

The Essential Catholic Prayer Book

**A COLLECTION OF PRIVATE
AND COMMUNITY PRAYERS**

With a Glossary of Key Terms and
a Brief Manual of Ways to Pray

A REDEMPTORIST PASTORAL PUBLICATION



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Introduction

The stressful and threatening events of our day can only be faced with equilibrium by people who pray. Without prayer, our faith grows cold, our love is misdirected, and our hope becomes a shaky matter at best. Prayer should be a daily event, not just a Sundays-only effort.

While the liturgical celebration of the holy sacrifice of the Mass is the summit of prayer for those called to the lay vocation, all agree with the Second Vatican Council which says the following in its Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy:

The spiritual life, however, is not limited solely to participation in the liturgy. The Christian is indeed called to pray to his Father in secret; furthermore, according to the teaching of the Apostle, he must pray without ceasing (§12).

Thus, this small book is presented in hopes of providing three things: (1) a collection of basic Catholic prayers that will gather in one place a wealth of prayers and devotions, traditional as well as new, that cover a wide range of needs and circumstances; (2) basic information on prayer types and strategies that will give readers a central source for learning about the prayer traditions of the Church, and perhaps give them insight to different ways to pray that might refresh and reinvigorate a life of prayer; and (3) fundamental definitions and explanations about praying and prayer that may be used as a reference, as part of a group learning experience, or for self-study.

Introduction

Section One, “Prayer: Into the Arms of God,” presents a brief introduction to prayer and its place in our life of faith. **Section Two** is a compilation of everyday, basic prayers for morning, daytime, and evening, including those prayers familiar to almost every Catholic.

Section Three compiles prayers and information that center around the holy sacrifice of the Mass. This includes an explanation of the order of the Mass, including some of the most familiar Mass prayers, prayers before and after Mass, as well as prayers before and after holy Communion.

Section Four centers on the sacrament of penance, presenting prayers suitable for saying before and after confession as well as a description of the Order of Individual Confession.

Section Five draws together prayers addressed to Jesus Christ. Here the reader will also find the Stations of the Cross, prayers to the Sacred Heart and Precious Blood of Christ, as well as prayers devoted to the Holy Name and the Child Jesus. At the end of this section are prayers in honor of the Divine Mercy and the Holy Eucharist.

Section Six includes prayers to the Holy Spirit and the Blessed Trinity, while **Section Seven** collects prayers and devotions to the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Section Eight offers prayers suitable for personal needs; and **Section Nine** compiles seven complete prayers services aimed primarily at home celebrations that can be observed over the course of the Church year.

Section Ten is a treasury of prayers for the sick, the dying, and the deceased, including the souls in purgatory; and **Section Eleven** brings together prayers to the angels and saints, including Saint Joseph. **Section Twelve** collects prayers for friends, family, and special intentions. **Section Thirteen** offers differing ways to pray and includes suggestions and some recommended sources as well. And, finally, **Section Fourteen** is a glossary of significant prayer-related terms presented in an easy-to-read format along with pronunciation guides for unfamiliar words.

Introduction

It is our hope that no matter how you chose to use this volume, you will find it an invaluable resource for expanding and enlarging your prayer life.

BROTHER DAN KORN, C.Ss.R.
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