



Consecration in Truth®

Family Catechesis

Educates adults in the truths of the faith and empowers them to lead their families in learning and living the faith. Taught by Roman Curia Cardinal Francis Arinze.



Discussion Guide 27A What Prayer Is (Questions 262-265)

The Apostolate's Family Catechism™

Opening Prayer (5 min.)

Gospel Reading (see Liturgical Calendar box).
Pause to reflect. When you are ready, end with an Our Father, Hail Mary and Glory Be. Announce the *Liturgical Season* and the *Significant Feast Days* for the week.

Recitation of Memory Verse (5 min.)

Mark 10:6-9 But from the beginning of creation, "God made them male and female. For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one." So they are no longer two but one. What therefore God has joined together, let not man put asunder.

Discussion and Sharing on

The Apostolate's Family Catechism (40 min.)

- Announce the topic and questions to be covered.
- Watch Commentaries with Cardinal Arinze video **Q# 262-265** (10 min.). Discuss.
- Read **Q# 262-265** aloud and discuss the answers. Point out the illustrations and diagrams and allow family members to explain them. Read the captions on the illustrations. Read the Scripture quotes.
- Discuss the "Doctrine, Moral, Worship Exercises" and the "Thought Provokers" related to **Q# 262-265** at the end of **Chapter 73**.

Closing Prayer (10 min.)

Go step-by-step through the Ten Steps to Mental Prayer.

End by praying the **Chapter 73** Summary Prayer.



Liturgical Calendar

- Season: LENT
- Upcoming Sunday Readings:
First Reading 2 Chronicles 36:14-16, 19-23
Second Reading Ephesians 2:4-10
Gospel Reading John 3:14-21
- Significant Feast Days This Week:
St. Patrick, Bishop
Solemnity of St. Joseph, Spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary



Scripture Memory Verse

Look up in personal Bible, copy, and memorize

James 5:16

The prayer of a righteous man has great power in its effects.



Family Activity

Bible Lookup Race

Everyone who plays needs his own non-indexed Bible. Make a score chart listing each person's name and leave room after it to record 14 scores. Copy and cut up the verses on prayer (next page) and put them in a container. A designated person draws a verse and announces it. The others race to find it in their Bibles.

Using a watch with a second hand, the designated person records the time for each to find the verse. The first to find each verse gets to read it. Others are to listen attentively.

Pair up the smaller kids with the bigger kids.

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Verses on Prayer for Bible Lookup Race

James 5:16

1 Peter 3:11-12

Matthew 6:6

1 Thessalonians 5:17

Matthew 18:19-20

Psalms 25:1

1 Corinthians 14:15

Luke 21:36

Hebrews 4:16

Revelation 8:4

Acts 2:42

2 Maccabees 12:44-45

1 Timothy 2:1-2

Matthew 7:7

What Prayer Is - I

Q. 262. What is prayer?

Prayer is the lifting of our minds and hearts to God.

We lift our minds and hearts to God to praise His goodness, to thank Him for His kindness, to acknowledge our sins, to plead for pardon, to ask His aid for our salvation, and to give glory to Him.

When we pray, both our minds and our hearts are active: our minds occupy themselves with thinking of God and our relationship with Him; our hearts perform acts of worship. (cf.

V.S., Section 71)

Prayer is conversation with God. Being aware of God, looking at Him with the eyes of our souls, we reach toward Him to converse with Him, to give Him what we have, to make our wills one with His. We adore, praise, and thank Him. We ask for His help and His pardon. We trust God in the simplest way, confiding to Him all that we have most at heart — our sorrows and joys, our hopes and fears, and our desires and plans. In return, we receive from Him help, consolation, and advice. We speak quite plainly with God of important matters, often without any feeling or emotion. All that matters, is that we speak honestly and earnestly. We pray well when we tell God what is in our hearts. Thus, prayer is communication of spirit with Spirit, of man with God.

Prayer is the simplest and most natural expression of worship. All intelligent creatures are obligated to think about God and to converse with Him; in other words, to pray to Him. In order to pray, you need only understand Who God is and who you are; how great God's fatherly goodness is, and how deep is your own misery. Faith will teach you all that is necessary. Your prayer, in order to be true prayer, must be from the heart.



