

Prayer with Sacred Scriptures

Prayer by His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI

Prayer with scripture draws us into a deeper encounter with the Living God through the Word. "Let us now remain silent, to hear the word of God with effectiveness and let us maintain this silence after hearing, so that it may continue to dwell in us, to live in us, and to speak to us. Let it resonate at the beginning of our day so that God has the first word and let it echo in us in the evening so that God has the last word."

(Pope Benedict XVI, XII Ordinary Assembly of the Synod of Bishops, October 27, 2008)

A Guide to Prayer

The lifting of our minds and hearts to God in prayer is in response to God's call. Even the act of looking for ways to pray is in response to God's invitation. In Scripture we hear, "Lord teach us to pray." (Lk 11:1). Jesus taught us His most beautiful prayer to the Father. Here in this space you will find a general guide to prepare yourself for prayer along with suggestions for Scripture to use as you begin this journey. Notice these are only suggestions to get you started. From this or similar beginnings follow God's lead as you become aware of the Divine Presence in every aspect of your life.

Lectio Divina and the Liturgy of the Hours

Lectio Divina

"If the practice of *Lectio Divina* is promoted with efficacy, I am convinced that it will produce a new spiritual springtime in the Church." Benedict XVI (16.11.2005)

Lectio Divina is a traditional way of praying the Scriptures that calls one to study, ponder, listen and, ultimately, pray from God's Word so that the Word of God may penetrate our hearts and that we may grow in an intimate relationship with the Lord.

Resources

Archbishop Collins on *Lectio Divina*

Archbishop Thomas Collins explains art of *Lectio Divina*.

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

Lectionautas

The *Lectionautas* (Cyber-lectio divina) site presents a comprehensive approach to the reading of Sacred Scripture in a dynamic and engaging way. This site is EPIC in the sense that it is Experiential, Participatory, Image-rich and Connecting with youth and young adults. Pope Benedict XVI said: "Dear young people, I exhort you to acquire familiarity with the Bible, to keep it close at hand, so that it may be for you a compass that indicates the path to follow."

(Message for the 21st World Youth Day, April 9, 2006).

<http://lectionautas.com/index.php>

The Carmelite Tradition of Prayer

Use the daily liturgical readings to approach a prayerful reading of scripture according to the monastic way of *Lectio Divina*. This web site was created by the Carmelites.

<http://www.ocarm.org/lectio/lecteng.htm>

The Catholic Youth Prayer Book

Help youth understand the meaning of Christian prayer. Introduce them to traditional and devotional prayers of the Church, as well as to contemporary styles and methods. Assist youth in developing the habit of daily prayer. This all-in-one resource for prayer forms was specially written for teens, in the PRAY IT! STUDY IT! LIVE IT!® model, like *The Catholic Youth Bible*® and *The Catholic Faith Handbook for Youth*. It is the most expansive prayer book for teens. But *The Catholic Youth Prayer Book* does more than teach about prayer. It helps teens become prayerful people.

<http://www.smp.org/ItemDetail.cfm?ItemNum=1335>

Outline of the book:

Part I: Prayers for Today's Teenagers

Part II: Prayers from the Catholic Tradition

Part III: Methods for Personal Prayer

Part IV: Liturgical Prayer (including a four-week psalter)

The Liturgy of the Hours

Public and common prayer by the people of God is rightly considered to be among the primary duties of the Church. From the very beginning those who were baptized "devoted themselves to the teaching of the apostles and to the community, to the breaking of the bread, and to prayer" (Acts 2:42). The Acts of the Apostles give frequent testimony to the fact that the Christian community prayed with one accord.

The witness of the early Church teaches us that individual Christians devoted themselves to prayer at fixed times. Then, in different places, it soon became the established practice to assign special times for common prayer, for example, the last hour of the day when evening draws on and the lamp is lighted, or the first hour when night draws to a close with the rising of the sun.

In the course of time other hours came to be sanctified by prayer in common. These were seen by the Fathers as foreshadowed in the Acts of the Apostles. There we read of the disciples gathered together at the third hour. The prince of the apostles "went up on the housetop to pray, about the sixth hour" (10:9); "Peter and John were going up to the temple at the hour of prayer, the ninth hour" (3:1); "about midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God" (16:25). Such prayer in common gradually took the form of a set cycle of hours. This liturgy of the hours or divine office, enriched by readings, is principally a prayer of praise and petition. Indeed, it is the prayer of the Church with Christ and to Christ.

Resources

eBreviary

This site offers daily PDF printouts (Adobe Acrobat Format) of the Liturgy of the Hours: Lauds (Morning Prayer), Vespers (Evening Prayer) and Compline (Night Prayer)

<http://www.ebreviary.com/>

Universalis

This site has both an html version of the Liturgy of the Hours and a version that you can download to your handheld! Each day's Morning, Evening and Night Prayer is made available along with Mass readings, liturgical calendar and the Office of Readings, including those great non-biblical readings from the Fathers and Doctors of the Church!

<http://www.universalis.com/>