

# Strengthen Your Prayer Life – Is Prayer your Superpower?

**Headline:** Develop a stronger daily habit of prayer and lead your family to do the same.

## **Objective:**

Why do we pray anyway? If God is all-knowing, as our faith tells us God is, then why bother to pray? God already knows what is on our minds and in our hearts, so why should we waste time telling God what God already knows?

There are two answers to this question. First, God may know what is on our minds and in our hearts, but do we know? Life can get so busy and so hectic at times that we easily lose touch with our thoughts and feelings. Prayer is our “time out” from the busyness of life to reflect on our deeper needs and desires. And why is it so important to contact our deepest needs and desires? Because that’s precisely where God usually speaks most clearly to us.

Another reason we pray is not only to discover what we think and feel, but also to learn what God thinks and feels. Prayer is a two-way street. When we pray, we give our all-knowing God a chance to communicate with us. That means we must LISTEN. This is risky business. All prayer is. By inviting God to speak to us, we risk being changed; that is, we risk having our attitudes altered, our perspectives broadened, our plans modified. So, Prayer is about developing a relationship with God. And, as Thomas Keating said, “The only way you can fail at prayer is to not show up.”

Challenge ourselves to be more disciplined in our prayer life and be a leader for our families in prayer.

**Song Suggestion:** Prayer of St. Francis

## **Bible and Catechism Readings: –**

### **1 John 5:14**

And we have this confidence in him, that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us.

### **1Thes 5:16-18.**

Rejoice always. Pray without ceasing. In all circumstances give thanks, for all is the will of God for you in Christ Jesus.

### **Phil 4:6**

Have no anxiety at all, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, make your requests known to God.

### **Romans 12:12**

Rejoice in hope, endure in affliction, persevere in prayer.

### **Catechism 2567**

God calls man first. Man may forget his Creator or hide far from his face; he may run after idols or accuse the deity of having abandoned him; yet the living and true God tirelessly calls each person to that mysterious encounter known as prayer. In prayer of the faithful God's initiative of love always comes first; our own first step is always a response. As God gradually reveals himself and reveals man to himself, prayer appears as a reciprocal call, a covenant drama. Through words and actions, this drama engages the heart. It unfolds throughout the whole history of salvation.

**Catechism 2558**

“Great is the mystery of the faith!” ... This mystery, then, requires that the faithful believe in it, that they celebrate it, and that they live from it in a vital and personal relationship with the living and true God. This relationship is prayer.

**Catechism 2560**

The wonder of prayer is revealed beside the well where we come seeking water: there, Christ comes to meet every human being. It is he who first seeks us and asks us for a drink. Jesus thirsts: his asking arises from the depths of God’s desire for us. Whether we realize it or not, prayer is the encounter of God’s thirst with ours.”

**Saint:**

St. Mother Theresa of Calcutta - one the most heroic and inspirational people of the 20<sup>th</sup> century - famously said “ My secret is simple, I pray. ”

**Vignette:**

–Joe was struggling to pray consistently and wanted to humbly be an example for his family. He knew that a consistent routine worked best, so decided that he would pray on his commute to and from work. It included the rosary, using the Halo app and the simple prayer formula from Catholic evangelist Chris Stefanick.

Four 4 Steps for Powerful Prayer (A.C.T.S - in this order):

- 1. **A= Adoration** – telling God “You are awesome.” Lead with this.
- 2. **C= Contrition** – examine your conscience and ask for forgiveness.
- 3. **T = Thanksgiving.** Gratitude sets your heart rightly.
- 4. **S = Stuff (supplication)** - give to God the stuff you are worried about

In addition, Joe used the Halo app to listen to the daily gospel and reflection by Jeff Cavins (7-10 minutes) and listen to what God is said to him. His attitude of gratitude improved, and he inspired others to develop a similar routine.

**Questions for Large and Small Group Discussion:**

Is daily prayer as vital as breathing? Explain how and why? Describe your relationship with God through daily prayer.

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How often do you pray? What benefits can you share from your prayer life that others might learn from?

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Do you ever read the Bible? How can the Bible drive your prayer life?

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What's the hardest thing for you in establishing a prayer life? Time? Priority?

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Do we incorporate gratitude and thankfulness in our prayers to God?

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Are our prayers answered? How would we know? Do we recognize that it is God's will be done and not ours?

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### Resources:

Chris Stefanick 4 Steps for Powerful Prayer (4-minute video – consider playing)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ibWL2-u2ZBU>

<https://watch.formed.org/videos/why-we-need-prayer-chris-stefanick-show#:~:text=That's%20like%20saying%20we%20don,Without%20prayer%2C%20we%20die%20spiritually.>

<https://www.usccb.org/catholic-prayers>

[https://www.radiantmagazine.com/2023/06/29/distracted-during-prayer-here-are-5-tips-to-help-you-focus/?mkt\\_tok=NDI3LUxFUS0wNjYAAAGT1AXAsE5OjttHzus2T\\_QxQDhiTH8d5hpxXrHEEVrd\\_9NkxeTx4E8G\\_HLgUlr8WR9R099SusPAYMHJ6StYU3Kt6pBaprPSIQNwWbr0p-gD](https://www.radiantmagazine.com/2023/06/29/distracted-during-prayer-here-are-5-tips-to-help-you-focus/?mkt_tok=NDI3LUxFUS0wNjYAAAGT1AXAsE5OjttHzus2T_QxQDhiTH8d5hpxXrHEEVrd_9NkxeTx4E8G_HLgUlr8WR9R099SusPAYMHJ6StYU3Kt6pBaprPSIQNwWbr0p-gD)

### Action Plan:

1. **When** – Set a time each day that you will pray – morning, evening, lunch time, etc. and for how long – 15min, 20min, 1 hour, etc.
2. **Where** – Find a good place where you can quiet yourself and get free from distractions (but not fall asleep...)
3. **What** (or how) – Find 1 thing that will drive your prayer - Rosary, Liturgy of the Hours, Novenas, a spiritual book, meditation, and journaling, etc.
4. **Why** – This is your “why” – It is meant to create a relationship, to build a relationship with the true and living God, who is pursuing ME. That is your “why” – To develop a relationship...
5. **Go! And just Show Up!** Commit to doing this for at least a month, and then adjust as you see what helps build that relationship.
6. **Talk about your prayer life** with your family and lead them in prayer.

**A Final Word:** Dr. Peter Kreeft writes: “I strongly suspect that if we saw all the difference even the tiniest of our prayers to God make, and all the people those little prayers were destined to affect, and all the consequences of those effects down through the centuries, we would be so paralyzed with awe at the power of prayer that we would be unable to get up off our knees for the rest of our lives.”

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