*See Papally Promulgated
Catechism of the Catholic Church*

Q. 262. See paragraphs: 2559-2565

See encyclical Veritatis Splendor (Splendor of Truth)

Q. 262. See sections: 71

You can pray to God at any time and in any place, for you are always in His presence. His love for you is always the same. Even when You are swamped with worldly cares and selfish interests, He is close to you; you will always find Him waiting to listen and ready to answer.

Prayer is the means by which we communicate with God. It is an indescribable grace and honor to have God listen to you and allow you to seek His presence. Nowhere else are you received so sincerely and so lovingly. Try to appreciate the great privilege of being able to talk with God.

Without prayer, you dare not face life. If you are out of touch with God, Our Lady, and the saints, you cannot properly do your work or carry your burdens or hope to reach eternal life.

Prayer is not necessarily a matter of words. It is, fundamentally, an active attitude of the soul. It is an attitude of eager longing for grace. It is a humble and trustful unfolding of your real needs before God, a pleading with Him to satisfy those needs, and a disposition to welcome gifts of God. Above all, it is a readiness to abandon yourself to God's will in all things.

Sacred Scripture

"Pray for one another, that you may be saved. For the continual prayer of a just man avails much." *James 5:16*

"Let him decline from evil and do good. Let him seek after good and pursue it. Because the eyes of the Lord are upon the just, and His ears unto their prayers." *1 Peter 3:11-12*

Vatican Council II

"The spiritual life, however, is not limited solely to participation in the liturgy. The Christian is indeed called to pray with others, but he must also enter into his bedroom to pray to his Father in secret; (cf. Mt. 6:6) furthermore, according to the teaching of the apostle [i.e., St. Paul], he must pray without ceasing (cf. 1 Th. 5:17). We also learn from the same apostle that we must always carry around in our bodies the dying of Jesus, so that the life also of Jesus may be made manifest in our mortal flesh (cf. 2 Cor. 4:10-11)." *Sacred Liturgy, 12*

Prayer: Almighty and everlasting God, may our prayers rise like incense before You; our hands like the evening sacrifice.

Hear our prayer
whatever the ch
always find str
Christ our Lord.

Eternal Fath
Your Name is
we cry out to
may sing You
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Be near to al
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Jesus, help us
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God, in which
Elder Brother
gathered in Y
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Hear our prayers, and protect us both by night and day, that whatever the changes and chances of this mortal life, we may always find strength in Your unchanging love, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Chapter Summary Prayer

Eternal Father, from the rising of the sun to its setting, Your Name is worthy of all praise. With joy and gladness we cry out to You, and ask You to open our hearts, that we may sing Your praises and announce Your goodness and truth.

Be near to all who call upon You in truth, and increase the dedication of those who revere You. Hear their prayers and save them, that they may always love You and praise Your holy Name.

Lord God, You fill the hungry with good things and break sinners' chains. Hear Your people, who call to You in their need, and lead Your Church from the shadows of death. Gather us, from sunrise to sunset, that we may grow together in faith and love, and so give lasting thanks for Your kindness through our prayers.

Jesus, help us to understand the power there is in unity of prayer. You said, "Again I say to you, that if two of you shall consent upon earth, concerning any thing whatever they shall ask, it shall be done to them by My Father Who is in Heaven. For where there are two or three gathered together in My Name, there am I in the midst of them" (Matthew 18:19-20). Unite us all as children of the family of God, in which God is our common Father, and You, our Elder Brother. Look down upon our family when we are gathered in Your Name, and graciously pour out Your blessings upon us.

Lord our God, Whose power is beyond all words to describe, Whose glory is measureless, Whose mercy is without limits, and Whose love for mankind is beyond all

telling, look down upon us, and in Your kindness, grant to us, and to all those praying with us, the riches of Your compassion and mercy. We ask this through Jesus our Lord, to Whom with You and the Holy Spirit be all honor and glory. Amen.

