

DIPPING INTO THE CATECHISM

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From the Compendium to the Catechism paragraphs: 550 – 558

WHAT ARE THE ESSENTIAL FORMS OF CHRISTIAN PRAYER ?



They are blessing and adoration, the prayer of petition and intercession, thanksgiving and praise. The Eucharist contains and expresses all the forms of prayer.

WHAT IS “BLESSING” ?

The prayer of blessing is man’s response to God’s gifts: we bless the Almighty who first blesses us and fills us with His gifts.

HOW CAN ADORATION BE DEFINED ?

Adoration is the first attitude of each individual acknowledging that he (or she) is a creature before the Creator God. It exalts the greatness of the Lord who made us and the almighty power of the Saviour who sets us free from evil. Adoration is homage of the spirit to the “King of Glory”, respectful silence in the presence of the “ever greater” God. Adoration of the thrice-holy and sovereign God of love blends with humility and gives assurance to our supplications (from the Catechism of the Catholic Church no 2628).

WHAT ARE THE DIFFERENT FORMS OF THE PRAYER OF PETITION ?

The vocabulary of supplication in the New Testament is rich in shades of meaning: ask, beseech, plead, invoke, entreat, cry out, even “struggle in prayer” (cf Romans 15:30). St Paul calls Christian petition “groaning”. The Holy Spirit “intercedes for us with sighs too deep for words” when we do not know how to pray as we ought. The prerequisite for righteous and pure prayer is asking (petitioning) for forgiveness. A trusting humility brings us back into the light of communion between the Father and His Son Jesus Christ and with one another. Asking for forgiveness is the prerequisite for both the Eucharistic liturgy and personal prayer (see CCC 2629, 2630, 2631, 2632, 2633).

IN WHAT DOES THE PRAYER OF INTERCESSION CONSIST ?

Intercession consists in asking on behalf of another. Since Abraham, it has been characteristic of a heart attuned to God’s Mercy. It conforms us and unites us to the prayer of Jesus who intercedes with the Father for all, especially sinners, even to the point of praying for those who do us harm (see Luke 23:34). The intercession of Christians recognises no boundaries: “for all men, for kings and all who are in high positions”, for persecutors, for the salvation of those who reject the Gospel. (see CCC 2634, 2635, 2636).

WHEN IS THANKSGIVING GIVEN TO GOD ?

The Church gives thanks to God unceasingly, above all in celebrating the Eucharist in which Christ allows her to participate in His own thanksgiving to the Father. Indeed, in the work of salvation, Christ sets creation free from sin and death to consecrate it anew and make it return to the Father, for His glory. The thanksgiving of the members of the Body participates in that of their Head. For the Christian every event becomes a reason for giving thanks. “Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you” (1 Thessalonians 5:18).

WHAT IS THE PRAYER OF PRAISE ?

Praise is that form of prayer which recognises most immediately that God is God. It is a completely disinterested prayer: it sings God’s praise for His own sake and gives Him glory, quite beyond what He does, but simply because HE IS. By praise, the Spirit is joined to our spirits to bear witness that we are children of God. Praise embraces the other forms of prayer and carries them toward Him who is its source and goal: the “one God”. The Eucharist contains and expresses all forms of prayer: it is “the pure offering” of the whole Body of Christ to the glory of God’s name and, according to the traditions of East and West, it is *the* “sacrifice of praise”(see CCC 2639, 2640,2641,2642, 2643).

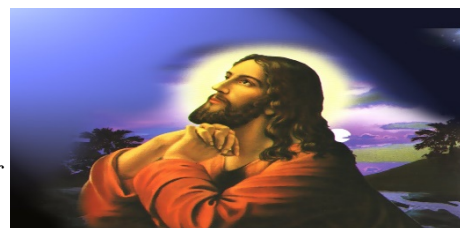
THE TRADITION OF PRAYER

WHAT IS THE IMPORTANCE OF TRADITION IN REGARD TO PRAYER ?

In the Church it is through living Tradition that the Holy Spirit teaches the children of God how to pray. In fact, prayer cannot be reduced to the spontaneous outpouring of an interior impulse; rather it implies contemplation, study and a grasp of the spiritual realities one experiences.

WHAT ARE THE SOURCES OF CHRISTIAN PRAYER ?

They are: The *Word of God* which gives us “the surpassing knowledge” of Christ (Philippians 3:8); the *Liturgy of the Church* that proclaims, makes present and communicates the mystery of salvation; the *theological virtues* (faith, hope and charity); and *everyday situations* because in them we can encounter God.



It is essential that every Catholic has access to good Catechesis to be able to deepen their faith. The Diocese of Plymouth recommends the many Catechetical Workshops from 'Franciscan at Home,' for more information on access

to these and online or real group sessions contact deborah.vankroonenburg@prcdtr.org.uk