

## BASIC PRAYERS

I AM the bread of life. ~John 6:35

I AM the light of the world. ~John 8:12

I AM the door. ~John 10:9

I AM the good shepherd. ~John 10:11

I AM the resurrection and the life. ~John 11:25

I AM the way, the truth and the life. ~John 14:6

I AM the true vine. ~John 15:1

God should be adored frequently and always. ~St. Cyprian of Carthage, c. 200-258

You move us to delight in praising you for you have made us for yourself, and our hearts are restless till they find rest in you. ~St. Augustine of Hippo, 354-430

Prayer is the key of the morning and the bolt of the evening. ~Mohandas Gandhi, 1869-1948

## ABOUT PRAYER

*For Christians, prayer is partly learned and partly received as a gift from God. We learn to pray by using normal human efforts to repeat the consecrated texts of our tradition. With persistent use, these verbal forms of prayer support and enrich our personal ways of speaking to God from our hearts.*

*But prayer is also a gift. In the sacraments of Christian initiation the Holy Spirit is poured out in our hearts and there cries to God continuously, "Abba, dear Father" (Galatians 4:6). The Spirit praying within us is an irresistible impulse toward God, although we can become dull to its promptings.*

*We have the very breath of God pulsating in us, urging us toward the invisible Presence. We have also received a set of basic prayers to memorize and use every day as channels for the Spirit's power: the Sign of the Cross, the Apostles' Creed; the Lord's Prayer, the Hail Mary, the doxologies and others. Along with the psalms and canticles of the Bible, these are gifts of the Spirit coming to us through our church's tradition. By way of parents, catechists and friends, our faith community hands over these prayers to us, sometimes orally, sometimes through books.*

## THE SIGN OF THE CROSS

*The church imposes on us this essential sign in baptism and confirmation and we use it in many ways: to sign our lips to open them in praise; to sign our forehead, lips and heart at the reading of the gospel; to sign our children on their foreheads at bedtime; to sign our whole body, from head to heart and from left to right shoulder, as a shield of faith and an act of commitment and rededication to Christ. As we begin morning and evening prayer, we make the sign of the cross on our lips, often with the words, "O Lord, open my lips . . ." We use the full sign of the cross at the end of these hours and also when beginning the gospel canticles of Zachary (at morning prayer), Mary (at evening prayer) and Simeon (at night prayer). When the sign of the cross is used on other occasions, the words are always these:*

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

## THE APOSTLES' CREED

*This basic profession of the Christian faith is given to us in baptism. It originated in the profession of faith that was made at Rome as new Christians were immersed three times in the baptismal pool in the name of the three persons of the Trinity. Through the Creed, we renew our baptismal vows committing us to Christ and his gospel.*

I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's 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;  
he ascended into heaven,  
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,  
and 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 the life everlasting. Amen.

## THE LORD'S PRAYER

*Often called simply the "Our Father," this prayer, too, is a gift of the Holy Spirit praying in us. The Lord Jesus himself taught it to his first disciples (Matthew 6:9-13, Luke 11:1-4), and the church put it on our lips in baptism and authorized and empowered us to say it as children of God. The earliest recorded instance of its use is in the Didache, a late-first-century document that tells us to say the Lord's Prayer three times a day. This beautiful prayer gives us words to pray and also a model for all of our prayers. It shows us how to pray and what to pray for.*

### OLDER VERSION

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.  
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours,  
now and for ever. Amen.

### MODERN VERSION

Our Father in heaven,  
hallowed be your name, your kingdom come,  
your will be done, on earth as in heaven.  
Give us today our daily bread.  
Forgive us our sins  
as we forgive those who sin against us.  
Save us from the time of trial  
and deliver us from evil.  
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours,  
now and for ever. Amen.

