

A Catholic Prayer Book

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A Treasury of Common Prayers

The Sign of the Cross

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be 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.

The Hail Mary

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee;
blessed art thou among women,
and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.

Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

The Glory Be

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,
world without end. Amen.

The Act of Faith

O my God, I firmly believe that thou art one God in three divine persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. I believe that thy divine Son became man and died for our sins and that He will come again to judge the living and the dead. I believe these and all the truths that the Catholic Church teaches because You have revealed them Who can neither deceive nor be deceived.

The Act of Hope

O my God, relying upon thy infinite goodness and promises, I hope to obtain the pardon of my sins, the help of thy grace, and life everlasting, through the merits of Jesus Christ, my Lord and Redeemer.

The Act of Love

O my God, I love Thee above all things with my whole heart and soul because Thou art all good and deserving of all my love. I love my neighbor as myself for the love of Thee. I forgive all who have injured me and ask pardon of all whom I have injured.

The Act of Contrition

O my God, I am heartily sorry for having offended Thee and I detest all my sins because I dread the loss of heaven and the pains of hell, but most of all because they offend Thee, O my God, Who art all good and deserving of all my love. I firmly resolve with the help of thy grace to confess my sins, to do penance, and to amend my life. Amen

Grace before and after meals

Bless us, O Lord, and these thy gifts, which we are about to receive from thy bounty, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

May the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.

We give Thee thanks, Almighty God, for these and all the gifts we have received from thy bounty, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

The 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 to the dead; on 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 will 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 Angelus

The angel of the Lord declared unto Mary.

And she conceived by the Holy Spirit.

Hail Mary

Behold the handmaid of the Lord;

Be it done unto me according to thy word.

Hail Mary

And the Word was made flesh;

And dwelt amongst us.

Hail Mary

Let us pray: Pour forth, we beseech Thee, O Lord, thy grace into our hearts, that we, to whom the Incarnation of Christ thy Son was made known by the message of an angel, may, by his passion and cross, be brought to the glory of his resurrection, through the same Christ our Lord. Amen.

The Regina Coeli

This prayer replaces the Angelus from Easter through the Saturday before Pentecost.

Queen of heaven, rejoice, Alleluia.

Because the Lord is truly risen, Alleluia.

For He whom thou didst merit to bear, Alleluia.

Has risen as He said, Alleluia.

Pray for us to God, Alleluia.

Rejoice and be glad, O Virgin Mary, Alleluia.

Let us pray:

O God, Who by the resurrection of thy Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, has been pleased to fill the world with joy, grant, we beseech Thee, that by the intercession of the Virgin Mary, his mother, we may receive the joys of eternal life. Through the same Christ our Lord. Amen.

My Daily Prayer

This prayer was composed by Msgr. R. J. Markham and was popular in the mid-20th century in Greater Cincinnati. It combines elements of several other prayers and is reprinted from a prayer card published in that era. Msgr. Markham wrote the following on the other side of the prayer card:

“My Daily Prayer” comes to you as one of God’s children. God is your kind, merciful, and loving Father. He is the most understanding and the most forgiving of all fathers. He really cares for you. He loves you; and he wants you to know Him, love Him, and serve Him in this world and be perfectly happy, for all eternity, in the world to come. This is your longing desire—the salvation of your soul—after all, the only thing that counts. “My Daily Prayer” will be for you a wonderful help in attaining this all-important end. Say it earnestly

and fervently. Make it a real prayer. Let every word come from your heart. Say it every day. May God bless your efforts!

I believe in One God. I believe that God rewards the good and punishes the wicked.

I believe that in God there are three Divine Persons—God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.

I believe that God the Son became man without ceasing to be God. I believe that He is my Lord and my Savior Jesus Christ, the Redeemer of the human race, Who died on the cross for the salvation of all men, Who died also for me.

I believe, on God’s authority, everything that He has taught and revealed.

O my God, give me strong faith. O my God, help me to believe with lively faith.

O my God, relying on thy almighty power and infinite mercy and promises, I sincerely hope to be saved. Help me to do all that is necessary for my salvation.

I have committed many sins in my life, but now I turn away from them and hate them. I am sorry, truly sorry for all of them, because I have offended Thee, my God, Who art all-good, all-perfect, all-holy, all-merciful—my kind and loving Father.

I love Thee, O my God, with all my heart. Forgive me, I implore Thee, for having offended Thee.

I promise, O God, that with thy help I will never offend Thee again.

My God, have mercy on me. Amen.

Morning Prayers

To My Guardian Angel

Angel of God, my guardian dear, to whom God's love commits me here, ever this day be at my side to light and guard, to rule and guide. Amen.

The Morning Offering

O Jesus, through the Immaculate Heart of Mary, I offer You all my prayers, works, joys, and sufferings of this day, in union with the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass throughout the world, in reparation for my sins, for the

intentions of all my associates, and in particular for the intentions of the Holy Father this month.

Direct our Actions

Direct, we beg You, O Lord, our actions by your holy inspirations, and carry them on by your gracious assistance, that every prayer and work of ours may begin always with You, and through You be happily ended. Amen.

Evening Prayers

Prayer of St. Augustine

Watch, O Lord, with those who wake, or watch, or weep tonight, and give your angels and saints charge over those who sleep.

Tend your sick ones, O Lord Jesus Christ,
Rest your weary ones,
Bless your dying ones,
Soothe your suffering ones,
Pity your afflicted ones,
Shield your joyous ones,
And all for your love's sake. Amen

At Bedtime

Now I lay me down to sleep;
I pray the Lord my soul to keep.
If I should die before I wake,
I pray the Lord my soul to take.

Examination of Conscience

"Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?" And He said to him, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like to it. You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments depend all the law and the prophets" (Mt 22:36-40).

I know I have some particular weaknesses that are included in the seven capital sins, those tendencies that incline me to particular sins—pride, greed, envy, wrath, lust, gluttony, and laziness. Have I done anything today to work against my particular weaknesses?

Have I given in to any particular temptation today? Have I practiced reasonable control over my eyes to avoid unnecessary temptations? Have I dressed modestly so as to reduce temptations to others? Have I

been honest in my speech? Did I put in a good day's work?

How well have I fulfilled my responsibilities to my family? To my parents? To my spouse? To my children? To my brothers and sisters?

Have I sinned against my neighbor in any way? What efforts did I make today to do more than avoid sin? Did I help anybody today? Did I encourage my neighbor? Did I share a kind word with anyone? Did I pray for anyone?

Have I done anything to let God really be God in my life today? In time of trial, have I trusted Him? Have I prayed? Have I done anything to show God that I love Him? Have I thanked God today for the gifts He has given me including the gift of faith, the gift of redemption, the gift of life, the gift of family, the gift of good health, and whatever other gifts God has entrusted to my care?

Have I made any effort to read Sacred Scripture? Have I done any other reading or listening to aid my growth in the Faith?

For a more complete examination of conscience, see the Preparation for Confession.

Act of Contrition

O my God, I am heartily sorry for having offended Thee and I detest all my sins because I dread the loss of heaven and the pains of hell, but most of all because they offend Thee, O my God, Who art all good and deserving of all my love. I firmly resolve with the help of thy grace to confess my sins, to do penance, and to amend my life. Amen.

A Penitential Psalm (51)

See "Preparation for Confession."

Prayers for the Family

The Pope's Prayer for the Family

Lord God, from You every family in heaven and on earth takes its name. Father, You are love and life.

Through your Son, Jesus Christ, born of woman, and through the Holy Spirit, the fountain of divine charity, grant that every family on earth may become for each successive generation a true shrine of life and love.

Grant that your grace may guide the thoughts and actions of husbands and wives for the good of their families and of all the families in the world.

Grant that the young may find in the family solid support for their human dignity and for their growth in truth and love.

Grant that love, strengthened by the grace of the sacrament of marriage, may prove mightier than all the weaknesses and trials through which our families sometimes pass.

Through the intercession of the Holy Family of Nazareth, grant that the Church may fruitfully carry out her worldwide mission in the family and through the family.

We ask this of You, who are life, truth, and love with the Son and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

--John Paul II

Prayer of the Church for Married Couples

The "Prayer of the Church" refers to the official prayer of the Church generally referred to as the Liturgy of the Hours or the Divine Office.

O Lord, help married couples with an abundance of your grace,

--so that they may better symbolize the mystery of your Church.

--Evening prayer, Monday, week IV

From the beginning You intended husband and wife to be one,

--keep all families united in sincere love.

--Evening prayer, Wednesday, week IV

Let married couples live in your peace,

--and grow in mutual love.

--Evening prayer I, Sunday, week I

Lord, You loved your parents and were loved by them,

--establish our families in mutual love and respect.

--Evening prayer I, Feast of the Holy Family

Prayer for Parents

O Almighty God, You have given me my father and mother and made them to be an image of your authority. Bless them, I beseech You, with health of mind and body and all necessary graces, and grant me your assistance to love, honor and obey them in all things. Amen.

The Prayer of the Church for Young People

Good Master, show young people the way You have chosen for each of them,

--may they walk in it and find fulfillment.

--Evening prayer, Monday, fifth week of Lent

May our young people be concerned with remaining blameless in your sight,

--and may they generously follow your call.

May our children imitate your example,

--and grow in wisdom and grace.

--Evening prayer, Tuesday, week I

Give your grace to children, that they may grow in your favor,

--and to young people, that they may reach their full stature by loving You and keeping your commandments.

--Evening prayer, Monday, second week of Lent

Parents' Prayer to the Holy Family

Jesus, Son of the eternal Father, we most fervently implore You to take our children under your special care, and enclose them in the love of your Sacred Heart. Rule and guide them that they may live according to our holy faith and may never waver in their confidence in You and may ever remain faithful in your love.

Mary, blessed mother of Jesus, grant to our children a place in your pure maternal heart. Spread over them your protecting mantle when danger threatens their innocence. Keep them firm when they are tempted to stray from the path of virtue; and should they have the misfortune to fall, raise them up again and reconcile them with your divine Son.

Holy foster father St. Joseph, watch over our children and protect them from the assaults of the wicked enemy and deliver them from all dangers of soul and body. Mary and Joseph, dear parents of the holy child Jesus, intercede for us that we may be a good example and bring up our children in the love and fear of God and one day attain with them the beatific vision in heaven. Amen

For a Peaceful Family

Lord Jesus Christ, be with us as a family so that we may always have a great love for your Sacred Heart. Make us gentle, courteous, and loving in our dealings with each other. Take from us all misunderstanding so that no angry or bitter word may ever cross our lips, and grant that we may always treat each other as You treated those with whom You shared your human family. Amen.

Prayer for My Husband*

Heavenly Father, I thank You for the gift of _____ . Help me always to see him as a gift from You to me. Help me to be the good wife and mother You want me to be.

