
A SYMPHONY OF PRAYER: TAKING STOCK OF ONE'S PRAYER LIFE

In preparation for Jubilee 2025, Pope Francis invited the church to a “great symphony of prayer” that expresses the many rich dimensions of Catholic faith and life.

There are many spiritual traditions and ways of praying in the church. The Jubilee Year is an opportunity to continue this symphony of prayer in our personal lives, reflecting on our habits and pushing ourselves to “pray constantly” by saturating every part of life in prayer. (1 Thess 5:17). St. Paul often encourages us to lift every aspect of life to God: “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly. Teach and advise one another in all wisdom. With gratitude, sing psalms and hymns and inspired songs to God in your hearts; and whatever you say or do, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.” (Col 3: 16 – 17)

In the gospels, we see Jesus praying in a variety of ways and circumstances. Consider some of these examples and how they might connect with you. This is a way to take stock of your prayer life.

Read the scripture, reflect on the questions and pray seeking God’s guidance on how to apply it to your life.

If you do not have a personal copy of the bible, you can access a searchable copy on the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops’ website www.usccb.org/bible

THE UPPER ROOM (Mark 14: 22 – 26)

- How do you pray during Mass, or during times of celebration and remembrance?
- Mark also notes how they “sung the psalms” together (v26). How familiar are you with the psalms? Do you pray or sing them often?

THE GARDEN OF GETHSEMANE (Matt 26: 36-45)

- How do you pray in times of anguish and suffering? Like Jesus, is your prayer “not as I want, but as you want?” (v39)

JESUS WOULD OFTEN “WITHDRAW TO DESERTED PLACES AND PRAY” (LUKE 5:16)

- Do you seek out spaces of solitude, silence and retreat?
- How can you grow in your capacity to pray?
- What environment might help you to pray?

IN THE DESERT (Matt 4:1 – 11)

- In times of temptation and trial do you turn to prayer or read scripture for support and guidance?

AT THE TABLE (Luke 5: 29 – 32)

- How often do you pray in community with friends or before meals?

ON THE CROSS (Matt 27:46, Mark 15:34, Luke 23:46)

- Do you pray when facing death or loss?
- Do you pour out your heart to God?

THE OUR FATHER (Matt 6: 9 – 13, John 17)

- This is the prayer Jesus taught us to pray. How often do you pray it slowly, with intention?
- The prayer of Jesus in John 17 is a rich prayer that journeys through the themes of the Our Father. Take some time to prayerfully reflect on this scripture.

IN THE SYNAGOGUE BEFORE OTHERS (Luke 4: 16- 22)

- Are you comfortable or confident praying in formal prayer settings or when somebody invites you to pray?

TAKE STOCK OF YOUR PRAYER LIFE

- Do you have a daily quiet time alone with God?
- Do you have a designated place to pray in your home?
- Do you have a scheduled time to pray each day?
- Do you use a specific prayer pattern as you pray?
- Do you use a prayer diary or prayer journal?
- What is your preferred style or routine or place to pray?
- Reflect on why you pray? Is it for need or a desire to spend time with God in prayer as Jesus did?
- What could you add to your current routine to enhance and deepen your prayer life during this Jubilee Year?
- Do you have a special time each day or week for household prayer, thanking God for the blessings received and praying for renewal in your family life?