A PERSONAL DEVOTIONAL GUIDE

Essential Catholic Prayers

The prayers every Catholic should know
- beautiful, simple, and ready to learn by heart.

AD MAJOREM DEI GLORIAM

PRAY OFTEN

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These are prayers Catholics have prayed for centuries - at Mass, at home, in times of joy and in times of need. Learn them slowly. Pray them often. Let them become part of you.

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NO. 01

The Sign of the Cross

Signum Crucis

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

The most basic Catholic prayer, marking the body and soul with the sign of Christ's cross. Traced on the body: forehead, chest, left shoulder, then right shoulder.

NO. 02

The Our Father

Pater Noster

> 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 prayer Jesus Himself taught His disciples (Matthew 6:9–13). It is the foundational prayer of all Christian life and is prayed at every Mass.

NO. 03

The Hail Mary

Ave Maria

> 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.

Drawn from the words of the Archangel Gabriel and St. Elizabeth in Scripture (Luke 1:28, 42). The most beloved Marian prayer, repeated throughout the Rosary.

NO. 04

The Glory Be

Gloria Patri

> 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.

A short doxology of praise to the Holy Trinity. Prayed at the end of each decade of the Rosary and throughout the Church's daily prayer.

NO. 05

The Fatima Prayer

Oratio Fatimae

> O my Jesus, forgive us our sins, save us from the fires of hell, lead all souls to Heaven, especially those most in need of Thy mercy.
>
> Amen.

Taught by Our Lady to the shepherd children at Fatima in 1917, this prayer is traditionally prayed after each decade of the Rosary, following the Glory Be. A tender plea for mercy on sinners and the dying.

NO. 06

The Apostles' Creed

Symbolum Apostolorum

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 into hell; on the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty; from there 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 ancient summary of the Christian faith, tracing the core truths handed down from the Apostles. Prayed at the Rosary and at many devotions.

NO. 07

Act of Contrition

Actus Contritionis

> O my God, I am heartily sorry for having offended Thee, and I detest all my sins because of Thy just punishments, but most of all because they offend Thee, my God, who art all good and deserving of all my love. I firmly resolve, with the help of Thy grace, to sin no more and to avoid the near occasion of sin.
>
> Amen.

A prayer of sorrow for sin, traditionally prayed in the Sacrament of Reconciliation (Confession) and as an examination of conscience.

NO. 08

Grace Before Meals

Benedictio Mensae

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

A simple prayer of gratitude prayed before meals, acknowledging that all we have comes from God.

NO. 09

Hail, Holy Queen

Salve Regina

> Hail, holy Queen, Mother of Mercy, 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 valley 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. A beloved Marian hymn prayed at the end of the Rosary. One of the oldest and most treasured prayers of the

Church, dating to the Middle Ages.

NO. 10

Anima Christi

Anima Christi

Soul of Christ, sanctify me. Body of Christ, save me. Blood of Christ, inebriate me. Water from the side of Christ, wash me. Passion of Christ, strengthen me. O Good Jesus, hear me. Within Thy wounds hide me. Permit me not to be separated from Thee. From the wicked foe defend me. At the hour of my death call me. And bid me come to Thee. That with Thy saints I may praise Thee. For ever and ever.

Amen.

A beautiful Eucharistic prayer of deep devotion to Christ, often prayed after receiving Holy Communion. Though often attributed to St. Ignatius of Loyola, it predates him and has been prayed since the 14th century.

NO. 11

The Miracle Prayer

Oratio Mirabilis

> Lord Jesus, I come before You, just as I am. I am sorry for my sins, I repent of my sins, please forgive me. In Your name, I forgive all others for what they have done against me. I renounce Satan, the evil spirits and all their works. I give You my entire self. Lord Jesus, now and forever, I invite You into my life Jesus. I accept You as my Lord and Saviour. Heal me, change me, strengthen me in body, soul, and spirit. Come Lord Jesus, cover me with Your precious blood, and fill me with Your Holy Spirit. I love You, Jesus. I praise You, Jesus. I thank You, Jesus. I shall follow You every day of my life.
>
> Amen.

A deeply personal prayer of surrender and consecration to Jesus — repenting, forgiving, renouncing evil, and inviting the Lord to heal and fill the whole person. Often prayed as a powerful act of faith in moments of need or conversion.

NO. 12

Prayer to St. Michael the Archangel

Oratio ad Sanctum Michaëlem

> St. 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, thrust into hell Satan and all evil spirits who prowl through the world for the ruin of souls.
>
> Amen.

Composed by Pope Leo XIII in 1886 and traditionally prayed at the end of Mass. A powerful prayer of protection invoking the Archangel who defends the Church against evil.

NO. 13

Morning Offering

Offeratio Matutina

> O Jesus, through the Immaculate Heart of Mary, I offer You my prayers, works, joys, and sufferings of this day in union with the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass throughout the world. I offer them for all the intentions of Your Sacred Heart: the salvation of souls, reparation for sin, and the reunion of all Christians.
>
> Amen.