Father, please help my husband to be the good man You want him to be. Help him to grow in faith and all the virtues he needs as husband, father, and provider. Help him to exercise the spiritual leadership of our family that You have entrusted to his care. Help us to be ever faithful to You and to each other in thought, word and deed. Help us to be good parents and to grow ever closer as we grow old together. I ask this in the name of Jesus and in the power of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Prayer of Spouses for Each Other

Lord Jesus, grant that my spouse and I may have a true and understanding love for each other. Grant that we may both be filled with faith and trust. Give us the grace to live with each other in peace and harmony. May we always bear with one another's weaknesses and grow from each other's strengths. Help us to forgive one another's failings and grant us patience, kindness, cheerfulness and the spirit of placing the well-being of one another ahead of self.

May the love that brought us together grow and mature with each passing year. Bring us both ever closer to You through our love for each other. Let our love grow to perfection. Amen.

Prayer for My Wife*

Heavenly Father, I thank You for the gift of _____ . Help me always to see her as a gift from You to me. Help me to be the good husband and father You want me to be.

Father, please help my wife to be the good woman You want her to be. Help her to grow in all the virtues she needs as wife, mother, and homemaker. Help her to be the real heart of our family, and help her to accept the leadership that You have entrusted to my care. Help us to be good parents and to grow ever closer as we grow old together. I ask this in the name of Jesus and in the power of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

The Sacrament of Reconciliation

Preparing for Confession

Reconciliation is the Sacrament where I meet the Risen Jesus Who gave the Apostles—the first priests—the power to forgive sins in his name (Jn 20:23). First, I ask the Holy Spirit to give me courage and knowledge of myself. Then it is time to give Christ, Who loves me and wants me to experience his forgiveness and his great mercy, all that has been burdening my heart. Reconciliation gives me the joy of God's mercy and strengthens my relationship with Christ and his Church.

Sin in my life

Modern society has lost its sense of sin and its sense of sorrow for sin. As a follower of Jesus, I need to make an effort to recognize sin in my daily actions, words, and omissions. I need to be sorry for my sins, to root them out of my life, to confess them, and to experience God's mercy and forgiveness. Lives of the saints prove that a person who grows in holiness and joyfulness has a stronger sense of sin and of sorrow for sin. The process of examining one's conscience should always be done without anxiety and with trust in God's infinite mercy and the power of the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

Sin is the deliberate choice of something opposed to God's law of love in one's thoughts, words, or deeds. The Church teaches that there are two kinds of sin: mortal and venial.

Mortal sin (also called serious or grave sin) is a deliberate and free choice of some action, words, or thought known to be seriously wrong. Such sin destroys the life of grace in the person. Three conditions must be met for a sin to be mortal:

1) serious matter, 2) sufficient reflection, and 3) full consent of the will.

First, the thing done must be something serious by way of thought, word, or action.

Second, you must have sufficient understanding and give the matter enough thought to realize it is seriously wrong.

Third, you must have sufficient freedom of the will and give your full consent.

Therefore, you cannot commit a mortal sin if the matter is not serious, if you did not know what you were doing (unless you were deliberately drunk), or if you did not act with full freedom (unless you deliberately discarded your freedom by using mind-altering drugs, including too much alcohol).

Venial sin is a minor offense against God that hurts the life of grace in the person but does not destroy it. Sometimes venial sin occurs when the matter is serious, as in mortal sin, but one or both of the other conditions for mortal sin are absent. For example, you might be slower than you should be in getting rid of certain temptations.

If you are truly not certain, you can give yourself the benefit of the doubt. Always make a good act of contrition.

The Sacrament of Reconciliation is the ordinary way to have our sins forgiven. It is a powerful help to getting rid of weaknesses, growing in holiness, and leading a balanced life. The serious Catholic celebrates it regularly and whenever the need is felt in order to receive all the graces that the Lord wants to give.

Monthly confession is a healthy and effective means to grow closer to Christ and to become more joyful and peaceful in spirit. Sometimes the mere thought of your monthly confession can ward off temptation. Start this practice, maintain it, and you will be glad you did.

Contrition

I need **contrition**, or sorrow for my sins, to receive worthily the Sacrament of Reconciliation and thus heal my relationship with my Heavenly Father whom I have offended. Contrition **MUST** include a firm purpose to avoid 1) the sins committed **and** 2) the persons, places, and things that prompted me to sin in the first place. These are called the near occasions of sin. Otherwise, one's confession can be an abuse of the sacrament.

How to Go to Confession

Examine your conscience, be truly sorry for your sins, and resolve to change your life for the better.

Go to the priest and say: "Bless me Father for I have sinned. It has been ____ weeks/months/years since my last confession." Also, tell the priest your state in life--whether you are married, a pre-teen, teenager, single adult, etc.

Tell the priest your mortal sins and the number of times each was committed, and then you may confess some of your venial sins. Although it is not strictly necessary to confess venial sins, the Church encourages you to do so. If you do not know if a sin was mortal or venial, ask the priest. If you have no mortal sins, confess the venial sins you have committed since your last confession.

Listen to the priest. If you have any questions about the Faith, how to grow in holiness, or whether something is a sin, feel free to ask him. The priest will then give a penance that is the first act of your "new life" after you leave the confessional.

Listen as the priest absolves you of your sins and enjoy the fact that God has truly freed you from all your sins. If you forget to confess a mortal sin, you are still

forgiven, but you should mention it in your next confession.

Do the penance the priest gives you.

If you are not sure of what to do, tell the priest and he will make it clear and easy for you. For example, if you do not know a certain prayer that the priest assigns as a penance, tell him, and he will assign one that you do know.

While still in the confessional, pray the Act of Contrition loudly enough so that the priest can hear you.

An Act of Contrition

O my God, I am heartily sorry for having offended thee because I dread the loss of heaven and the pains of hell, but most of all because they offend thee, O my God, who art all good and deserving of all my love. I firmly resolve with the help of thy grace to confess my sins, to do penance and to amend my life. Amen.

Examination of Conscience

The Commandments

1. I am the Lord your God. You shall not have strange gods before Me.

Do I seek to love God with my whole heart and soul?

Does He truly hold the first place in my life?

Have I participated in the occult, witchcraft, fortune telling, Ouija boards, séances, tarot cards, good luck charms?

Have I actually believed in horoscopes?

Have I received Holy Communion in a state of mortal sin?

Have I told a lie in confession or deliberately not confessed a mortal sin?

Have I ever denied a truth of the Catholic faith out of fear or embarrassment?

Have I ever despaired of God's love for me?

Have I sinned and at the same time presumed that God would forgive me afterwards?

Do I pray regularly?

In general, how much in my life distinguishes me from a polite pagan? Would anybody guess from watching me that I am a believing Catholic, a follower of Jesus Christ, a worshipper of the One True God?

2. You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain.

Have I insulted God's holy name or used it lightly or carelessly?

Have I wished evil on anyone?

Do I dishonor the name of Jesus by using it as slang?

Do I honor the name of Jesus by bowing my head when I hear it spoken? (It's a good practice but not a sin if you don't.)

3. Remember to keep holy the Lord's Day.

Have I missed Mass deliberately on Sunday or Holy Days of obligation?

Do I leave Mass early or come late deliberately without having a good reason?

The Sabbath is a day of solemn rest, holy to the Lord (see Ex. 31:15). Have I done unnecessary work on Sundays?

Sunday is a family day. Have I spent time with my family on Sundays?

4. Honor your father and your mother.

Do I honor and obey my parents? Have I cursed or deliberately hit my parents?

Have I neglected the care of my aging parents? If my parents are dead, do I pray for them? Do I avoid criticizing them?

Do I honor and obey my legitimate superiors?

Have I neglected my family responsibilities?

5. You shall not kill.

Have I physically harmed anyone?

Have I risked harming others by my unsafe driving?

Have I had an abortion? Have I encouraged anyone to have an abortion? Have I hoped for a miscarriage?

Have I (or my spouse) used any kind of birth control that has the potential to cause an early abortion (that is, the Pill, implants, injections, or the IUD)?

Have I sought pregnancy through in vitro fertilization? or encouraged my spouse to do so?

Have I abused alcohol or drugs? Am I harming my health through smoking?

Have I harbored hatred, anger or resentment in my heart towards anyone?

Have I given scandal to anyone by my sins, thereby leading them to sin?

Have I attempted suicide or seriously considered it?

6. You shall not commit adultery.

For married persons:

Am I faithful to my marriage vows in thought and action?

Does the marriage act reflect the faith, the love and the commitment for better and for worse that we made when we married?

During this past week or month—

What acts of kindness have I done for my spouse to reflect the faith, love and commitment we made on our wedding day?

Have I failed to show affection to my spouse?

Have I taken my spouse for granted?

Have we failed to pray together this week or since my last confession?

Have I used any unnatural form of birth control or been sterilized?

Have I used any form of artificial or unnatural reproductive technique that is contrary to the teaching of the Catholic Church?

For the unmarried:

Have I engaged in any activity that by its nature arouses sexual desire, such as impure touching or passion-arousing kissing?

For all:

Have I masturbated?

Have I deliberately looked at pornography, whether in print, films, videos, internet, or print and TV advertising?

Have I used impure language or told impure jokes?

Have I dressed in such a way as to draw attention to my sexual areas?

Have I failed to guard my eyes properly, that is, have I looked repeatedly at provocative dress and images even if not truly pornographic?

7. You shall not steal.

Have I taken what is not mine? Destroyed property belonging to somebody else? Knowingly accepted stolen goods?

Have I cheated an employer or employee? Do I put in a fair day's work?

Do I share proportionately what I have with the poor, my Church, and charitable works?

8. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

Have I lied or sworn falsely?

Have I gossiped or ruined anyone's good name?

Have I revealed information that I should have kept confidential?

9. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife.

Have I deliberately and consciously permitted sexual thoughts about someone to whom I am not married?

Do I try to control my imagination?

Am I responsible in the books and magazines I read and the TV and movies I watch?

Have I watched shows, videos, plays, pictures or movies that contain impure scenes with the deliberate intention of watching those impure scenes? Do I stop watching those that provide me with serious temptations? If I am a parent, do I allow my children to watch sexually oriented TV and films?

10. You shall not covet your neighbor's goods.

Am I envious of the possessions, talents and success of others?

If I do not need to work, am I deliberately leaving my children to have more of this world's goods and honors?

You shall love your neighbor as yourself.

Do I love my neighbor?

Are there persons whom I do not love or refuse to love?

Have I ridiculed or humiliated others?

Do I seek to help others in need? Do I seriously try to love others as Christ wants?

Do I forgive from my heart those who have hurt me? Do I pray for my enemies?

Do I love myself as God loves me? Do I take care of my physical, emotional and spiritual health?

Do I forgive myself for my sins after bringing them to God in the Sacrament of Reconciliation?

Precepts of the Church

Do I go to Confession at least once a year when I have serious sins to confess?

Do I receive Holy Communion at least once during Eastertide?

Do I abstain from meat on Fridays during Lent (for those age-14 and over) and fast on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday (for those 16 and over)?

Do I support the Church?

Do I worship at Mass every Sunday and holy day of obligation?

If married, have I married within the law of the Church?

See also the Examination of Conscience in Evening Prayers.