## HAIL MARY

*The Hail Mary is a combination of two texts in the gospel of Luke (1:26-45). In the first part the Archangel Gabriel salutes the Virgin Mary (verse 28) and in the second part her cousin Elizabeth, the mother of John the Baptist, moved by the Holy Spirit, hails her as doubly blessed (verse 42). The third part of the Hail Mary was developed in the late Middle Ages.*

Hail, Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with you.  
Blessed are you among women,  
and blessed is the fruit of your womb, Jesus.  
Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners,  
now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

## DOXOLOGIES

*Doxologies are the church's most fundamental and widely used acts of praise to the Blessed Trinity. The greater doxology (Gloria in excelsis Deo) is used at Mass and the lesser ones in the Liturgy of the Hours, usually at the end of hymns, psalms and canticles. Just as the Sign of the Cross is accompanied by a physical signing of the body, so a doxology is used with a bow of the head and body to the Holy Trinity. The following are several forms of the doxology:*

Glory to the Father, and to the Son,  
and to the Holy Spirit:  
as it was in the beginning, is now,  
and will be for ever. Amen.

Glory to you, Source of all Being,  
Eternal Word,  
and Holy Spirit:  
as it was in the beginning, is now,  
and will be for ever. Amen.

Glory to God: Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier,  
the only wise God, now and always and for ever and ever. Amen.

To the King of the ages, immortal, invisible,  
the only wise God,  
be honor and glory, through Jesus Christ,  
for ever and ever. Amen.

## THE THREE GOSPEL CANTICLES

*These three canticles appear in Luke's gospel, sung by three important figures in the story of the incarnation of the Word of God: Zachary, the father of John the Baptist; Mary, the mother of Jesus; and Simeon, the prophet. They are revered in the Eastern and Western liturgies, especially at morning, evening and night prayer.*

### CANTICLE OF ZACHARY – THE *BENEDICTUS* Luke 1:68-79

Blessed are you, + Lord, the God of Israel,  
you have come to your people and set them free.  
you have raised up for us a mighty Savior,  
born of the house of your servant David.  
Through your holy prophets, you promised of old  
to save us from our enemies,  
from the hands of all who hate us,  
to show mercy to our forebears,  
and to remember your holy covenant.  
This was the oath you swore to our father Abraham:  
to set us free from the hands of our enemies,  
free to worship you without fear,  
holy and righteous before you,  
all the days of our life.

And you, child, shall be the prophet of the Most High,  
for you will go before the Lord to prepare the way,  
to give God's people knowledge of salvation  
by the forgiveness of their sins.  
In the tender compassion of our God  
the dawn from on high shall break upon us,  
to shine on those who dwell in darkness  
and the shadow of death,  
and to guide our feet into the way of peace.

**CANTICLE OF MARY – THE *MAGNIFICAT***      *Luke 1:46-55*

My soul + proclaims the greatness of the Lord,  
my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,  
for you, Lord, have looked with favor on your lowly servant.

From this day all generations will call me blessed:  
you, the Almighty, have done great things for me  
and holy is your name.  
You have mercy on those who fear you,  
from generation to generation.

You have shown strength with your arm  
and scattered the proud in their conceit,  
casting down the mighty from their thrones  
and lifting up the lowly.  
You have filled the hungry with good things  
and sent the rich away empty.

You have come to the aid of your servant Israel,  
to remember the promise of mercy,  
the promise made to our forebears,  
to Abraham and his children for ever.

**CANTICLE OF SIMEON – THE *NUNC DIMITTIS***      *Luke 2:29-32*

Now, + Lord, you let your servant go in peace:  
your word has been fulfilled.  
My own eyes have seen the salvation  
which you have prepared in the sight of every people:  
a light to reveal you to the nations  
and the glory of your people Israel.

## THE JESUS PRAYER

*One of the oldest, simplest and best of prayers is a calling in faith upon the Holy Name of Jesus. By repeatedly invoking the proper name of our Savior, chosen by God and given to Mary and Joseph by the angel Gabriel, Christians are convinced that they will be enabled to penetrate more and more deeply and surely into a growing awareness of the presence of God who saves and sanctifies us from within.*

*The Holy Name is sometimes repeated by itself and sometimes in a phrase. The most common form of the fuller invocation is:*

Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the living God,  
have mercy on me, a sinner.

