

Prayers, Beliefs, & Practices of the Catholic Church

THE SIGN OF THE CROSS

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

THE LORD'S PRAYER

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

HAIL MARY

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou amongst 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.

GLORY BE

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.

GRACE BEFORE MEALS

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

GRACE AFTER MEALS

We give you thanks, almighty God, for these and all your gifts which we have received through Christ our Lord. Amen.

ANGEL OF GOD

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.

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ACT OF CONTRITION

O my God, I am heartily sorry for having offended thee, and I detest all my sins because of thy just punishment, but most of all because I have offended thee, my God, who are 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.

(Alternate Version)

My God, I am sorry for my sins with all my heart. In choosing to do wrong and failing to do good, I have sinned against you whom I should love above all things. I firmly intend, with your help, to do penance, to sin no more, and to avoid whatever leads me to sin. Our Savior Jesus Christ suffered and died for us. In his name, my God, have mercy.

APOSTLES' CREED

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 Nicene Creed

I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible. I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Only Begotten Son of God, born of the Father before all ages. God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father; through him all things were made. For us men and for our salvation he came down from heaven,

(At the words that follow, up to and including and became man, all bow.)

and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and became man. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate, he suffered death and was buried, and rose again on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead and his kingdom will have no end. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of Life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. I believe in One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church. I confess one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins and I look forward to the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.

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HAIL HOLY QUEEN

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!

V. Pray for us O Holy Mother of God

R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

The Memorare

Remember, O most gracious Virgin Mary, that never was it known that anyone who fled to thy protection, implored thy help, or sought thine 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.

The Ten Commandments

A Traditional Catechetical Formula

1. I am the Lord your God. You shall not have other gods besides me.
2. You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain.
3. Remember to keep holy the Sabbath day.
4. Honor your father and mother
5. You shall not kill.
6. You shall not commit adultery.
7. You shall not steal.
8. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.
9. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife.
10. You shall not covet your neighbor's goods.

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The Seven Sacraments

The Latin word sacramentum means "a sign of the sacred." The seven sacraments are ceremonies that point to what is sacred, significant and important for Christians. They are special occasions for experiencing God's saving presence. That's what theologians mean when they say that sacraments are at the same time signs and instruments of God's grace.

The Sacraments of Initiation

For Catholics, the Sacrament of **Baptism** is the first step in a lifelong journey of commitment and discipleship. Whether we are baptized as infants or adults, Baptism is the Church's way of celebrating and enacting the embrace of God.

Confirmation is a Catholic Sacrament of mature Christian commitment and a deepening of baptismal gifts. It is one of the three Sacraments of Initiation for Catholics. It is most often associated with the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

Catholics believe the **Eucharist, or Communion**, is both a sacrifice and a meal. We believe in the real presence of Jesus, who died for our sins. As we receive Christ's Body and Blood, we also are nourished spiritually and brought closer to God.

The Sacraments of Healing

The Catholic Sacrament of **Reconciliation** (also known as Penance, or Penance and Reconciliation) has three elements: conversion, confession and celebration. In it we find God's unconditional forgiveness; as a result we are called to forgive others.

The Catholic Sacrament of **Anointing of the Sick**, formerly known as Last Rites or Extreme Unction, is a ritual of healing appropriate not only for physical but also for mental and spiritual sickness.

The Sacraments at the Service of Communion

In the Sacrament of **Holy Orders**, or Ordination, the priest being ordained vows to lead other Catholics by bringing them the sacraments (especially the Eucharist), by proclaiming the Gospel, and by providing other means to holiness.

For Catholics, the Sacrament of **Marriage, or Holy Matrimony**, is a public sign that one gives oneself totally to this other person. It is also a public statement about God: the loving union of husband and wife speaks of family values and also God's values.

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Praying the Rosary

The Pope has spoken often on the importance of praying the rosary, urging Catholics to meditate on the mysteries in order to grow in faith, understanding and holiness. While the prayer which is most recited is the Hail Mary, the rosary is a meditation on Scripture and on the different points of Christ's life.

Why pray the Rosary every day for a year?