A Penitential Psalm (51)

Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast
love;
according to your abundant mercy blot out my
transgressions.
Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me
from my sin!
For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before
me.
Against You, You only, have I sinned, and done that
which is evil in your sight,
so that You are justified in your sentence, and blameless
in your judgment.
Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin did my
mother conceive me.

Behold, You desire truth in the inward being; therefore
teach me wisdom in my secret heart.
Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean;
wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.
Fill me with joy and gladness;
let the bones which You have broken rejoice.
Hide your face from my sins, and blot out all my
iniquities.
Create in me a clean heart, O God,
and put a new and right spirit within me.

Cast me not away from your presence, and take not your
holy Spirit from me.
Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and uphold me
with a willing spirit.
Then I will teach transgressors your ways, and sinners
will return to You.
Deliver me from blood guiltiness, O God, thou God of
my salvation,
and my tongue will sing aloud of your deliverance.
O Lord, open thou my lips, and my mouth shall show
forth your praise.

For You have no delight in sacrifice;
were I to give a burnt offering, You would not be
pleased.
The sacrifice acceptable to God is a broken spirit;
a broken and contrite heart, O God, You will not
despise.
Do good to Zion in your good pleasure; rebuild the walls
of Jerusalem,
then will You delight in right sacrifices, in burnt
offerings and whole burnt offerings;
then bulls will be offered on your altar.

*(David composed Psalm 51 after the prophet Nathan
accused him of adultery and murder.)*

Prayers in Preparation for Mass and Holy Communion

Church Etiquette

“My house shall be called a house of prayer.” *Isaiah 56:7*

A Catholic church is not just another house, a meeting place or building. It is God’s house; Jesus is present there, really, personally present. It is a house of prayer and worship. Keeping this in mind, our behavior in church needs to reflect where we are.

We should be quiet when we go into a Catholic church so we do not disturb other people who are praying. Even if there is no one praying in the church, we should observe a prayerful silence or speak only in quiet tones out of respect for the Eucharistic presence of our Lord.

When we enter the church, we should bless ourselves with holy water. We should do this with reverence, not absentmindedly. The blessed water reminds us of the waters of Baptism which made us members of God’s family; the sign of the cross reminds us of the cross, the sacred sign of our salvation.

We should genuflect on one knee before we enter the pew. This is how people used to show respect to their king. We genuflect to show respect to Jesus Christ, the King of Kings. We need to do this with reverence, touching one knee to the floor. We should genuflect toward the tabernacle, acknowledging the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist. It is good to say a short prayer such as “Praise and honor be to You, Lord Jesus Christ, King of everlasting glory.”

We should pray and sing at Mass, but at other times we generally should keep silence. If we need to ask or answer a question, we should do so quietly. After-Mass conversations can wait until we are outside the main part

of the church; others may be trying to pray as we are leaving.

We should dress properly, remembering that we are entering God’s house. (Jesus **does** care how we dress; the clothes we choose show what we think about the person or place we are visiting or others who are there. We should dress with respect and modestly. Modest dress conceals rather than reveals; it does not draw attention to one’s sexual zones.)

We should be on our best behavior and treat the church building and the things used for Mass with respect.

We should teach our children to use the restrooms before Mass, not during. Unnecessary trips to the restrooms during Mass are distracting.

If we need to take a fussy child to the vestibule or some designated room, we should still try to concentrate on the Mass. Taking children outside to play or checking out the book and pamphlet rack is not participating in the Mass.

We should not leave Mass early. Leaving right after Communion is disrespectful to our Lord and the priest and distracting to the rest of the congregation. It also sets a bad example for young people.

Keeping these points of etiquette, these outward signs of faith and respect, helps us and our brothers and sisters in Christ to come together in fellowship with Jesus Christ to worship our God in spirit and in truth. In the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass as in all things, we “Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good. His mercy endures forever!”

Prayers before Mass

Prayer of St. Thomas Aquinas

Almighty and ever living God, I approach the sacrament of your only-begotten Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. I come sick to the doctor of life, unclean to the fountain of mercy, blind to the radiance of eternal light, and poor and needy to the Lord of Heaven and earth. Lord, in your great generosity, heal my sickness, wash away my defilement, enlighten my blindness, enrich my poverty, and clothe my nakedness.

May I receive the Bread of angels, the King of kings and Lord of lords with humble reverence, with purity and faith, the repentance and love, and the determined purpose that will help to bring me to salvation.

May I receive the sacrament of the Lord’s Body and Blood and its reality and power. Kind God, may I receive the Body of your only-begotten Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, born from the womb of the Virgin Mary, and so be received into his Mystical Body and numbered among his members.

Loving Father, as on my earthly pilgrimage I now receive your beloved Son under the veil of a sacrament, may I one day see Him face to face in glory, Who lives and reigns with You for ever. Amen.

To Prepare for Mass

It is the very nature of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass that it offers praise and adoration to God, reparation for our sins, thanksgiving for the salvation wrought by Jesus Christ, and petition for the needs of the Church. You may find it helpful to make these purposes of the Mass more clearly your own and thus become a more active participant. You may want to pray the following prayer or something like it as you drive or walk your family to Mass, and then each family member can add his or her own special thanks and petitions.

An Offering Prayer*

Heavenly Father, I offer You this Mass today in praise and adoration of the Godhead—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

I offer this Mass in reparation for my own sins and those of each member of my family and extended families.

I offer this Mass in thanksgiving for the whole work of creation and redemption, for the work of the prophets, for the “yes” of Jesus, for the “yes” of Mary and Joseph, for all that Jesus did and said and taught us, for his suffering and death and resurrection, for his ascension into heaven, for his sending the Spirit, for his gift of the Church, and for his priest who will celebrate this Mass.

I offer this Mass in thanksgiving for every personal blessing You have given to me and my family, especially for the gift of faith that draws me to worship, for the gift of good health that enables me to come to Mass, for the

gift of my family, and for the freedom to worship at Mass without fear of persecution.

I offer this Mass in solemn petition for authentic reform and renewal in the Church, for all the missionary work of the Church, for a rebirth of chastity, for a stop to contraception, and for a stop to abortion and euthanasia.

I offer this Mass for faith and perseverance for all those who are being actively persecuted for the Faith today; I offer this Mass for a stop to persecution of the Church; and I offer this Mass for a healing of divisions within the Church and for unity of Faith among all Christians.

I offer this Mass in petition for the conversion of Islam, for the conversion of the Jews, and for the conversion of China and all other lands still under the heavy hand of atheistic communism. I offer this Mass for the conversion of my own country and all other countries that allow abortion and encourage personal immorality.

I offer this Mass also in solemn petition for all my personal needs and those of my family and friends—for an increase of faith, hope, love, contrition, and purity, for a deep and true spirit of religion, for the gift of wisdom, for the continuation of good health, for adequate employment, for a true spirit of Christian generosity, and for these other needs:

_____ . Amen.

Receiving Holy Communion—worthily and reverently

The best way to participate thoroughly in the Mass is to receive the Eucharist **worthily**. St. Paul reminds us: “Whoever eats this bread or drinks the cup of the Lord unworthily will be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord...he who eats and drinks unworthily, without discerning the body, eats and drinks judgment on himself” (1Cor 11:27,29).

To prepare ourselves to receive the Eucharist worthily—

We must be baptized.

We must know that we are receiving the Body and Blood of Jesus; thus we ought to receive Communion with reverence and devotion.

We must receive Communion with the right intention, not because everyone else is doing it or because of what others might think if we do not, but in order to please God, to increase our love for God, and to be strengthened on our walk with the Lord.

We must be in the state of grace. If we are in the state of mortal sin, we must first confess our sins to a priest in the Sacrament of Reconciliation. We certainly do not want to commit the sin of sacrilege by receiving the Eucharist unworthily.

We must be sorry for any venial sins.

We must follow the Church’s law on Eucharistic fasting. This means that we must not eat or drink anything, except water or medicine, for one hour before

receiving Holy Communion. (This includes such things as chewing gum, coffee, tea, pop, and candy.)

If we remember that it is really Jesus Whom we receive in Holy Communion, we should want to prepare ourselves well.

Reverence should characterize our manner of receiving Holy Communion. Therefore—

We should walk with hands joined in prayer.

We should think about what we are doing—going to receive the Savior of the world in Holy Communion.

If you receive Communion standing, make an act of reverence to the Blessed Sacrament while a person ahead of you is receiving Communion (the Sign of the Cross, a bow, or a genuflection).

When the priest, deacon or extraordinary minister holds up the Eucharist and says, “The body of Christ,” respond, “Amen.”

If you receive the Host in your hand, place one hand under the other, cupping your palms; the Host will be placed in your hand. (You may not take the Host from the Eucharistic minister.) After you have put the host in your mouth, check your hand; if there are any particles of the Host still there, consume them with your tongue.

Return to your pew with hands joined in prayer, kneel down, and pray to the Lord whom you have just received.

Prayers after Holy Communion

Prayer before a Crucifix

Look down upon me, good and gentle Jesus, while before your face I humbly kneel, and with burning soul pray and beseech You to fix deep in my heart lively sentiments of faith, hope and charity, true contrition for my sins, and a firm purpose of amendment, while I contemplate with great love and tender pity your five wounds, pondering over them within me, calling to mind the words which David, your prophet, said of You, my good Jesus: "They have pierced my hands and my feet; they have numbered all my bones" (Ps 22: 17-18).

A plenary indulgence is granted on each Friday of Lent to the faithful, who after Communion piously recite the above prayer before an image of Christ crucified; on other days of the year the indulgence is partial.

Anima Christi

Soul of Christ, sanctify me.
Body of Christ, save me.
Blood of Christ, inebriate me.
Water from the side of Christ, cleanse me.
Passion of Christ, strengthen me.
O good Jesus, hear me.
Within thy sacred wounds, hide me.
Never suffer me to be separated from Thee.
From the malice of my enemies, defend me.
At the hour of my death, call me.
Command me to come to Thee,
that with thy saints I may praise Thee
for ever and ever. Amen.

--St Ignatius Loyola

Thanksgiving

Lord, all-powerful and ever-living God, I thank You, for even though I am a sinner, your unprofitable servant, not because of my worth but in the kindness of your mercy, You have fed me with the precious Body and Blood of Your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. I pray that this Holy Communion may not bring me condemnation and punishment but forgiveness and salvation.

May it be a helmet of faith and a shield of good will.
May it purify me from evil ways and put an end to my evil passions. May it bring me charity and patience, humility and obedience, and growth in the power to do good. May it be my strong defense against all my enemies, visible and invisible, and the perfect calming of all my evil impulses, bodily and spiritual. May it unite me more closely to You, the one true God, and lead me safely through death to everlasting happiness with You.

And I pray that You will lead me, a sinner, to the banquet where You, with your Son and Holy Spirit, are true and perfect light, total fulfillment, everlasting joy, gladness without end, and perfect happiness to your saints. Grant this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

--St. Thomas Aquinas

Basic Petition

Jesus, meek and humble of heart,
make my heart like unto thine.
Jesus, gentle and pure of heart,
make my heart like unto thine.