*The best way to say the Jesus Prayer is to sit in as much physical and inner stillness as one can manage and then repeat the invocation over and over, slowly and steadily, fixing the mind directly and intensely on the words of the prayer itself, without trying to conjure*

*up any mental pictures or intellectual concepts. One should pray in this way without strain but with real effort for some length of time at each attempt. Rosary beads are a useful timer and reminder in this effort.*

*Persistent, frequent attempts to pray in this way will gradually habituate the soul to more effortless and continuous use of the Holy Name until it becomes the very substance of one's life of prayer. It is well to use the Jesus Prayer before and after other forms of prayer, such as morning and evening prayer. It can also be used during normal intervals in the day's work, when walking from place to place, for example, even when conditions are not ideal for recollected kinds of prayer.*

*Great saints and fervent mystics of both East and West tell us that the Jesus Prayer can even become self-acting as it descends from the lips and mind into the heart, the very center of our being. Such a gift is, of course, a pure grace, but it can be prepared for, in the first place, by genuine effort in a spirit of faith.*

*The Jesus Prayer is a high act of faith and self-surrender to the indwelling Spirit who longs to teach us to pray without ceasing to Abba, our dear and heavenly Father. It is a sure path to contemplative prayer and to "the peace that passes all understanding" (Philippians 4:7).*

## THE DIVINE PRAISES

*The Divine Praises are a series of praise prayers, recited for generations after the benediction of the Blessed Sacrament. They are thought to be originally compiled in 1797 by Jesuit Fr. Luigi Felici to make reparation for blasphemy and profane language. Praises of the immaculate conception, the assumption, the sacred Heart, St. Joseph and the precious Blood were often added later since the mid-nineteenth century to reflect popular piety or papal declarations. We offer this ecumenical version reflecting the original text:*

Blessed be God.

Blessed be God's holy Name.

Blessed be Jesus Christ, truly God and truly human.

Blessed be the Name of Jesus Christ.

Blessed be Jesus Christ in the great Eucharistic Sacrifice.

Blessed be Jesus Christ in the most holy Sacrament of the Altar.

Blessed be Jesus Christ in the Breaking of the Bread  
by the Body of Christ.

Blessed be the new world of fellowship,  
compassion, and justice of Jesus Christ.

Blessed be the Holy Spirit, the Advocate.

Blessed be the Holy Spirit, the Consoler.

Blessed be the Holy Spirit, Fire of courage.

Blessed be Mary of Galilee, exalting the humble.

Blessed be the Name of Mary, Virgin and Mother.

Blessed be the great Mother-of-God, downfall of tyrants.

Blessed be God in all of God's angels and saints.

Blessed be God for ever.

Let us pray.

O Jesus, present in the Sacrament of the Altar,  
teach all the nations to serve You with willing hearts,  
knowing that to serve God is to reign.

May Your sacrament, O Jesus,  
be light to the mind,  
strength to the will,  
joy to the heart.

May It be support of the weak,  
the comfort of the suffering,  
the wayfaring bread of salvation for the dying  
and for all the pledge of future glory. Amen.

*John XXIII, Bishop of Rome, 1881-1963*

## THE ANGELUS

*In the thirteenth century, the brothers of Saint Francis of Assisi (1181-1226) began to recite a daily set of prayers in honor of the Word-made-Flesh and of Mary's free consent to God's loving initiative. This custom spread to the whole western church and is signaled by a peal of bells at 6 AM, 12 noon and 6 PM. This devotion is especially suitable to the noon hour each day.*

The angel of the Lord brought the good news to Mary.  
*-And she conceived by the Holy Spirit.*

Hail, Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with you.  
Blessed are you among women  
and blessed is the fruit of your womb, Jesus.  
*-Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners,  
now and at the hour of our death. Amen.*

"I am the Lord's servant.  
*-May it happen to me as you have said.*  
Hail, Mary . . .

And the Word was made flesh.  
*-And dwelt among us.*  
Hail, Mary . . .

Pray for us, O holy Mother of God.  
*-That we may become worthy of the promises of Christ.*

Let us pray.

