesus in the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar.
Blessed be the Holy Spirit, the Paraclete.
Blessed be the great Mother of God, Mary most holy.
Blessed be her holy and Immaculate Conception.

Blessed be her glorious Assumption.
Blessed be the name of Mary, Virgin and Mother.
Blessed be St. Joseph, her most chaste spouse.
Blessed be God in His angels and in His Saints.

May the heart of Jesus, in the Most Blessed Sacrament, be praised, adored, and loved with grateful affection, at every moment, in all the tabernacles of the world, even to the end of time.
Amen.

Reposition and Closing Hymn:

An appropriate song of praise to God is sung at this time, for example: 'Holy God, We Praise Your Name.'

Prayer for Vocations (Pope Benedict XVI):

O Father, raise up among Christians numerous and holy vocations to the priesthood, to keep the faith alive and guard the gracious memory of your Son Jesus through the preaching of his word and the administration of the Sacraments, with which you continually renew your faithful.
Give us holy ministers of your altar, who are careful and fervent guardians of the Eucharist, the sacrament of the supreme gift of Christ for the redemption of the world.
Call ministers of your mercy, who, through the sacrament of Reconciliation, spread the joy of your forgiveness.
Grant, O Father, that the Church may welcome with joy numerous inspirations of the Spirit of your Son and, docile to His teachings, may she care for vocations to the ministerial priesthood and to the consecrated life.
Sustain the Bishops, priests and deacons, consecrated men and women, and all the baptized in Christ, so that they may faithfully fulfill their mission at the service of the Gospel. This we pray You through Christ our Lord. Amen.



VOCATIONS
ARCHDIOCESE OF CINCINNATI

Celebration of the Rosary
“Lord, Teach us to Pray!” Luke 11:1

Introduction:

As ‘Mother of All Priests,’ Mary plays a unique role in the fostering of vocations to the priesthood and religious life. She continues to be the intercessor between the faithful and Her Divine Son, bringing our needs to Him, while instructing us to ‘Do whatever He tells you.’ This program for a Celebration of the Rosary during Vocation Awareness Week can be used either in the home, among prayer groups or before or after Mass in the parish. The meditations offered are specifically for intentions of an increase in vocations to the priesthood and religious life.

Outline of the Devotion:

Hymn:

A hymn of praise to God for Mary’s intercession and guidance may be sung to start the devotion and recitation of the Rosary, for example Sing We of the Blessed Mother.

Sign of the Cross and Acclamation of Praise:

Blessed are you, O Mary,
For the world’s salvation came forth from you;
You rejoice with the Lord in glory for ever.

All: Intercede for us with your son.

At this time the leader may introduce the celebration.

The Rosary begins:

APOSTLES’ CREED:

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of Heaven and earth;
and in Jesus Christ, His only Son Our Lord,
Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried.
He descended into Hell; the third day He rose again from the dead;
He ascended into Heaven, and sits at the right hand of God, the Father almighty;
from thence He shall come to judge the living and the dead.

**I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Catholic Church,
the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body and life everlasting.
Amen.**

THE OUR FATHER:

Our Father, who art in heaven,
Hallowed by thy name;
Thy kingdom come;
Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread;

**And forgive us our trespasses
As we forgive those who trespass against us;
And lead us not into temptation,
But deliver us from evil. Amen.**

ANGELIC SALUTATION (Leader):

Faith, hope, and love are the three basic virtues central to our relationship with God. Let us pray for their growth and development in our lives as dedicated followers of Christ.

All pray three Hail Mary's.

DOXOLOGY

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be. Amen.

THE MYSTERIES:

After each mystery is introduced by the leader, all pray one Our Father, Ten Hail Mary's and one Doxology. At the end of each mystery a short Marian acclamation or song may be sung (e.g. Ave, ave, ave Maria; ave, ave, ave Maria).

The Baptism of Jesus: The mystery of our Lord's Baptism is the mystery of Jesus taking upon Himself the mission of the Messiah. Thus begins His public ministry. Let us offer this decade for those called to the priesthood and religious life but are afraid to answer because of what others may say or think. Grant them courage, O Lord, to accept the mission you are giving them.

The Wedding Feast of Cana: Through the intercession of Mary, Jesus transforms ordinary water into extraordinary wine. What incredible things God's grace can do in our lives! Let us offer this decade for those who are being called but doubt that they have much to offer. May they trust in the power of God to bring all things into completion and say "yes" to His call.

The Proclamation of the Kingdom: Our Lord begins His public ministry by announcing the arrival of the Kingdom of God. What joyous news this is for all humanity to hear! Let us offer this decade for an increase in vocations that there might be many more priests and religious who will proclaim this truth and bear witness to it with their lives.

The Transfiguration: Jesus strengthened the faith of His Apostles by allowing His divinity to be momentarily perceived. He wished them to gain a supernatural perspective on His forthcoming Passion and Death. Let us offer this decade for all those who are being called as priests and religious that they may have the grace to recognize God's call in the midst of life and courageously accept carrying the Cross.

The Institution of the Holy Eucharist: The gift of the Most Holy Eucharist is a mystery going beyond our ability to fully comprehend. Our Lord's abiding Presence in the Blessed Sacrament, the saving mystery of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass -- the world would suffer a great loss without these miracles. Jesus gives Himself in the Holy Eucharist through the ministry of His priests. Let us offer this decade for more priests for our Archdiocese. May God call many more men to share in the Priesthood and may they respond generously.

Homily:

A brief homily that relates the mysteries of the rosary to the daily life of the Christian may be given. This may be replaced by a brief period of silence.

Intercessions:

- For an increase of vocations to the priesthood and religious life, especially for a courageous response by the people of this parish/home/school who are being called, we pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**
- For those who are being called to the married life, may their lives foster good and faithful sons and daughters who are ready to do the will of God, we pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**
- For those who are called to live as single men and women, may they be great witnesses to all of the sustaining and fulfilling love of God our Father and Mary, our mother, we pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**
- For the men and women who have already followed God's call into the priesthood and religious life, may they find strength in the courageous example of Mary's "Yes," we pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

Lord's Prayer:

The leader introduces and begins the Our Father.

Concluding Prayer:

Pray for us, O holy Mother of God.

That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

We turn to you, Mother of the Church.

Through your "fiat," you have opened the door
which makes Christ present in the world, in history, and in individual lives.

In humble silence and in total availability,
you welcomed the call of the Most High.

May there be many men and women in our day
who respond to your Son's invitation, "Follow me!"

Grant them courage to leave family, work, and earthly hope
to follow Christ along the road that He walked.

Mary, Queen of Apostles, pray for us
and for an increase of priestly and religious vocations.

Amen.

Vocation Prayer to Mary, Queen of Apostles *taken from* <http://campus.udayton.edu/mary/prayers/VocationPrayer.htm>.

Concluding Rite:

DISMISSAL:

May the Lord bless us, protect us from all evil, and bring us to Eternal Life.

Amen.

SALVE, REGINA

The Salve, Regina or another Marian antiphon or hymn is sung.

Adapted from "Celebration of the Rosary" in 'Celebrating the Marian Year: Devotional Celebrations in Honor of Mary, Mother of God,' USCCB, 1987.