Cross-References for Chapter 120

Q. 262. What is prayer?

Catechisms / Theology Books

The Teaching of Christ [First Edition], Lawler, Wuerl and Lawler, pp. 384-385;
The Teaching of Christ [Second Edition], Lawler, Wuerl and Lawler, pp. 374-375;
The Catholic Catechism, Hardon, pp. 297-298, 434-435;
Fundamentals of Catholicism, Baker, Vol. 1, pp. 145-146;
Basics of the Faith: A Catholic Catechism, Schreck, pp. 183-192;
The Church's Confession of Faith, German Bishops' Conference, pp. 37, 74-75;
Modern Catholic Dictionary, Hardon, see "Prayer";
Pocket Catholic Dictionary, Hardon, see "Prayer".

Philosophy Books

Transformation in Christ, von Hildebrand, pp. 139-140, 198-201, 250.

Papal Documents

Familiaris Consortio, John Paul II, sect. 59-62;
On the Holy Spirit in the Life of the Church and the World, John Paul II, sect. 65.



What Prayer Is - II

Q. 263. What is mental or interior prayer?

Mental or interior prayer (as distinct from vocal prayer, which normally is expressed by set formulas) begins with a serious consideration of the truths of the Faith, with a view to their practical application to our daily lives. During mental prayer, you grow in the knowledge of your Faith and acquire principles of right living by applying yourself to prolonged reflection on some doctrine of the Church or teaching of our Savior.

This reflection, however, is only a point of departure for spontaneous prayer. Such prayer is the principal part of every meditation. The subject of meditation provides incentives and matter for prayer. Prayer really begins at the moment when your will, set on fire with love, enters into direct communication with God, and yields lovingly to Him in order to please Him and to fulfill His commands and desires. Therefore, the essential element in mental prayer is contact with God, the source of all holiness.

It is in the heart that prayer essentially dwells. The Blessed Virgin Mary kept the words of Jesus "in her heart" (cf. Luke 2:51). When our Lord taught His Apostles to pray, He did not bid them to apply themselves to an intellectual exercise, but to express the love of their hearts as simply as do little children. If meditation does not lead to conversation with God, then it is no longer an internal prayer, but a kind of study or examination of conscience, or a period of spiritual reading for information and enjoyment. The important point is not to think much, but to love much.

Successful meditation depends above all on prayer and a longing for perfection. Use a book only as a means of uniting your heart with God. If you can commune with God only

through vocal prayer, the Holy Spirit has many ways of leading you. You are able to speak habitual prayer. You gain much spiritual food from it. Do not yourself down to any particular way. Be generous! Find at least a short meditation practice an important means. It will gradually acquire the habit of words, means the habit of more frequently.

The difference between this: in vocal prayer we use a standard prayer from a book made up by ourselves, and in mental prayer, from the book or from the heart, not use a prepared form of words, but minds and hearts to God speak words of love, or in no words.

Vocal prayer also forms the worship of God. Vocal prayer has special power with God. Our Lord said, "Again I say, if you ask, it shall be done to the Father. For where there are two or three gathered in My Name, there am I in the midst of them."

"Thus therefore you shall pray: 'Our Father in Heaven, hallowed be Thy Name. Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done...'" (Matthew 6:9-10)

There comes a point in the full practice of Christian prayer. It acts and prays within us. It knows how to pray as we ought. It has the able groanings, prays with

Through the gifts of the Holy Spirit, what is called infused prayer is brought into. "The love of God is poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit Who is given to us."

The grace of infused prayer is a primary mystical grace or the ordinary graces of Baptism.



See Papally Promulgated
Catechism of the Catholic Church
Q. 263. See paragraphs: 2709-2719

through vocal prayer, then continue vocal prayer. The Holy Spirit has many ways of leading a soul nearer to God. If you are able to speak habitually and simply with God, and can gain much spiritual food from this communication, do not tie yourself down to any particular method. Once the best way is found, keep faithfully to it until the Holy Spirit draws you to another way. Be generously docile to His grace. Try to make at least a short meditation every day. You will find this practice an important means of growing in the love of God. You will gradually acquire the spirit of prayer, which, in other words, means the habit of having recourse to God more and more frequently.

The difference between vocal prayer and interior prayer is this: in vocal prayer we use a prepared form of words, either a standard prayer from a prayer book, or a prayer we have made up by ourselves, and we recite this prayer, aloud or silently, from the book or from memory. In interior prayer we do not use a prepared form of words at all, but merely raise our minds and hearts to God spontaneously, addressing Him with words of love, or in no words at all.