Prayer after Communion*

Jesus, I praise You, I worship You, I glorify You.

I offer You to your heavenly Father in union with the Holy Spirit in thanksgiving for the whole work of creation and redemption and in particular for

_____ [whatever Jesus said or did in the Gospel of this Mass].

I thank You for giving yourself, Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity, to us under the appearances of the consecrated bread and wine of Holy Communion.

I thank for You for the many times You have forgiven my sins. Thank You for letting me receive You today.

Lord Jesus, I believe, but not firmly enough. Please help me and each member of my family and extended family to grow in faith.

I thank You for my family and every other blessing You have given me. Please help me to fulfill well today and this week all the responsibilities You have entrusted to my care.

I thank You for the gift of the Church; please bring about authentic reform and renewal within your Church.

I offer You to your heavenly Father in union with the Holy Spirit in most solemn petition—

for a rebirth of chastity, a stop to contraception, and a stop to abortion;

for an end to the persecution of the Church;

for the conversion of Islam and the Jews;

for the conversion of Africa;

for the conversion of China, India, Vietnam and all countries that strongly resist the Faith;

for the reconversion of Europe and the Americas.

for that unity of the Church for which You prayed at the Last Supper;

and that I may be some small part of that effort or at least not cause any further disunity;

and for my own personal needs and intentions

Grant that I may love You always, and then do with me as You will.

A Spiritual Communion

My Jesus, I believe that You are in the Blessed Sacrament. I love You above all things, and I long for You in my soul. Since I cannot now receive You sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. As though You have already come, I embrace You and unite myself entirely to You; never permit me to be separated from You. Amen.

Prayers for Chastity

My Guardian Angel, help me.

Immaculate Heart of Mary, pray for me.

Virgin most pure, pray for me.

St. Joseph, pray for me.

St. John the Baptist, pray for me.

St. Maria Goretti, pray for me.

*Prayer for Chastity**

O most compassionate virgin Mary, remember your friends who pray to you for the grace of chastity. Weakened by our own past sins and surrounded by a world filled with temptations, we can avoid falling into sin only with the graces that God has entrusted to your care.

Ever virgin, holy Mary, Mother of the true God, you have been chosen by God to crush the head of the serpent. Help us and all the members of our family to live holy and happy lives.

Our Lady of Guadalupe, pray for us.

Most chaste Saint Joseph, pray for us.

Jesus, Mary and Joseph, help us to know and to live the truth about love. Amen.

To Mary

Dearest Mother, I consecrate myself entirely to you today, and in order that I may always be close to your side, I earnestly beseech you to take entire possession of my heart and all my senses. Never permit me to be defiled by any impure thoughts or desires; but if they should come upon me, stretch forth your arms and take me under your blue mantle. Fill my heart with your love and flood all my senses with your purity, that I may live and die an immaculate son (or daughter) of you, my Immaculate Mother, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

To Saint Joseph

Saint Joseph, father and guardian of virgins, into your faithful keeping were entrusted Innocence itself, Christ Jesus, and Mary, the Virgin of virgins. I pray and beseech you, to keep me from all uncleanness, and to grant that my mind may be untainted, my heart pure and my body chaste. Help me always to serve Jesus and Mary in perfect chastity. Amen.

To St. Stanislaus

Saint Stanislaus, my patron most chaste, Angel of purity, I rejoice with you in that singular gift of virginal purity which graced your spotless heart. I humbly beseech you, obtain for me the strength to overcome temptations to impurity, and inspire me to continual vigilance in keeping intact the virtue of holy purity.

Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be.

Prayers of Praise and Thanks

Canticle of Daniel

Bless the Lord, all you works of the Lord,
praise and exalt him above all forever.

Angels of the Lord, bless the Lord.

You heavens, bless the Lord.

All you waters above the heavens, bless the Lord.

All you hosts of the Lord, bless the Lord.

Sun and moon, bless the Lord.

Stars of heaven, bless the Lord.

Every shower and dew, bless the Lord.

All you winds, bless the Lord.

Fire and heat, bless the Lord.

Cold and chill, bless the Lord.

Dew and rain, bless the Lord.

Frost and chill, bless the Lord.

Ice and snow, bless the Lord.

Nights and days, bless the Lord.

Light and darkness, bless the Lord.

Lightnings and clouds, bless the Lord.

Let the earth bless the Lord,

praise and exalt him above all forever.

Mountains and hills, bless the Lord.

Everything growing from the earth, bless the Lord.

You springs, bless the Lord.

Seas and rivers, bless the Lord.

You dolphins and all water creatures, bless the Lord.

All you birds of the air, bless the Lord.

All you beasts, wild and tame, bless the Lord.

You sons of men, bless the Lord.

O Israel, bless the Lord,

praise and exalt him above all forever.

Priests of the Lord, bless the Lord.

Servants of the Lord, bless the Lord.

Spirits and souls of the just, bless the Lord.

Holy men of humble heart, bless the Lord.

Hananiah, Azariah, Mishael, bless the Lord,

praise and exalt him above all forever.

Let us bless the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit,

Let us praise and exalt him above all forever.

Blessed are you, Lord, in the firmament of heaven,

praiseworthy and glorious forever.

—*The New American Bible* version plus doxology

The Gloria

Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men of good will.

Lord God, heavenly King, almighty God and Father,
we praise You, we bless You, we adore You, we
glorify You, we give You thanks for your great glory.

Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father,

Lord God, Lamb of God,

You take away the sins of the world: have mercy on us;

You take away the sins of the world, receive our prayer;
You are seated at the right hand of the Father: have
mercy on us.

For You alone are the Holy One, You alone are the Lord,
You alone are the most High, Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

The Te Deum

A solemn hymn of praise and thanksgiving.

O God, we praise You, and acknowledge You to be the supreme Lord. Everlasting Father, all the earth worships You. All the Angels, the heavens and all angelic powers, All the Cherubim and Seraphim, continuously cry to You: Holy, holy, holy, Lord, God of Hosts! Heaven and earth are full of the Majesty of your glory.

The glorious choir of the Apostles, the wonderful company of Prophets, the white-robed army of Martyrs, praise You. Holy Church throughout the world acknowledges You: the Father of infinite Majesty; Your adorable, true and only Son; also the Holy Spirit, the Comforter.

O Christ, You are the King of glory! You are the everlasting Son of the Father. When You took it upon yourself to deliver man, You did not disdain the Virgin's womb. Having overcome the sting of death, You opened the Kingdom of Heaven to all believers. You sit at the right hand of God in the glory of the Father. We believe that You will come to be our Judge.

We, therefore, beg You to help your servants whom You have redeemed with your Precious Blood. Let them

be numbered with your Saints in everlasting glory. Save your people, O Lord, and bless your inheritance! Govern them, and raise them up forever.

Every day we thank You. And we praise your Name forever; yes, forever and ever. O Lord, deign to keep us from sin this day. Have mercy on us, O Lord, have mercy on us. Let your mercy, O Lord, be upon us, for we have hoped in You. O Lord, in You I have put my trust; let me never be put to shame.

Let us pray: O God of whose mercies there is no number, and of whose goodness the treasure is infinite, we give thanks to your most gracious majesty for the gifts You have given us; evermore beseeching your clemency, that as You grant the petitions of those who ask You, You may never forsake them but may prepare them for the rewards to come. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

A partial indulgence is granted to the faithful who recite the Te Deum in thanksgiving. A plenary indulgence is granted if the hymn is recited publicly on the last day of the year.

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 Saint 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.

Prayers to the Holy Spirit

Come, Holy Spirit

Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of thy faithful, and
kindle within them the fire of thy divine love.
Send forth Your Spirit and they shall be created.
And Thou shall renew the face of the earth.

Let us pray: O God, You have taught the hearts of your faithful by the light of the Holy Spirit; grant that by the gift of that same Holy Spirit we may be truly wise and always rejoice in his consolation. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

To the Holy Spirit for Holiness

Breathe in me, O Holy Spirit,
that my thoughts may all be holy,
Act in me, O Holy Spirit,
that my work, too, may be holy.
Draw my heart, O Holy Spirit,
that I love only what is holy.
Strengthen me, O Holy Spirit,
to defend all that is holy.
Guard me so, O Holy Spirit,
that I may always be holy. Amen.

A Cardinal's Advice

I am going to reveal to you the secret of sanctity and happiness. Every day for five minutes control your imagination, close your eyes to the things of sense, and your ears to the noise of the world, in order to enter into yourself. There in the sanctuary of your baptized spirit—say to Him:

“O Holy Spirit, beloved of my soul, I adore You. Enlighten, guide and console me. Tell me what I must do; give me your orders. I promise to subject myself to all that You desire of me and to accept all that You permit to happen to me. Let me only know your will.”

If you do this, your life will flow along happily, serenely, and full of consolation even in the midst of trials. Grace will be proportioned to the trial, giving you strength to carry it, and you will arrive at the gate of paradise laden with merit. This submission to the Holy Spirit is the secret of sanctity.

--Cardinal Mercier

Prayers and Devotions to Jesus

Litany of the Sacred Heart of Jesus

Lord, have mercy on us.

Christ, have mercy on us.

Lord, have mercy on us. Christ, hear us.

Christ, graciously hear us.

(After each invocation, "Have mercy on us.")

God the Father of heaven,

God the Son, Redeemer of the world,

God the Holy Spirit,

Holy Trinity, one God,

Heart of Jesus, Son of the eternal Father,

Heart of Jesus, formed by the Holy Spirit in the womb of
the Virgin Mother,

Heart of Jesus, substantially united to the Word of God,

Heart of Jesus, of infinite majesty,

Heart of Jesus, sacred temple of God,

Heart of Jesus, tabernacle of the Most High,

Heart of Jesus, house of God and gate of heaven,

Heart of Jesus, burning furnace of charity,

Heart of Jesus, abode of justice and love,

Heart of Jesus, full of goodness and love,

Heart of Jesus, abyss of all virtues,

Heart of Jesus, most worthy of all praises,

Heart of Jesus, King and center of all hearts,

Heart of Jesus, in Who are all the treasures of wisdom
and knowledge,

Heart of Jesus, in Whom the Father was well pleased,

Heart of Jesus, of whose fullness we have all received,

Heart of Jesus, desire of the everlasting hills,

Heart of Jesus, patient and most merciful,

Heart of Jesus, enriching all who invoke You,

Heart of Jesus, fountain of life and holiness,

Heart of Jesus, propitiation for our sins,

Heart of Jesus, loaded down with opprobrium,

Heart of Jesus, bruised for our offenses,

Heart of Jesus, obedient unto death,

Heart of Jesus, pierced with a lance,

Heart of Jesus, source of all consolation,

Heart of Jesus, our life and resurrection,

Heart of Jesus, our peace and reconciliation,

Heart of Jesus, victim for sins,

Heart of Jesus, salvation of those who trust in You,

Heart of Jesus, hope of those who die in You,

Heart of Jesus, delight of all the saints,

Lamb of God, You take away the sins of the world, spare
us, O Lord.