Each time the Blessed Virgin has appeared-- whether it be to Saint Bernadette Soubirous at Lourdes; to Lucia, Jacinta, and Francisco at Fatima; or to Mariette Beco at Banneux-- she has asserted the importance, saving grace, and power of praying the Holy Rosary on a daily basis. Based upon her words, the Rosary is penance and conversion for sinners, a pathway to peace, an end to war, and a powerful act of faith in Jesus Christ. Pope Paul VI presented the Rosary as a powerful means to reach Christ "not merely with Mary but indeed, insofar as this is possible to us, in the same way as Mary, who is certainly the one who thought about Him more than anyone else has ever done."

The Joyful Mysteries

(Monday & Saturday)

1. The Annunciation: Humility
2. The Visitation: Charity
3. The Birth of Jesus: Poverty, detachment from the world
4. The Presentation of Jesus: Purity of heart, Obedience
5. The Finding of Jesus in the Temple: Piety

The Sorrowful Mysteries

(Tuesday & Friday)

1. The Agony in the Garden: Contrition for our sins
2. The Scourging at the Pillar: Mortification of our senses
3. The Crowning with Thorns: Interior mortification
4. The Carrying of the Cross: Patience under crosses
5. The Crucifixion & Death of Jesus: That we may die to ourselves

The Glorious Mysteries

(Wednesday & Sunday)

1. The Resurrection: Conversion of heart
2. The Ascension: A desire for heaven
3. The Coming of the Holy Spirit: The Gifts of the Holy Spirit
4. The Assumption of Mary: Devotion to Mary
5. The Coronation of Mary: Eternal happiness

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(The Rosary Continued.)

The Luminous Mysteries

(Thursday)

1. The Baptism in the Jordan
2. The Wedding at Cana
3. The Proclamation of the Kingdom
4. The Transfiguration
5. The Institution of the Eucharist

The Angelus

The Angel of the Lord declared to Mary: And she conceived of the Holy Spirit. 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.

Behold the handmaid of the Lord: Be it done unto me according to Thy word.

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 be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Let us pray:

Pour forth, we beseech Thee, O Lord, Thy grace into our hearts; that we, to whom the incarnation of Christ, Thy 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.

Year of Faith Prayer

May this year of faith be a year to help me appreciate the gift of faith, deepen my relationship with God, and strengthen my commitment to sharing faith with others. May I recognize the face of Christ in those who are suffering, and help them along the journey of life. May I not grow lazy in the faith. May I be enlightened in mind, and heart by the word of the Lord. May I be capable of opening the hearts and minds of many to the desire of God, and for true life, life without end. Amen.

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THE STATIONS OF THE CROSS

- I. Jesus is condemned to die.
- II. Jesus takes up the cross.
- III. Jesus falls the first time.
- IV. Jesus meets his mother.
- V. Simon helps Jesus carry the cross.
- VI. Veronica wipes the face of Jesus.
- VII. Jesus falls the second time.
- VIII. Jesus meets the women of Jerusalem.
- IX. Jesus falls the third time.
- X. Jesus is stripped of his garments.
- XI. Jesus is nailed to the cross.
- XII. Jesus dies on the cross.
- XIII. Jesus is taken down from the cross.
- XIV. Jesus is laid in the tomb.
- XV. The Resurrection of Jesus.

THE SEVEN SORROWS OF MARY

1. Prophecy of Simeon - reflect on and sympathize in the sorrow of our Blessed Lady, when she presented her Divine Child in the Temple, and heard from the aged Simeon that a sword of grief should pierce her soul on His account.
2. Flight into Egypt - reflect on her sorrow when, to escape the cruelty of King Herod, she was forced to fly into Egypt with St. Joseph and her beloved Child.
3. Three-day Separation from Jesus in Jerusalem - reflect on her grief, when, in returning from Jerusalem she perceived that she had lost her dear Jesus, whom she sought sorrowing during three days.
4. Meeting Christ on the Road to Calvary - reflect on her meeting her Divine Son, all bruised and mangled, carrying His cross to Calvary, and seeing Him fall under His heavy weight.
5. Crucifixion and Death of Jesus Christ - reflect on her standing by when her Divine Son was lifted up on the cross, and the blood flowed in streams from His sacred wounds.
6. Our Lord is Taken Down from the Cross (Pieta) - reflect on her sorrow, when her Divine Son was taken down from the cross, and she received Him into her arms.
7. Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ is Buried in the Tomb -Contemplate her following His sacred body, as it was borne by Joseph of Arimathea, and Nicodemus, to the sepulcher, enclosed there, and hidden from her sight.