Pour forth, O Lord, your grace into our hearts  
that we to whom the incarnation of Christ your 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 CAELI

*During the Fifty Days of Easter, this twelfth-century Marian anthem replaces the Angelus each day.*

Rejoice, O Queen of heaven, alleluia!  
for the Son you bore, alleluia!  
has arisen as he promised, alleluia!  
Pray for us to God the Father, alleluia!

Rejoice and be glad, o Virgin, Mary, alleluia!  
*-For the Lord has truly risen, alleluia!*

Let us pray.

Holy and deathless God,  
you have given joy to the world by the resurrection of your Son,  
our Lord Jesus Christ.  
Through the prayers of his mother, the Virgin Mary,  
bring us to the happiness of eternal life.  
We ask this through Christ our Lord. *-Amen.*

## MARIAN ANTHEMS

### FOR ORDINARY TIME

Hail, holy Queen, Mother of mercy,  
hail, our life, our sweetness, and our hope.  
To you we cry, the children of Eve;  
to you we send up our sighs,  
mourning and weeping in this land of exile.  
Turn, then, most gracious advocate,  
your eyes of mercy toward us;  
lead us home at last  
and show us the blessed fruit of your womb, Jesus:  
O clement, O loving, O sweet Virgin Mary.

Pray for us, holy Mother of God,  
*-That we may become worthy of the promises of Christ.*

Almighty and everlasting God,  
by the cooperation of the Holy Spirit,  
you prepared the humble Virgin Mary  
to be a fit dwelling for your beloved Son.  
May we who rejoice in her memory  
be freed by her loving prayers  
both from present ills and from eternal death.  
We ask this in Jesus' name.  
*-Amen.*

## FOR ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS SEASONS

Mother of Christ, our hope, our patroness,  
star of the sea, our beacon in distress.  
Guide to the shores of everlasting day  
God's holy people on their pilgrim way.

Virgin, in you God made his dwelling-place;  
Mother of all the living, full of grace,  
blessed are you: God's word you did believe;  
"Yes" on your lips undid the "No" of Eve.

Daughter of God, who bore his holy One,  
dearest of all to Christ, your loving Son,  
show us his face, O Mother, as on earth,  
loving us all, you gave our Savior birth.

The Word was made flesh.  
*-And lived among us.*

Abba, dear Father,  
by the fruitful virginity of the Virgin Mary  
you brought life and salvation  
to the whole human race.  
Grant that we may experience  
the power of her intercession  
through whom we received the author of life,  
our Lord Jesus Christ, in whose name we pray.  
*-Amen.*

May the Virgin Mary mild,  
bless us with her holy Child.  
*-Amen.*

## FOR LENT

We turn to you for protection,  
holy Mother of God.  
Listen to our prayers  
and help us in our needs.  
Save us from every danger,  
glorious and blessed Virgin.

May we praise you, O holy Virgin.  
*-Give us strength in our hour of need.*

Merciful God and Father,  
may we who honor the memory  
of the great Mother of God, Mary most holy,  
rise from our sins by the help of her prayers.  
In the name of Jesus.  
*-Amen.*

## FOR EASTER SEASON

Rejoice, O Queen of heaven, alleluia!  
For the Son you bore, alleluia!  
Has arisen as he promised, alleluia!  
Pray for us to God the Father, alleluia!

Rejoice and be glad, alleluia!  
*-For the Lord has truly risen, alleluia!*

Holy and living God,  
joy came into the world  
when you lifted your dear Son from among the dead.  
By the prayers of Mary his mother  
and of all the myrrh-bearing women,  
bring us to the happiness of everlasting life,  
through the same Christ our Lord.  
*-Amen.*

## ANGEL OF GOD

*“For it is written, ‘For he will command his angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways.’”  
(Luke 4:10).*

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

## GRACE BEFORE MEALS

*“If I partake with thankfulness, why should I be denounced because of that for which I give thanks?”  
(1 Corinthians 10:30)*

*And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him. (Colossians 3:17)*

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

## THANKSGIVING AFTER MEALS

We give you thanks, almighty God,  
for these and all your blessings;  
you live and reign for ever and ever.  
-Amen.

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