Lamb of God, You take away the sins of the world,
graciously hear us, O Lord.

Lamb of God, You take away the sins of the world,
have mercy on us.

Jesus, meek and humble of heart,

Make our hearts like unto thine.

Let us pray: O almighty and everlasting God, look upon
the Heart of your well-beloved Son and the praise and
satisfaction He offers You in the name of sinners and for
those who seek your mercy. Be appeased, and grant us
pardon in the name of the same Jesus Christ, your Son,
Who lives and reigns with You in the unity of the Holy
Spirit, world without end. Amen.

Act of Consecration to the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus

O most loving Jesus, Redeemer of the human race,
behold us humbly prostrate before your altar. We are
yours and yours we wish to be. But to be more surely
united in You, behold each one of us freely consecrates
himself today to your most Sacred Heart. Many, indeed,
have never known You; many, too, despising your
precepts, have rejected You. Have mercy on them all,
most merciful Jesus, and draw them to your Sacred
Heart.

Be King, O Lord, not only of the faithful who have
never forsaken You, but also of the prodigal children
who have abandoned You. Grant that they may quickly
return to their Father's house, lest they die of
wretchedness and hunger.

Grant, O Lord, to your Church, assurance of freedom
and immunity from harm. Give peace and order to all
nations. Make the earth resound from pole to pole with
one cry: Praise to the Divine Heart that wrought our
salvation. To It be glory and honor forever. Amen.

Act of Reparation to the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus

Pope Pius XI issued two encyclicals dealing with devotion to the Sacred Heart. Miserentissimus Redemptor (Most Merciful Redeemer, 1928) is on reparation to the Sacred Heart; Caritate Christi compulsi (Compelled by the Love of Christ, 1932) complements it. He decreed that the consecration of the world to the Sacred Heart, started by Leo XIII and reaffirmed by Pius X, be transferred to the feast of Christ the King. He also composed the definitive Mass of the Sacred Heart. Finally, he was so moved by massive indifference to the Lord Jesus that he composed the following prayer.

O most loving Jesus, whose immense love for men is repaid by so much forgetfulness, negligence and contempt, behold us prostrate before your altar. We are eager to repair, by a special act of homage, the cruel indifference and injuries to which your loving heart is everywhere subjected.

We ourselves have had a share in such great indignities, which we now deplore from the depths of our hearts. We humbly ask your pardon and declare our readiness to atone by voluntary penance not only for our own personal offenses, but also for the sins of those, who, straying far from the path of salvation, refuse in their obstinate infidelity to follow You, their Shepherd and Leader, or renouncing the vows of their baptism, have cast off the sweet yoke of your law.

And while we intend to expiate all such deplorable crimes, we propose to repair each one in particular:

immodesty in dress and actions,
the many seductions to ensnare the feet of the innocent,
the violation of Sundays and holy days,
the horrible blasphemies uttered against You and your saints,
the insults hurled against your Vicar and your priests,
the negligence and the horrible sacrileges by which the very sacrament of your love is profaned,

and, finally, the public crimes of all nations which resist the rights and the teaching authority of the Church which You have founded.

Would that we could with our blood wash away such abominations! And now, in reparation for these violations of your divine honor, we offer the satisfaction that You once made on the cross to your Father, and which You renew daily on our altars. We offer it in union with the expiation of your Virgin Mother, all the saints and of all the devout faithful on earth. We promise sincerely to repair, as far as we are able, with the help of your grace, the neglect of your great love, and for the sins we and others have committed in the past: by a firm faith, an innocent life, the observance of the law of charity, and with all our power to prevent others from offending You and to bring as many as possible to follow You.

O loving Jesus, through the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary, our model in reparation, deign to receive the voluntary offering we make of this act of reparation. By the crowning gift of perseverance keep us faithful until death in our duty and in the allegiance we owe to You, so that we may all one day come to that happy home, where You with the Father and the Holy Spirit live and reign God, world without end. Amen.

The Nine First Fridays Devotion

Devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus is devotion to the bodily Heart of Christ as the chief sign and symbol of the love He shows us as our Redeemer. Devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus has been part of Catholic prayer life since the first millennium. It grew steadily in the Middle Ages (1100-1350), and in 1353 Pope Innocent VI instituted a Mass in honor of the Sacred Heart. The apparitions of the Lord Jesus to St. Margaret Mary Alacoque in 1673-1675 intensified this devotion. In these apparitions, Jesus made 12 promises to souls devoted to his Sacred Heart.

I will give them all the graces necessary in their state of life.

I will establish peace in their homes.

I will comfort them in all their afflictions.

I will be their secure refuge in life and above all in death.

I will bestow abundant blessings on all their undertakings.

Sinners shall find in my heart the source and the infinite ocean of mercy.

Tepid souls shall become fervent.

Fervent souls shall quickly mount to high perfection.

I will bless every place where a picture of my heart shall be exposed and honored.

I will give to priests the gift of touching the most hardened hearts.

Those who shall promote this devotion shall have their names written in my heart, never to be blotted out.

I promise you, in the excessive mercy of my heart, that my all-powerful love will grant to all those who receive Holy Communion on the first Friday for nine consecutive months the grace of final repentance; they shall not die in my disgrace nor without receiving the sacraments; my Divine Heart shall be their safe refuge in that last moment.

To receive the blessings of these promises of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, you must fulfill certain conditions.

--Receive Holy Communion on the first Friday of the month

--For nine consecutive months without interruption

--With the proper dispositions

--With the intention of making reparation to the Heart of Jesus and to obtain the fruit of the "Great Promise."

The Nine First Fridays Devotion consists of fulfilling these conditions. You receive Holy Communion on the first Friday of nine consecutive months with the proper dispositions and intention. "Proper disposition" means that you must be in the state of sanctifying grace. If you are in the state of grace, you are not required to go to Confession before each First Friday, but the practice of monthly confession is highly recommended. For your convenience, use the following space to record the dates on which you make the Nine First Fridays Devotion. Caution: use a pencil at first, or mark up your calendar. It is sometimes difficult to make the consecutive months; if you miss, start over again.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____

Consecration of Your Home to the Sacred Heart

The consecration of the family to the Sacred Heart is a devotion desired by our Lord, who has made loving promises in favor of families consecrated to Him. "I will bless," He said, "those homes where an image of my heart shall be exposed and venerated; I shall give peace in their families; I shall bless abundantly all their undertakings. I shall be their secure refuge in life and especially at the hour of death."

In order to make this consecration, one must have a representation of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, have it blessed by the priest, and after having put it in the place of honor in the house, make before it the consecration of the entire family. Where it is possible, it is good that all be present at the ceremony, and where this is not possible, then as many family members as can be there should be present; the consecration is equally valid.

The Sacred Heart of Jesus has accorded many favors, even extraordinary ones, to those families which have received Him into their midst by consecrating themselves to Him. Among the graces may be mentioned help received in critical periods, dangers averted, discords settled, and above all numberless souls who have returned to the faith.

Act of Consecration of the Family to the Sacred Heart

O most loving Heart of Jesus, Who, to your great lover Saint Margaret Mary, has made this consoling promise: "I will bless those homes in which an image of my Sacred Heart shall be exposed and venerated," deign to accept today the consecration of our family to You. By this act we intend to proclaim solemnly the dominion that You have over all creatures and over us, recognizing You as King of our souls.

Your enemies, O Jesus, refuse to admit your sovereign rights, and repeat the satanic cry: "We do not want this One to reign over us," thereby torturing in a most cruel manner your most loving heart.

We, on the other hand, repeat with greater fervor and more ardent love: "Reign, O Jesus, over our family and over each of its members. Reign over our minds, that we may always believe in the truths You have taught us. Reign over our hearts, that we may always follow your divine teachings." O divine heart, You alone are the loving King of our souls, of those souls which You have conquered at the price of your precious Blood, and all of which You desire to see saved.

And now keep your promise and let fall upon us your blessings. Bless us in our labors, in our undertakings, in our health, in our interests. Bless us in joy and in sorrow, in prosperity and in adversity, now and always. Grant that peace reign in our midst, as well as concord, respect, love for one another, and good example.

Defend us from dangers, from sickness, from accidents, and above all, from sin. Deign, finally, to write our names in the most sacred wound of your heart, and grant that it be never effaced so that after having been united with You on earth, we may one day be united in heaven, there to sing the glories and the triumphs of your mercy. Amen.

All: We want God Who is our Father. We want God who is our King.

Now recite one Our Father, one Hail Mary, and one Glory Be in honor of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, and one Hail Holy Queen to the Blessed Virgin Mary to obtain her protection.

It is good to renew this consecration on the great feast days of the year.

Prayer before the Blessed Sacrament (Adoro Te Devote)

Hidden God, devoutly I adore You,
Truly present underneath these veils:
All my heart subdues itself before You,
Since it all before You faints and fails.

Not to sight, or taste, or touch be credit,
Hearing only do we trust secure;
I believe, for God the Son has said it—
Word of Truth that ever shall endure.

On the Cross was veiled Your Godhead's splendor,
Here Your manhood lies hidden too;
Unto both alike my faith I render,
And, as sued the contrite thief, I sue.

Though I look not on your wounds with Thomas,
You, my Lord, and You, my God, I call;
Make me more and more believe your promise,
Hope in You, and love You over all.

O memorial of my Savior dying,
Living bread, that gives life to man;
Make my soul, its life from You supplying,
Taste your sweetness, as on earth it can.

Deign, O Jesus, Pelican of Heaven,
Me, a sinner, in your Blood to lave,
To a singly drop of which is given
All the world from all its sin to save.

Contemplating, Lord, Your hidden presence,
Grant me what I thirst for and implore,
In the revelation of your essence
To behold your glory evermore.

Other prayers

See also "Thanksgiving after Holy Communion."

Prayers and Devotions to Mary

The Memorare

Remember, O most gracious Virgin Mary, that never was
it known that anyone who fled to thy protection,
implored thy help, or sought thy intercession was left
unaided. Inspired by this confidence, I fly unto thee, O

Virgin of virgins, my Mother. To thee do I come, before
thee I stand, sinful and sorrowful. O Mother of the Word
Incarnate, despise not my petitions, but in thy mercy hear
and answer me. Amen.

The Magnificat

My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord,
my spirit rejoices in God my Savior
for he has looked with favor on his lowly servant.
From this day all generations will call me blessed:
the Almighty has done great things for me,
and holy is his name.
He has mercy on those who fear him
in every generation.
He has shown the strength of his arm,
he has scattered the proud in their conceit.
He has cast down the mighty from their thrones,
and has lifted up the lowly.

He has filled the hungry with good things,
and the rich he has sent away empty.
He has come to the help of his servant Israel
for he has remembered his promise of mercy,
the promise he made to our fathers,
to Abraham and his children for ever.
Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy
Spirit,
As it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever.
Amen.