Vocal prayer also forms an essential prayer of the external worship of God. Vocal prayer, expressed in public worship, has special power with God and is very pleasing to Him, for Our Lord said, "Again I say to you, that if two of you shall consent upon earth, concerning any thing whatever they shall ask, it shall be done to them by My Father Who is in Heaven. For where there are two or three gathered together in My Name, there am I in the midst of them." (Matthew 18:19-20)

"Thus therefore you shall pray, 'Our Father Who art in Heaven, hallowed be Thy Name. Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done...' " (Matthew 6:9-10).

There comes a point in the spiritual life when, after faithful practice of Christian virtue and prayer, the Holy Spirit acts and prays within us. As Scripture says, "We do not know how to pray as we ought. But the Holy Spirit, with unspeakable groanings, prays within us" (Romans 8:26).

Through the gifts of the Holy Spirit, we come to experience what is called infused prayer. Infused prayer means "poured into." "The love of God is poured forth in our hearts by the Holy Spirit Who is given to us" (Romans 5:5).

The grace of infused prayer does not require any extraordinary mystical graces or experiences. It is the development of the ordinary graces of Baptism.

Vatican Council II

"In the various seasons of the year and in keeping with her traditional discipline, the Church completes the formation of the faithful by means of pious practices of soul and body, by instruction, prayer, and works of penance and mercy."

Sacred Liturgy, 105

Chapter Summary Prayer

Almighty and everlasting God, may our prayers rise like incense before You. As we contemplate Your presence in word and sacrament, and in the lives of our brothers and sisters, rekindle in us the fire of that love which Jesus Your Son brought on earth by His Passion, and which burns in our hearts by the Holy Spirit.

Author of undying light, quench our mortal thirst with the grace of the Spirit, that our lips may praise You, our lives may honor You, and our meditations may glorify You, as we seek to find You in prayer and to reflect upon Your truth and commandments.

Jesus, You pointed out Martha as an example of external activity, and Mary, as an example of union with God in prayer. I want to combine both: to be active, without thereby losing the spirit of prayer amid the pressure of the occupations of my calling, and, on the other hand, to devote myself to prayer, without allowing it to interfere with the duties of my state in life.

Like Mary, I am resolved to learn at Your feet the lessons of holiness and salvation, not only by meditation but also by my frequent Holy Communions and prayers before the tabernacle. Thus, my union with You in loving friendship will make my active life more fruitful, because my activity will be penetrated by Your Spirit and sanctified by Your blessing. May I praise You forever and ever. Amen.

Cross-Ref

Q. 263. What is mental c
Cate

The Teaching of Christ [F
395-400;

The Teaching of Christ [S
385-390;

*The Catholic Catechism, F
Fundamentals of Catholic*

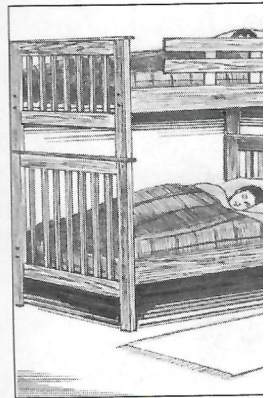
*Basics of the Faith: A Cat
The Church's Confession c*

pp. 76-77;

*Modern Catholic Dictiona
itation";*

*Pocket Catholic Dictionar
tation".*

Transformation in Christ



Why Prayer Is Necessary

Q. 264. Why is prayer necessary?

Prayer is necessary (1) *because God has commanded us to pray (the very need for prayer is rooted in our nature); and (2) because it is the great unconditional means of obtaining grace. The need for prayer is rooted in man's very nature as a creature of God who receives gifts from His generosity.*

1. *Prayer is necessary because God has commanded us to pray.*

The First Commandment of God binds man to religion and to the worship of God: "I, the Lord, am Your God. You shall not have other gods besides Me" (Exodus 20:2; Deuteronomy 5:6). The First Commandment obliges us to offer to God alone the supreme worship that is due Him. Man must recognize and honor God as His Creator. Religion consists in giving God the recognition and honor He deserves. (cf. V.S., Section 52)

Prayer to God is an act of the virtue of religion, the highest of all the moral virtues which leads us to fulfill our duty to our Creator by showing Him respect and submission. Created by God and totally dependent upon Him at every instant, we must always be in a state of reverence toward Him. When we pray our mind, our noblest faculty, recognizes Him as Creator and Lord, and expresses our need for Him.