A beautiful way to begin each day — offering everything to God through Mary. Prayed by Catholics worldwide each morning, it turns even the smallest task into an act of love.

NO. 14

Prayer to the Holy Spirit

Oratio ad Spiritum Sanctum

> Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of Your faithful and enkindle in them the fire of Your love. Send forth Your Spirit and they shall be created, and You shall renew the face of the earth. Let us pray. O God, who by the light of the Holy Spirit did instruct the hearts of the faithful, grant that by the same Holy Spirit we may be truly wise and ever enjoy His consolations. Through Christ our Lord.
>
> Amen.

One of the oldest and most beloved prayers to the Holy Spirit, prayed at Pentecost and whenever we need the Spirit's guidance, wisdom, and comfort.

NO. 15

Prayer to My Guardian Angel

Oratio ad Angelum Custodem

> 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.

A simple, beloved prayer taught to Catholic children for generations. Each person is believed to receive a guardian angel at birth who watches over and protects them throughout life (Matthew 18:10).

NO. 16

Act of Faith

Actus Fidei

> O my God, I firmly believe that You are one God in three divine Persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. I believe that Your divine Son became man and died for our sins, and that He will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe these and all the truths which the holy Catholic Church teaches, because You have revealed them, who can neither deceive nor be deceived.
>
> Amen.

One of the three 'Acts' (Faith, Hope, and Love) traditionally prayed by Catholics as a daily renewal of their commitment to God. An act of faith is a declaration of belief in all that God has revealed.

NO. 17

Act of Hope

Actus Spei

> O Lord God, I hope by Your grace for the pardon of all my sins and after life here to gain eternal happiness, because You have promised it, who are infinitely powerful, faithful, kind, and merciful. In this hope I desire to live and die.
>
> Amen.

The second of the three Acts. Hope is the theological virtue by which we trust in God's promises and rely on His grace for our salvation.

NO. 18

Act of Love

Actus Caritatis

> O Lord God, I love You above all things and I love my neighbor for Your sake, because You are the highest, infinite, and perfect good, worthy of all my love. In this love I intend to live and die.
>
> Amen.

The third of the three Acts. Charity (love) is the greatest of the theological virtues — the love of God above all things and of our neighbor for God's sake (1 Corinthians 13:13).

NO. 19

The Memorare

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.

Attributed to St. Bernard of Clairvaux in the 12th century, this beloved Marian prayer expresses complete trust in Mary's intercession. Its name comes from the opening word: 'Remember.'

NO. 20

Offering to Mary

Offeratio Mariae

> My Queen and my Mother, I give myself entirely to you; and to show my devotion to you, I consecrate to you this day my eyes, my ears, my mouth, my heart, my whole being. Wherefore, O loving Mother, since I am your own, keep me and guard me as your property and possession.
>
> Amen.

A traditional prayer of consecration to Mary, often taught to children. It places everything — senses, heart, and whole self — under Mary's loving protection.

NO. 21

Prayer to the Infant Jesus

Oratio ad Parvulum Iesum

O Infant Jesus, I run to You with all my needs. I believe in Your infinite goodness and love. O little Jesus, bless me and protect me. Help me to grow in grace and virtue each day, and to love You with the simplicity of a child.

Amen.

A tender prayer of devotion to the Christ Child, recalling Jesus' words: 'Let the little children come to me' (Mark 10:14). Associated with the Infant Jesus of Prague devotion.

NO. 22

Lord, I Offer You My Life

Domine, Vitam Meam Tibi Offero

> Lord, I offer You my life — my thoughts, my words, my actions, and my sufferings. Take all that I am and all that I have. Use me for Your glory and the good of others. Help me to love You more each day and to serve You with a joyful heart.
>
> Amen.

A prayer of total self-giving, echoing St. Paul's call to 'offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God' (Romans 12:1). A beautiful prayer for any time of day.

NO. 23

Prayer for Our Family

Oratio pro Familia

> Lord, bless our family and our home. Keep us close to Your Sacred Heart. Protect us from all danger and evil. Help us to love one another as You have loved us. May our home be a place of peace, where Your name is honored and Your will is done. Through Christ our Lord.
>
> Amen.

A prayer for the domestic church — the family. The home is where faith is first learned and lived, and this prayer asks God's blessing on the family's life together.

NO. 24

Grace After Meals

Gratiarum Actio post Mensam

> We give You thanks, almighty God, for all Your gifts and benefits, who live and reign, world without end.
>
> Amen.

The companion to Grace Before Meals, prayed after eating as an act of gratitude for God's provision. A simple, ancient prayer of thanksgiving.

NO. 25

Prayer of Thanksgiving

Oratio Gratiarum Actionis

Lord, I thank You for all the blessings You have given me — for my life, my health, my family, and my friends. Thank You for the gift of faith and for Your infinite love. Help me to be grateful each day and to share Your love with others. Through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

A prayer of gratitude for all of God's gifts. Thanksgiving is at the heart of Catholic life — the word 'Eucharist' itself means 'thanksgiving.'

Pray Without Ceasing

1 Thessalonians 5:17

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