Litany of Loretto

Lord, have mercy.
Christ, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy. Christ, hear us.
Christ graciously hear us.
God the Father of Heaven,
Have mercy on us.
God the Son, Redeemer of the
world,
Have mercy on us.
God the Holy Spirit,
Have mercy on us.
Holy Trinity, one God,
Have mercy on us.
(After each invocation,
"Pray for us.")
Holy Mary,
Holy Mother of God,
Holy Virgin of Virgins,
Mother of Christ,
Mother of the Church,
Mother of divine grace,
Mother most pure,
Mother most chaste,
Mother inviolate,
Mother undefiled,
Mother most amiable,
Mother most admirable,
Mother of good counsel,
Mother of our Creator,
Mother of our Savior,
Virgin most prudent,
Virgin most venerable,
Virgin most renowned,
Virgin most powerful,
Virgin most merciful,
Virgin most faithful,

Mirror of justice,
Seat of Wisdom,
Cause of our joy,
Spiritual vessel,
Vessel of honor,
Singular vessel of devotion,
Mystical rose,
Tower of David,
Tower of ivory,
House of gold,
Ark of the covenant,
Gate of heaven,
Morning star,
Health of the sick,
Refuge of sinners,
Comforter of the afflicted,
Help of Christians,
Queen of angels,
Queen of patriarchs,
Queen of prophets,
Queen of apostles,
Queen of martyrs,
Queen of confessors,
Queen of virgins,
Queen of all saints,
Queen conceived without original
sin,
Queen assumed into heaven,
Queen of the most holy rosary,
Queen of peace,
Pray for us.

Lamb of God, You take away the
sins of the world,

Spare us, O Lord.
Lamb of God, You take away the
sins of the world,
Graciously hear us, O Lord,
Lamb of God, You take away the
sins of the world,
Have mercy on us.

Pray for us, O holy Mother of God.
That we may be made worthy
of the promises of Christ.

Let us pray: Grant us your
servants, we beseech You, O Lord
God, to enjoy perpetual health of
mind and body; and by the
glorious intercession of blessed
Mary, ever-Virgin, to be delivered
from present sorrows and to enjoy
everlasting happiness. Through
Christ our Lord. Amen.

To Our Lady of Guadalupe

The Lady of Guadalupe introduced herself to Juan Diego on December 9, 1531 as the “Ever Virgin, Holy Mary, Mother of the True God.” Several days later she introduced herself to Juan Diego’s uncle as “te coatlaxopeuh,” which translates roughly as “Ever Virgin Holy Mary who crushes the head of the serpent.” This, in Aztec, sounded something like Guadalupe to the Spanish, who had such a shrine in Spain, and thus the still popular name for this visit of Our Lady.

Our Lady of Guadalupe, mystical rose, make intercession for the Holy Church; protect the Holy Father; help all those who invoke you in their needs.

Since you are the ever Virgin Mary and Mother of the true God, obtain for us from your most holy Son, Jesus, the grace to keep our faith, sweet hope in the midst of the difficulties of life, burning charity, and the precious gift of final perseverance.

Our Lady of Guadalupe, patroness of the Americas, pray for us. Amen.

The Traditional Rosary

There are a number of small publications that explain in detail how to pray the rosary. Here we offer only the titles of the twenty mysteries or subjects of meditation in the traditional grouping. “Praying the rosary” generally refers to praying five decades of the rosary. In 2002, Pope John Paul II introduced the Five Luminous Mysteries

The Five Joyful Mysteries

- The Annunciation
- The Visitation
- The Nativity
- The Presentation in the Temple
- The Finding of Jesus in the Temple

The Five Sorrowful Mysteries

- The Agony in the Garden
- The Scourging at the Pillar
- The Crowning with Thorns
- The Carrying of the Cross
- The Crucifixion

The Five Glorious Mysteries

- The Resurrection
- The Ascension
- The Descent of the Holy Spirit
- The Assumption of Mary
- The Coronation of Mary

The Five Luminous Mysteries

- The Baptism of Jesus by John
- The Wedding at Cana
- The Preaching of the Kingdom
- The Transfiguration
- The Last Supper

Prayer after the Rosary

Let us pray: O God, whose only-begotten Son, by his life, death, and resurrection, has purchased for us the rewards of eternal salvation, grant, we beseech You, that, meditating upon these mysteries of the most holy Rosary of the Blessed Virgin Mary, we may imitate what they contain and obtain what they promise. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Hail Holy Queen

Hail, holy Queen, Mother of Mercy, hail, our life, our sweetness, and our hope. To thee do we cry, poor banished children of Eve. To thee do we send up our sighs, mourning and weeping in this vale of tears. Turn then, most gracious advocate, thine eyes of mercy toward us, and after this, our exile, show unto us the blessed fruit of thy womb, Jesus. O clement, O loving, O sweet Virgin Mary.

Pray for us, O holy Mother of God;
That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Prayer to St. Michael

This prayer is commonly said after the Rosary.

Saint Michael, the Archangel, defend us in battle. Be our protection against the wickedness and snares of the devil. May God rebuke him, we humbly pray, and do thou, O Prince of the heavenly host, by the power of God, cast into hell Satan and all evil spirits who prowl about the world seeking the ruin of souls. Amen.

The Seven Day Bible Rosary

The Seven Day Bible Rosary has a different set of mysteries or meditations for each day of the week plus an extra set that was part of the Seven Day format before Pope John Paul II introduced the Luminous Mysteries. It contains the traditional mysteries with slight modifications, and it also includes other events and teachings in the public life of the Lord Jesus. Here we list only the four sets of mysteries not included in the traditional format.

The Five Mysteries of the Public Life

- Jesus is tempted in the wilderness.
- Jesus calls for faith and a change of heart.
- Jesus teaches us to love our enemies and each other.
- Jesus teaches us about marriage and a right heart.
- Jesus shows us his divine power at work in the world.

The Five Mysteries of the Parables

- Jesus teaches us to respond to the word of God.
- Jesus teaches us about our neighbor.
- Jesus teaches about using the gifts He has given us.
- Jesus teaches about the dangers of riches.
- Jesus teaches us about the loving mercy of God toward repentant sinners.

The Five Mysteries of the Last Supper

Jesus washes the feet of his apostles.
Jesus commands us to love one another as He has loved us.
Jesus gives us his body and blood as our spiritual food and drink.
Jesus promises that the Holy Spirit will lead the apostles and their successors in the truth.
Jesus prays for unity among all those who believe in Him.

The Five Mysteries of the Church

Jesus calls all men to be his disciples.
Jesus makes Peter the head of his Church.
Jesus continues his saving work through his sacraments and the preaching of his word.
Jesus works through the members of his Mystical Body.
Jesus intends his Church to be a symbol of truth and love in the midst of a sinful and unbelieving world.

The Five First Saturdays Devotion

Between May 13 and October 13, 1917, our Lady appeared to three children—Jacinta, Francisco and Lucia—six times near Fatima, Portugal. On July 13 she predicted the end of World War One. “But,” she said, “if people do not stop offending God, another, even worse one will begin in the reign of Pius XI [World War Two]. . . To prevent it, I shall come to ask for the consecration of Russia to my Immaculate Heart and the Communion of reparation on the first Saturdays.” On December 10, 1925, Our Lady with the Christ Child appeared to Lucia, who was now a nun. “Look, my daughter, at my Heart, surrounded with thorns with which ungrateful men pierce Me at every moment by their blasphemies and ingratitude. You, at least, try to console Me and announce for Me that I promise to assist at the hour of death, with the graces necessary for salvation, all those who, on the first Saturday of five consecutive months, shall confess, receive Holy Communion, recite five decades of the Rosary, and keep Me company for fifteen minutes while meditating on the fifteen mysteries of the Rosary, with the intention of making reparation to Me.” These apparitions are the basis for the Five First Saturdays Devotion. In subsequent apparitions, Jesus clarified questions posed by Lucia. The obligation of Confession can be fulfilled within eight days before or after the first Saturday. The persons must be in the state of grace when they receive Holy Communion, and they must have the intention of making reparation to the

Immaculate Heart of Mary. If they forget to make that intention at the time of the Holy Communion, they can do so at their next confession and they should take advantage of the first opportunity to go to Confession.

*The **promise** is that Our Lady will “assist at the hour of death, with the graces necessary for salvation” all those who fulfill these conditions:*

*On the first Saturdays of five consecutive months—
--Make a good confession within eight days
--Receive Holy Communion in the state of grace
--Recite five decades of the Rosary
--Meditate an additional fifteen minutes on the fifteen mysteries of the Rosary
--All of this with the intention of making reparation for the sins committed against the Immaculate Heart of Mary.*

Use the Space below to record the complete dates of your Five Consecutive First Saturdays. Record in pencil, and start over if you miss a Saturday.
Month—Day—Year

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

A Prayer for First Saturdays

Hasten, O Lady, the conversion of sinners, so that they may love Jesus and cease to offend God, already so much offended, and thus avoid eternal punishment. Turn

your eyes of mercy toward us, so that henceforth we may love God with all our heart while on earth and enjoy Him forever in heaven. Amen.

For Those in Special Need

Holy Virgin, in the midst of your glorious days, do not forget the sadness of earth. Cast a look of goodness on those who are suffering, who are fighting against difficulties.

Have pity on those who love one another and who have been separated.

Have pity on the loneliness of our hearts.
Have pity on the weakness of our faith.
Have pity on the troubled objects of our love.
Have pity on those who are weeping, on those who are praying, on those who are seized with fear.
Give to all of us hope and peace with justice. Amen.

Prayers to St. Joseph

Litany of St. Joseph

Lord, have mercy on us.
Christ, have mercy on us.
Lord, have mercy on us. Christ,
hear us.

Christ, graciously hear us.
God the Father of heaven,
have mercy on us.
God the Son, Redeemer of the
world,

have mercy on us.
God the Holy Spirit,
have mercy on us.
Holy Trinity, one God,
have mercy on us.

(After each invocation:
"Pray for us.")

Holy Mary,
Saint Joseph,
Illustrious scion of David,
Light of patriarchs,
Spouse of the Mother of God,
Chaste guardian of the Virgin,
Foster-father of the Son of God,
Diligent protector of Christ,
Head of the Holy Family,
Joseph most just,
Joseph most chaste,
Joseph most prudent,
Joseph most valiant,
Joseph most obedient,
Joseph most faithful,
Mirror of patience,
Lover of poverty,
Model of laborers,
Glory of home life,
Guardian of virgins,
Safeguard of families,
Solace of the afflicted,
Hope of the sick,
Patron of the dying,
Terror of demons,
Protector of Holy Church,
pray for us.

Lamb of God, You take away the
sins of the world,
spare us, O Lord.

Lamb of God, You take away the
sins of the world,
graciously hear us, O Lord.

Lamb of God, You take away the
sins of the world,
have mercy on us, O Lord.

He made him lord of His house,
And prince of all His
possessions.

Let us pray: O God, in your
ineffable providence You chose
blessed Joseph to be the spouse of
the ever Virgin Mary. Grant, we
beseech You, that we may be made
worthy to have him for our
intercessor in heaven whom on
earth we venerate as our protector.
Amen.