Other virtues are involved in prayer, especially the theological virtues of faith, hope, and charity. Through faith, we know God and His merciful power to which we appeal. Charity governs our desires, and in so doing, brings order to our petitions. Hope gives us the confident expectation that these desires will be granted. The virtues of humility and penitence then cooperate with the virtue of religion to deepen our sentiments of reverence toward God.



*See Papally Promulgated
Catechism of the Catholic Church*

Q. 264. See paragraphs: 2566, 2725

See encyclical **Veritatis Splendor** (Splendor of Truth)

Q. 264. See sections: 1, 9, 52, 67, 86, 102, 103, 105, 107

God requires prayer not because of any need of His, for He has need of nothing, but because of His justice and holiness. He is our Lord, our Father, and the source of all our good. Hence, honor is due to Him, and He cannot deny Himself by allowing this honor to be given to another. (cf. V.S., Section 9)

Prayer is the means ordained by God for His creatures to reach Him and remain with Him. We were created by God to know, love, praise, adore, and serve Him. Through prayer, we attain these ends, as far as we can do so on earth. In Heaven, there will be eternal prayer.

Our Lord often taught the necessity of prayer. He said, "Ask and it shall be given you: seek and you shall find: knock, and it shall be opened to you" (Matthew 7:7). "Watch, and pray, that you enter not into temptation" (Matthew 26:41). "Amen, amen I say to you: if you ask the Father anything in My name, He will give it to you" (John 16:23). Our Lord tells us that we should pray "always" (Luke 18:1). St. Paul says: "Never cease praying" (1 Thessalonians 5:17), which means that we should always be ready to pray at the proper times and that our prayers should constantly influence our other actions.

2. Prayer is necessary because it is a great unconditional means of obtaining grace.

The sacraments and prayer, together with good works, are the divinely instituted means of obtaining grace. Whatever fruits our good works produce in us must derive nourishment and strength from God, the source of all grace. We all need this important means of grace called prayer. Without it, it is impossible to lead a Christian life and to die a happy death.

Without God's grace, there is no salvation; without prayer, no grace can be expected in those who have reached the age of reason. Prayer, therefore, is a grace itself. Without the grace of God, we can do nothing in the supernatural order. We cannot overcome temptation, or gain spiritual merit for any good deed performed. (cf. V.S., Section 102, 103, 105)

God knows all our wants and needs even before we express them to Him, and He is ever ready to help us; but He has established prayer as the condition for obtaining His grace and favors.

Moreover, since our minds have been darkened and our wills have been weakened by original sin, it is difficult to resist temptation or stay out of grave sin without the help of God's grace, which is given in answer to our prayers. Prayer,

therefore, is the remedy for our weakness. Therefore, when we pray, God gives us the strength to overcome our weakness by ourselves. (cf. V.S., Section 1, 67, 86)

Sacred S

"And the smoke of the incense of the prayers of the saints ascended up before God from the altar." (cf. V.S., Section 107)

Vatican C

"All the disciples of Christ were constantly praising God (cf. Acts 2:42-47), singing, and offering sacrifice, living, holy and pleasing to God. They should everywhere on earth give an answer to everyone who asks them for the sign of an eternal life which is theirs." (cf. V.S., Section 107)

(cf. V.S., Section 107)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, We ask Your grace and strength of conscience to pray — not simply to obtain grace, but to adore You, thank You, and love You. We are careless with our prayers, and we neglect the graces and blessings which You give us through Your prayers. May Your Holy Spirit enlighten our minds and strengthen our wills, that we may pray with confidence and love, through Christ our Lord.

Chapter Sur

Lord Jesus Christ, we believe that grace is a gift of God, and that we cannot obtain it without prayer. We believe that we lose what grace and union with God we have if we neglect prayer. Prayer spells doom to our souls.