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LITURGICAL YEAR

The season of **Advent** prepares us for the coming of the Son of God. We watch and wait. We prepare to celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ at Christmas.

The **Christmas** season is a time to celebrate that God is with us. We rejoice that the Son of God became one of us to save us.

Lent is a season of preparation for the Church's greatest celebration. During the forty days of Lent, we pray for God's mercy and remember Jesus' life and death.

Jesus has risen from the dead! During the **Easter** season, we celebrate the Resurrection of Jesus, for fifty days! Jesus is with us always.

Ordinary Time is the season in which we celebrate the whole life of Jesus Christ and his teachings. It is the longest season of the year. It comes around twice- once between Christmas and Lent, and again after Easter until Advent.

SPIRITUAL AND CORPORAL WORKS OF MERCY

Spiritual Works of Mercy

1. To instruct the ignorant.
2. To counsel the doubtful.
3. To admonish sinners.
4. To bear wrongs patiently.
5. To forgive offenses.
6. To comfort the afflicted.
7. To pray for the living and the dead.

Corporal Works of Mercy

1. To feed the hungry.
2. To give drink to the thirsty.
3. To clothe the naked.
4. To shelter the homeless.
5. To visit the sick.
6. To visit those in prison.
7. To bury the dead.

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DAYS OF FASTING AND ABSTINENCE

Every Catholic, even children and older adults, should participate in some way in the spiritual disciplines and penitential practices of Lent.

Ash Wednesday and Good Friday are days of fast and abstinence. This means that we do not eat meat and that we have one full meal on these days. Concerning the Good Friday fast, the Second Vatican Council teaches: "Let the Easter fast be kept sacred. Let it be celebrated everywhere on Good Friday and, where possible, prolonged throughout Holy Saturday, so that the joys of the Sunday of the Resurrection may be attained with uplifted and clear mind."

The other Fridays of the Season of Lent are also days of abstinence from meat. The obligation to abstain from meat binds all Catholics 14 years of age and older. The obligation to fast, limiting oneself to one full meal and two lighter meals in the course of the day, binds Catholics from the age of 18 until after their 60th birthday. Those who are younger or older are encouraged to participate and may freely embrace these disciplines. However, these disciplines should never endanger one's health.

The Holy Days of Obligation

January 1 Mary, Mother of God

August 15 Assumption of Our Lady

November 1 All Saints' Day

December 8 Immaculate Conception

December 25 Christmas Day

THE BEATITUDES (Matthew 5:1-12) (Luke 6:20-26)

1. Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
2. Blessed are the meek; for they shall possess the land.
3. Blessed are they that mourn; for they shall be comforted.
4. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for justice, for they shall have their fill.
5. Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.
6. Blessed are the pure of heart, for they shall see God.
7. Blessed are the peacemakers; for they shall be called the children of God.
8. Blessed are those who are persecuted for justice sake; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

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The Four Marks of the Catholic Church

In the Nicene Creed, we profess, "We believe in **One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic** Church": these are the four marks of the Church. They are inseparable and intrinsically linked to each other. Our Lord Himself in founding the Church marked it with these characteristics, which reflect its essential features and mission. Through the continued guidance of the Holy Spirit, the Church fulfills these.

Prayer to the Holy Spirit

Come Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle 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. 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.

Prayer to St. Paul

Glorious St. Paul, apostle to the Gentiles, when the Lord called, you answered; and you spread the good news of the Gospel to the very ends of the earth. Pray for us, that we may serve Christ as you did: proclaiming the name of Jesus in good times and in bad, when convenient and when inconvenient. Pray for us, that we may welcome all the people we meet with compassionate hearts and open minds. Pray for us, that Christ may live in us as he lived in you. We pray in the name of Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.

Vocation Prayer

Loving God, You speak to us and nourish us through the life of this Church community. In the name of Jesus, we ask you to send your Spirit to us so that men and women among us, young and old, will respond to your call to service and leadership in the Church. We pray, especially in our day, for those who hear your invitation to be a priest, sister, brother, or deacon. May those who are opening their hearts and minds to your call be encourage and strengthened through our enthusiasm in your service. Amen.