For Purity

O Blessed Saint Joseph, faithful
guardian and protector of virgins,
to whom God entrusted Jesus and
Mary, I implore you by the love
which you did bear them, to
preserve me from every defilement
of soul and body, that I may
always serve them in holiness and
purity of love.

St. Joseph, most chaste spouse
of the ever virgin Mary, pray for
us. Amen

For a Happy Death

O Holy Joseph, chaste spouse of
the Mother of God, most glorious
advocate of all who are in danger
or in their last agony, and most
faithful protector of all the servants
of Mary, I ask your help. In the
presence of Jesus and Mary, from
this moment I choose you for my
powerful patron and advocate, and
I implore you to obtain for me
through your powerful intercession
the grace of a happy death.

Receive me, therefore, for your
perpetual servant, and recommend
me to the constant protection of
Mary, your spouse, and to the
everlasting mercies of Jesus my
Savior.

Assist me in all the actions of
my life which I now offer to the
greater glory of Jesus and Mary.

Never, therefore, forsake me,
and whatever grace you see most
necessary and profitable for me,
obtain it for me now and also at
the hour of my death.

I know not when I shall die,
but whenever it shall happen I
invite you to be with me at my
deathbed.

Through your gracious
intercession may there be granted
me in my last hour all the graces I
need, through the merits of Jesus
Christ, my Savior, Who together
with the Father and the Holy
Spirit, lives and reigns, world
without end. Amen

To the Patron of the Church

*Pope Leo XIII prescribed this
prayer for the month of October
after the recitation of the rosary
and the Litany of Loretto. In 1935,
Pius XI further encouraged its use.*

Unto thee, O blessed Joseph, do
we fly in our tribulation and,
having implored the help of your
holy spouse, we now also
confidently seek your protection.
By that affection which united you
to the Immaculate Virgin Mother
of God, and by your fatherly love
for the Child Jesus, we humbly beg
you to look down with compassion
on the inheritance that Jesus Christ
purchased with his blood, and in
our need to help us by your
powerful intercession.

Do thou, O prudent guardian of
the Holy Family, watch over the
chosen people of Jesus Christ.
Keep us, O loving father, safe
from all error and corruption. O
great protector, from your place in
heaven, graciously help us in our
contest against the powers of
darkness. And as of old you
rescued the Child Jesus from the
danger of death, so now defend
God's holy Church from the snares
of the enemy and from all
adversity. Extend to each one of
us your continual protection, that
led on by your example and
strengthened by your aid, we may
live and die in holiness, and obtain
everlasting happiness in heaven.
Amen.

Special Prayers

Thanksgiving for Blessings Received

Thank You, O God, for hearing my prayer and granting my request. Thank You for all the kindness You have shown me.

Thank You, Father, for your great love in giving me my life, for your great patience in preserving me despite my sinfulness, for your protection in the past and for the opportunity to serve and honor You in the future.

Thank You, Lord Jesus, for keeping me numberless times from sin and death by the toils of your life, the sufferings of your passion, and by your victorious resurrection.

Thank You, Holy Spirit of God, for bestowing so many graces upon my soul and for having so frequently renewed your life with me.

May my life, from now on, be a sign of my gratefulness. Amen.

Prayer of St. Francis

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace.

Where there is hatred, let me sow love;

Where there is injury, pardon;

Where there is doubt, faith;

Where there is despair, hope;

And where there is sadness, joy.

O Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled as to console;

to be understood as to understand;

to be loved as to love.

For it is in giving that we receive,

it is in pardoning that we are pardoned,

and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.

Amen.

A Papal Prayer for Vocations

Lord Jesus, as You once called the first disciples to make them fishers of men, let your sweet invitation continue to resound: Come, follow Me!

Give young men and women the grace of responding quickly to your voice. Support our bishops, priests, and consecrated people in their apostolic labor.

Grant perseverance to our seminarians and to all those who are carrying out the ideal of a life totally consecrated to your service.

Awaken in our community a missionary eagerness. Lord, SEND WORKERS TO YOUR HARVEST and do not allow humanity to be lost for the lack of pastors, missionaries and people dedicated to the cause of the Gospel.

Mary, Mother of the Church, the model of every vocation, help us to say "Yes" to the Lord Who calls us to cooperate in the divine plan of salvation.

--Pope John Paul II

The Prayer of the Church for Her Priests

God, You are the source of all holiness. Though no one can see You and live, You give life most generously, and in an ever greater way restore it. Sanctify your priests through your life-giving Word, and consecrate your people in his blood until our eyes see your face.

--Morning prayer, Thursday, week III

You are our King, Lord God. Help us to find a place for You in our hearts. Clothe your priests with saving power, fill the needy with bread, and let your holiness shine on us all.

--Evening prayer, Thursday, week III

You ordained your priests to be ministers of Christ and stewards of your marvelous gifts,

--fill them with fidelity, wisdom and love.

--Evening prayer, Wednesday, week IV

Let your ordained ministers grow toward perfect love,

--and preserve your faithful people in unity by the bond of peace.

--Evening prayer, Thursday, Week I

For Holy Priests

O Jesus, eternal Priest, keep your priests within the shelter of your Sacred Heart, where none may touch them. Keep unstained their anointed hands, which daily touch your Sacred Body. Keep unsullied their lips, daily purpled with your Precious Blood. Keep pure and unworldly their hearts, sealed with the sublime mark of the priesthood. Let your holy love surround them and shield them from the world's contagion. Bless their labors with abundant fruit, and may the souls to whom they minister be their joy and consolation here and in heaven their beautiful and everlasting crown. Amen.

--St. Therese of the Child Jesus

Prayer for Priests

O Jesus, I pray for your faithful and fervent priests; for your unfaithful and tepid priests; for your priests laboring at home or abroad in distant mission fields; for your tempted priests; for your lonely and desolate priests; for your young priests; for your dying priests; for the souls of your priests in purgatory.

But above all I recommend to You the priests dearest to me: the priest who baptized me; the priests who absolved me from my sins; the priests at whose Masses I assisted and who gave me your Body and Blood in Holy Communion; the priests who taught and instructed me; all the priests to whom I am indebted in any other way. O Jesus, keep them all close to your heart, and bless them abundantly in time and in eternity. Amen.

A Bishop's Prayer for Vocations

Leader: Let us ask God to give worthy Priests, Brothers and Sisters to his holy Church.

Others: O God, we earnestly beseech You to bless this archdiocese (diocese) with many priests, brothers, and sisters who will love You with their whole strength and gladly spend their entire lives to serve the Church and to make You known and loved.

Leader: Bless our families; bless our children.

Others: Choose from our homes those who are needed for your work.

Leader: May, Queen of the clergy!

Others: Pray for us. Pray for our priests and religious. Obtain for us many more.

—Archbishop William O. Brady

For Priestly Vocations

Lord Jesus, grant saintly priests to the world, priests who live close to the Eucharist, who have a deep spiritual life, who work and suffer, yet with a joyful heart; priests who dedicate each minute of their lives for the salvation of souls and your Kingdom. Amen.

Father Marcial Maciel, L.C.
Founder of the Legionaries of Christ

For Authentic Renewal in the Church*

Holy Spirit, at the Last Supper the Lord Jesus promised that You would lead the Apostles and their successors into the fullness of the truth. Please help today's successors of the Apostles to fulfill well the responsibilities that Jesus has entrusted to their care.

Fill them with your gifts. Give them true understanding of the attacks being made upon the Church from within. Give them the wisdom to know what to do and the fortitude to do it so that the Church will be more clearly the light of the world, the city on the mountain, a beacon of truth, justice and love in the midst of a sinful and unbelieving world. We ask this through Him Who is the Way, the Truth and the Life. Amen.

The Prayer of the Church for those Fallen Away

Lead back to your friendship and truth all who have gone astray,

--teach us how to help them.

--Evening prayer, Wednesday, fourth week of Lent

Guide all estranged from You by sin and scandal,

--that they may come back to You, and remain always in your love.

--Evening prayer, Tuesday, fourth week of Lent

We pray for those who have turned away from your paths,

--that they may experience the grace of your forgiveness and the joy of rising to new life.

--Evening prayer I, third Sunday of Easter

Be merciful to sinners who have fallen away from your love,

--reconcile them to yourself and to your Church.

--Evening prayer, Friday, week II

Take pity on those who struggle and fall along the way,
--may they find a friend to help them.

Evening prayer, Friday, first week of Advent

For the Conversion of Relatives*

Lord Jesus, You foretold that households would be divided over You, that men and women of faith would be opposed by members of their own families, sons against fathers, daughters against mothers.

How true this is even to this day, and You know better than I the situation in my own family and extended family. It is hard to see that N. _____ is (are) walking the narrow way that leads to everlasting life with You. But You died for all of us. You suffered for them as well as for us who believe. Out of your infinite mercy, send your Holy Spirit upon us; please grant the graces of conversion and perseverance to each member of my family and extended families so that we all may rejoice together in your presence for all eternity. Amen.

For the Conversion of Islam and the Jews*

Heavenly Father, years ago You revealed yourself to Abraham and he believed. Today we contemplate and deplore the unhappy divisions among those of us who claim Abraham as our father in faith.

O God of unity and truth, we appeal to You now in the name of Jesus to send the Holy Spirit in power to bring about unity in faith and love among all who claim Abraham as their father. Please bring about the conversion of the Jews; help us all to believe in the fullness of your revelation that in the One Godhead You are three divine persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Please bring about the conversion of Islam. Help us all to believe more firmly that You love us so much that You invite us to call You Abba, Father.

The human mind cannot imagine how unity can be achieved out of such divisions as exist today, but You are the God of infinite love and mercy and power. Help us who walk with your divine Son to love our own enemies as He commanded and to love all the descendants of Abraham as we pray for their conversion. Help us to love and to serve as Jesus did so that we may become one flock under one shepherd, Christ our Lord. Amen.

For a Happy Death

Father, when You are ready to lead me through death to eternal life, be with me as You were with your people of old. As the last breath of life pours from me, take away all fear and let me embrace You with joy. Give me the grace to die, as did Saint Joseph, with Jesus and Mary at my side. Amen.

For the Conversion of America*

Holy Mother of God, the United States of America has been dedicated to you as the Immaculate Conception, and it is in grievous need of your help. Civic corruption, abortion, impurity, divorce and families without fathers show that all too many in this country no longer walk the way of the Lord Jesus. Many have never known Him; still others have abandoned Him, and even some within his holy Church do not accept her teaching.

Immaculate Heart of Mary, we ask you to intercede for the Church in America that it may truly be the salt of the earth and bring about authentic renewal within itself and the whole nation. We plead in a special way for a rebirth of chastity, a stop to contraception, a stop to abortion, a proper sense of sin and true sorrow for sin, and for unity of faith among all Christians.

Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

For a Stop to Persecution*

Lord Jesus Christ, You suffered and died for our salvation, and You told us to expect rejection and persecution as the price of being your followers. You told us even to pray for our persecutors as You prayed for yours on the Cross. And so, Lord Jesus, we pray for the persecutors of your Church. Please grant them the grace of conversion and everlasting life, and please bring about this change of heart quickly as You did with Saul on the road to Damascus.

Lord Jesus, while we pray for a stop to the persecution of the Church, we pray also for an increase of faith and courage among all those who are being persecuted for their faith in You. Grant them your consolation, and when the trial is done, please give them the reward of eternal life. We ask this through the intercession of the Sorrowful Mother who is now with You in the glory of heaven. Amen.

For the Gift of Motherhood

O good Saint Gerard, powerful intercessor before God and wonder worker of our day, I call upon you and seek your aid. I ask you who on earth always fulfilled God's design to help me to do the holy will of God.

Beseech the Master of Life, from whom all paternity flows, to render me fruitful in offspring that I may raise up children to God in this life and heirs to the kingdom of his glory in the world to come. Amen.

Respect for Life Prayer

Gentle Saint Francis, you were so devoted to the humanity of Christ. Your heart burst with appreciation toward God for taking on human life. You saw beauty and goodness in all living things—in birds that sing, the fish that fill our waters, and all that lives in nature.

Help us to imitate your reverence for life wherever it may be. Especially, humble Francis of Assisi, help us to help others to see the worth of each living, unborn baby sheltered in its mother's womb.

May all mankind have the grace to understand that these tiny, budding lives have the right to life, liberty, and pursuit of happiness.

For the Unborn

Heavenly Father, You create men in your own image, and You desire that not even the least among us should perish. In your love for us, You entrusted your only Son to the holy Virgin Mary. Now, in your love, protect against the wickedness of the devil those little ones to whom You have given the gift of life. Amen.

For Good Eyesight

Both St. Lucy, a late third century virgin and martyr, and St. Odilia, who died in 720 or 722, are patrons of good eyesight. Legend says that St. Lucy's eyes were gouged out in her martyrdom and then restored. St. Odilia was born blind and was cast out of her father's royal household. She received her sight when she was baptized at the age of thirteen. She headed a religious community, engaged in works of charity, and died on December 13, the feast of St. Lucy, for whom she had a tender devotion. She is a patron of the Order of the Holy Cross (the Crosier Fathers).

O God, our Creator and Redeemer, mercifully hear our prayers; and as we venerate your servant, St. Lucy, for the light of faith You bestowed upon her, increase and preserve this same light also in our souls, that we may be able to avoid evil, to do good, and abhor nothing so much as the blindness and the darkness of evil and of sin.

Relying on your goodness, O God, we humbly ask You by the intercession of your servant, Saint Lucy, to give perfect vision to our eyes, that they may serve for your greater honor and glory, for our salvation and that of others, and that we may come to the enjoyment of the unfailing light of the Lamb of God in paradise.

Saint Lucy, virgin and martyr, hear our prayers and obtain our petitions. Amen.

O God, the illuminating Light of all nations, You have shown us wonderful things through the powerful intercession of Saint Odilia. We beseech You, in your merciful kindness, through her prayers and merits, give us both temporal light and eternal glory, as You removed the darkness of her natal blindness. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

For Cure of Cancer

O God, who gave to Saint Peregrine an angel for his companion, the Mother of God for his teacher, and Jesus as the physician of his malady, grant we beseech You though his merits that we may on earth intensely love our holy Angel, the blessed Virgin Mary, and our Savior, and in Him bless them forever. Grant that we may receive the favor which we now petition. We ask this through the same Christ our Lord. Amen.

(Pray seven Our Fathers, seven Hail Marys and seven Glory Be's with the invocation, "St. Peregrine, pray for us.")

Prayer to St. Jude, Patron of Difficult Causes

O glorious Apostle Saint Jude, true relative of Jesus and Mary, I salute you through the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus.

Through this Heart, I praise and thank God for all the graces He has bestowed upon you. Humbly prostrate before you, I implore you through this Heart to look down upon me with compassion. Despise not my poor prayer and let not my trust be in vain. To you has been assigned the privilege of aiding mankind in the most desperate cases. Oh, come to my aid that I may praise the mercies of God.

All my life I will be grateful to you and will be your faithful client until I can thank you in heaven. Amen.
If your request is granted, you are expected to publicly acknowledge the intercession of St. Jude.

To Overcome Mental and Nervous Disorders

Lord, our God, You graciously chose Saint Dymphna as patroness of those afflicted with mental and nervous disorders. She is thus an inspiration and a symbol of charity to the thousands who ask her intercession.

Please grant, Lord, through the prayers of this pure youthful martyr, relief and consolation to all suffering such trials, and especially those for whom we pray:
(Here mention those for whom you wish to pray.)

We beg You, Lord, to hear the prayers of Saint Dymphna on our behalf. Grant all those for whom we pray patience in their sufferings and resignation to your divine will. Please fill them with hope, and grant them the relief and cure they so much desire.

We ask this through Christ our Lord Who suffered agony in the garden. Amen.

For the Poor Souls in Purgatory

Eternal Father, I offer You the Most Precious Blood of your divine Son, Jesus, in union with the Masses said throughout the world today, for all the holy souls in purgatory, for sinners everywhere, for sinners in the Universal Church, those in my own home and within my family. Amen.

This prayer is attributed to St. Gertrude the Great. It is also claimed that she received it from the Lord Who also said that this prayer would obtain the release of 1,000 souls from purgatory each time it is said.

The Prayer of the Church concerning Work

Christ, by your work the world was made, but You were willing to be called a worker's son,
--teach us to work diligently.

--Morning prayer, Feast of the Holy Family

God our Father, work is your gift to us, a call to reach new heights by using our talents for the good of all.

Guide us as we work, and teach us to live in the Spirit that has made us your sons and daughters, and in the love that has made us brothers and sisters. Grant this through Christ our Lord.

--Midmorning prayer, Monday

Father, yours is the harvest and yours is the vineyard: You assign the task and pay a wage that is just.

Help us to meet this day's responsibilities, and let nothing separate us from your love. Grant this through Christ our Lord.

--Midday prayer, Monday

God of Mercy, this midday moment of rest is your welcome gift.

Bless the work we have begun, make good its defects, and let us finish it in a way that pleases You. Grant this through Christ our Lord.

--Midday prayer, Wednesday

Lord, give our bodies restful sleep and let the work we have done today bear fruit in eternal life.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

--Night prayer, Monday

For Advocates of Marital Chastity*

Lord Jesus, born into a loving and caring human family, we turn to You in this moment of need. You know the desires of our hearts even before we voice them, yet You encourage us to pray in your Name. Therefore we come to You, asking that You touch the hearts of many married couples to respond to the need for more advocates of marital chastity through the promotion and teaching of Natural Family Planning.

Lord, You know our desire to remain faithful to your Church and its teachings on Christian marriage. Be with us as we seek to build your kingdom by handing on to others what we have received—your divine truths about human love.

Open the minds of all to accept fully the teachings of your Vicar on earth, Pope N._____, and enable us to continue joyfully our efforts to support those teachings.

Led by the Spirit, we submit ourselves humbly to your Church through our bishop, and we call upon Mary and Joseph to keep us always in communion with You and the will of your Father. Amen.

***Prayer to Live and to Teach
the Truth about Love****

Heavenly Father, out of your great love for us, You sent your Son to bring us back to You and to teach us the truth about love. We pray that your kingdom will reign in our hearts and that we may be fruitful messengers of your love and dominion.

O Jesus, help all those who call themselves your disciples to let You reign as King in their hearts, to walk the narrow way with You, and to keep your commandments of love.

Most Holy Spirit, especially during times of temptation help us to remember God's love for us and the sufferings Our Lord has borne for us. Strengthen us to avoid sin and to grow in virtue.

Heavenly Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, we praise You in all that You have done; we thank You for whatever good You have done through us. We ask your special blessings on all the people working to promote marital chastity by teaching natural family planning. Help us to live and to teach your divine truth about human love. Amen.

Prayers for the Dying and Deceased

Acceptance of Death

The following prayer may be suggested for a dying but conscious person to say.

Jesus, I adore You. I repeat your words on the Cross: "Into your hands I commend my spirit."

I know not whether I shall have free use of my understanding when I leave this world, so from this moment I offer to You my agony and all the pains of my departing.

You are my Savior. I commend my soul into your hands. I desire that my last moment may be united to your death, and that the last beat of my heart may be an act of pure love for You.

My Lord and my God, from this moment I accept at your hands, with resignation and cheerfulness, the kind of death it may please You to send me, with all its pains and anguish. Amen.

Prayer to the Blessed Virgin Mary

May Mary the most merciful Virgin Mother of God, kindest comforter of them that mourn, commend to her Son the soul of this his servant, that through Mary's maternal intercession, he (she) may overcome the dread of death and, with her as guide, joyfully reach his (her) longed for home in the heavenly fatherland. Amen

Prayer to St. Joseph

To you I have recourse, Saint Joseph, Patron of the dying. To you, at whose blessed death watchfully assisted Jesus and Mary, by both these dearest pledges I earnestly recommend the soul of this servant in the sufferings of his (her) last agony. I pray that he (she) may, by your protection, be delivered from the snares of the devil and from eternal death, and may merit to attain everlasting joy. Through the same Christ our Lord. Amen.

Invocations

Short prayers to be suggested to the sick, leisurely and distinctly, especially when they are nearing death and cannot bear long prayers. For longer prayers, see the Treasury of Common Prayers.

Grant that I may love You always, and then do with me as You will.

Lord Jesus, Who died for me, have mercy on me.

Lord, I believe in You. I believe all You have taught me by your word and by your Church.

In You, O Lord, I put all my trust: O let me never be confounded.

Hide me, dear Jesus, in your wounds; bathe my soul in your precious blood. O protect and defend me in this hour.

Into your hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit; Lord Jesus, receive my soul.

O my God, I desire to praise You, to bless You, and to glorify You for all eternity.

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, world without end. Amen.

O Divine Love, take full possession of my soul. O my God, teach me to love You forever.

I give You thanks, O God, with my whole heart, for all your graces and blessings. Please pardon, I implore

You, all my ingratitude and all the other sins of my whole life.

Have mercy on me, O God, according to your great mercy; and according to the multitude of your tender mercies, blot out all my iniquity.

O God, be merciful to me a sinner.

Incline unto my aid, O God; O Lord make haste to help me.

Remember, dear Jesus, You purchased me for Yourself by your precious blood. Please let nothing ever separate me from You.

Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us.

Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death.

O my good angel, stand by me in this hour.

All you blessed angels and saints of God, assist me by your prayers.

I renounce Satan and all his suggestions. O blessed angels of God, drive this wicked enemy far from me.

After Death

The following prayer may be offered for those who are present.

Grant, O God, that while we lament the departure of this your servant, we may always remember that we are most certainly to follow him (or her). Give us grace to prepare for that last hour by a good life, that we may not be

surprised by a sudden and unprovided death, but be ever watching, that, when You call, we may, with the bridegroom enter into eternal glory, through Christ our Lord. Amen.