We also believe that prayer is a great and holy privilege, and that we should engage in the same great privilege of receiving the sacraments and being engaged eternally in Heaven.

therefore, is the remedy for our human weakness. When we pray, God gives us the strength to do that which we cannot do by ourselves. (cf. V.S., Section 1, 67, 86, 102, 103, 105)

Sacred Scripture

“And the smoke of the incense of the prayers of the saints ascended up before God from the hand of the angel.”

Revelation 8:4

Vatican Council II

“All the disciples of Christ, persevering in prayer and praising God (cf. Acts 2:42-47), should present themselves as a sacrifice, living, holy and pleasing to God (cf. Romans 12:1). They should everywhere on earth bear witness to Christ and give an answer to everyone who asks a reason for the hope of an eternal life which is theirs (cf. 1 Pet. 3:15).” *The Church, 10*

(cf. V.S., Section 107)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, We believe that we are bound in conscience to pray — not simply in order to ask You for favors, but to adore You, thank You, and ask Your pardon for our sins. If we are careless with our prayers, we deprive our souls of many graces and blessings which You would give us in answer to our prayers. May Your Holy Spirit always help us to pray as we ought, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Chapter Summary Prayer

Lord Jesus Christ, we believe that prayer is as necessary as grace, without which there is no salvation, simply because, in the ordinary course of things, no grace is obtained without prayer. Without prayer, our souls must lose what grace and union they possess. Neglect of prayer spells doom to our souls.

We also believe that prayer is more than a duty. It is a great and holy privilege, second only to the surpassing privilege of receiving the sacraments. When we pray, we engage in the same great work in which You are now engaged eternally in Heaven, where You are always

making intercession for us. We share in the great work of Mary and the saints; to their prayers, we join our own, that they may offer them to God for us. Help us to appreciate the privilege of prayer by praying as often as we possibly can.

Jesus, help us to understand that nothing is more important or necessary for us than to be in close union with You, the Father, and the Holy Spirit, for all holiness consists in this union. Give us the grace to imitate Your example of living with God through prayer.

Our lives are fruitless unless You bless our efforts with Your grace, for without You, Jesus, we can do nothing. Help us always to remain in You by divine love and prayer, but especially through frequent Holy Communion. If we are united with You, then as often as we perform actions with good intentions, and out of love for You, we shall be successful. All our actions, however unimportant they may seem, will be pleasing to You and will merit a reward. To You be all honor, glory, and praise, now and forever. Amen.

Cross-References for Chapter 122

Q. 264. Why is prayer necessary?

Catechisms / Theology Books

- The Teaching of Christ* [First Edition], Lawler, Wuerl and Lawler, pp. 382-383;
The Teaching of Christ [Second Edition], Lawler, Wuerl and Lawler, pp. 372-373;
The Catholic Catechism, Hardon, pp. 80-81, 182, 297;
Fundamentals of Catholicism, Baker, Vol. 1, p. 146;
Basics of the Faith: A Catholic Catechism, Schreck, p. 183;
The Church's Confession of Faith, German Bishops' Conference, pp. 74-75;
Faith for Today, Hogan and LeVoir, pp. 212, 256.

Papal Documents

Familiaris Consortio, John Paul II, sect. 59-62.

The Four Pu

Q. 265. What are the four

The four purposes of prayer are (1) adoration, (2) petition, (3) repentance, and (4) thanksgiving.

1. The first purpose of prayer

Our first and foremost purpose is adoration. It is the recognition of God's preme dominion over us, and our absolute dependence on Him, as well as His supreme excellence. The Holy Spirit, is called the witness in us, who gives us the grace to give to the angels and saints, and to recognize its difference from the adoration of God alone.

Adoration is due to God alone. It is the preme. All other beings are created and ruled by Him.

Adoration is the essential purpose of prayer. It is the creature's awareness of its dependence on God, and its desire to glorify God is an ideal.

"I will give praise to You, O Lord, and will relate all Your wonders. I will sing to Your Name, O Lord, in the assembly of the saints." (Psalm 145:2-3)

"Seven times a day I have praised You, O Lord, because of Your justice" (Psalm 119:164)

2. The second purpose of prayer

We pray, secondly, to thank God for His gifts. We pray for the purpose in creating the world, for the goods and security, but also for the glory of God about Him, so that we might glorify Him.



See Papally
Catechism of the

Q. 265. See paragraphs:

See encyclical *Veri*

Q. 265. See sections: 9, 7

The Four Purposes of Prayer

Q. 265. What are the four purposes of prayer?

The four purposes of prayer are: (1) *adoration*, (2) *thanksgiving*, (3) *repentance*, and (4) *petition*

1. *The first purpose of prayer is adoration.*

Our first and foremost duty is to acknowledge God's supreme dominion over us, as our Creator and Father; our absolute dependence on Him, as His creatures and children; and His supreme excellence. The worship of God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, is called the worship of adoration. The worship we give to the angels and saints is called veneration, to stress its difference from the adoration which is due to God and to God alone.

Adoration is due to God alone, because God alone is supreme. All other beings are creatures, being made by God and ruled by Him.

Adoration is the essential act of prayer, because it expresses the creature's awareness of the Creator. Consecration of ourselves to God is an ideal prayer of adoration.

"I will give praise to You, O Lord, with my whole heart. I will relate all Your wonders. I will be glad and rejoice in You. I will sing to Your Name, O You, Most High" (Psalm 9:1-2).

"Seven times a day I have given praise to You for the judgments of Your justice" (Psalm 119:164).

2. *The second purpose of prayer is thanksgiving.*

We pray, secondly, to thank God for His favors. God's purpose in creating the world was not only to give us material goods and security, but also to inspire in us grateful thoughts about Him, so that we might reach our sublime destiny. Our



*See Papally Promulgated
Catechism of the Catholic Church*

Q. 265. See paragraphs: 2626-2643

See encyclical **Veritatis Splendor** (Splendor of Truth)

Q. 265. See sections: 9, 71

entire beings are God's free gifts of love. He has given us immortality so that we can know, love, and possess Him for all eternity. Through the Redemption, He has raised us to a supernatural plane; that is, He has made us His children, brothers and sisters of Jesus, and heirs of Heaven. By His providence, He watches over us day and night with unfailing care and bestows on us many blessings. When we wander away from God through sin, He forgives us through the saving grace of the Sacrament of Penance. When we become hungry and tired in soul, He nourishes us with His own Body and Blood. In our prayers, we can put our gratitude into words for these marvelous gifts.

“Hear, O Lord, my prayer: and let my cry come to You. Turn not away Your face from me. In the day when I am in trouble, incline Your ear to me” (Psalm 102:2-3).

“Be filled with the Holy Spirit, speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns, and spiritual canticles, singing and making melody in your hearts to the Lord. Giving thanks always for all things, in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ, to God the Father” (Ephesians 5:18-20).

For all this generosity we can make only one fitting return — the offering of Jesus Christ to God the Father in the Mass. We should unite ourselves to Jesus and offer ourselves, too, with all that we are and do, in thanksgiving for the limitless graces and blessings that have been bestowed upon us. Frequently during the day, as we go about our work, we should turn our thoughts and affections to God by offering Him prayers of gratitude.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, by Whose wisdom we are created and by Whose providence we are governed, give us the grace to offer You our thanks as best we can, for unless You direct us by Your Holy Spirit, we will not know how to address You as we ought in prayer. We ask this through Jesus Christ , our Lord and Savior. Amen.

3. *The third purpose of prayer is repentance.*

We pray, thirdly, to obtain from God the pardon of our sins and the remission of their punishment. When we break God's law, we offend God. Sorrow for sin makes for fruitful conversation with God. The terrifying fact that you have actually offended the all-good and all-holy God should ever keep you in the attitude of the penitent sinner.

4. The fourth purpose of

We pray to ask for grace for others. We need God every order. We depend upon God. In prayer, we pray to Him for help as spiritual favors.

Our need for God in the world is that God is the limitless source of all good. We want to share this good with others. He has called us to reign with Him in Heaven and to be there forever. We should always be with Him. Our Lord has urged us to be with Him. He shall be given you: seek, and you shall be opened to you" (Mt. 11:12).

Sacr

"I desire therefore, first
intercessions, and thanks
kings, and for all that are i
quiet and a peaceable life i

“Confess therefore your
for another, that you may
of a just man avails much.”

“For if he had not hoped
rise again, it would have se
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that they who had fallen
grace laid up for them. It i
thought to pray for the de
sins.” 2 Maccabees 12: 44-46

Vatica

"The practice of religion consists of those voluntary and free acts which direct the soul towards God. Acts of religion are not forbidden by any merely civil nature requires that these internal acts of religion be left to the conscience of the individual. On religious matters, and

(U.S. Section 71)

Papal

The discovery of intimac

4. *The fourth purpose of prayer is petition.*

We pray to ask for graces and blessings for ourselves and others. We need God every moment of our lives in the natural order. We depend upon God for everything, and for that reason, we pray to Him for help. We may ask for temporal as well as spiritual favors.

Our need for God in the supernatural order is even greater. God is the limitless source of all good, and He longs to share this good with others. He has even assured us that our goal is to reign with Him in Heaven and to share His own happiness there forever. We should appeal to God in prayer frequently. Our Lord has urged us to make such appeals: "Ask, and it shall be given you: seek, and you shall find: knock, and it shall be opened to you" (Matthew 7:7). (cf. V.S., Section 9)

Sacred Scripture

"I desire therefore, first of all, that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all men: for kings, and for all that are in high station: that we may lead a quiet and a peaceable life in all piety and chastity." *1 Timothy 2:1-2*

"Confess therefore your sins one to another, and pray one for another, that you may be saved. For the continual prayer of a just man avails much." *James 5:16*

"For if he had not hoped that they that were slain should rise again, it would have seemed superfluous and vain to pray for the dead, and because he [Judas Maccabees] considered that they who had fallen asleep with godliness, had great grace laid up for them. It is therefore a holy and wholesome thought to pray for the dead, that they may be loosed from sins." *2 Maccabees 12: 44-46*

Vatican Council II

"The practice of religion of its very nature consists primarily of those voluntary and free internal acts by which a man directs himself to God. Acts of this kind cannot be commanded, or forbidden by any merely human authority. But his own social nature requires that man give external expression to these internal acts of religion, that he communicate with others on religious matters, and profess his religion in community." *Liberty, 3*

(cf. V.S., Section 71)

Papal Document

"The discovery of intimacy with God, the necessity for ado-

ration, the need for intercession — the experience of Christian holiness shows us the fruitfulness of prayer, in which God reveals himself to the spirit and heart of his servants. The Lord gives us this knowledge of himself in the fervor of love.” Pope Paul VI, *Apostolic Exhortation on the Renewal of Religious Life*, 43

Chapter Summary Prayer

Hear our prayers, Lord Jesus, and cover us with the wings of Your Cross, that whatever the changes and chances of this mortal life, we may always find strength in Your unchanging love, for You are the Savior of the world and the joy of mankind. You promised to be with those who pray in Your Name; help us to always pray with You to the Father, in the Holy Spirit.

Lord Jesus, Whose pierced hands were lifted toward Your holy Father and Whose life was rescued out of death, be the Shepherd of Your Chosen People; Lead us through the trials and tribulations of this present life and help us to sing hymns of praise to the Blessed Trinity.

Lord Jesus Christ, by Your death and Resurrection, You reconciled everything in Heaven and on earth; by the power of Your blessed Passion, set us apart so that we may sing the praise of God in union with the angels and saints in Heaven.

Watch over Your people who come to You in prayer, and strengthen the hearts of those who hope in You, that they may proclaim Your saving acts of kindness in the Heavenly City.

God of all compassion, Father of all goodness, to heal the wounds that our sins and selfishness bring upon us, You bid us turn to prayer and to sharing with our brothers. We acknowledge our sinfulness. Our guilt is ever before us. When our weakness causes discouragement, let Your compassion fill us with hope and lead us, through repentance, to the beauty of eternal joy.

*May Your love never
saving work among us as a
May the saving Sacrifice
forgiveness so that, freed from
You. May our sharing in the
protection, forgiveness, and*

Cross-Reference

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May Your love never abandon us. Continue Your saving work among us as we endeavor to serve You well. May the saving Sacrifice of the Mass bring us Your forgiveness so that, freed from sin, we may always please You. May our sharing in the Bread of Life bring us Your protection, forgiveness, and life. Amen.

Cross-References for Chapter 123

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