

MAY JESUS CHRIST BE PRAISED

April 29, 2018 – FIFTH Sunday of Easter

Spiritual Ponderings Prayer

Here are just a couple of thoughts on prayer.

Pope Francis Five Finger Prayers

Pope Francis talked about the simplicity of prayer and in his talk he told people about how his mother taught him to pray using the fingers on his hand. On this last day of April having covered the seven joys of St. Joseph, I thought I would conclude with this simple lesson in prayer.

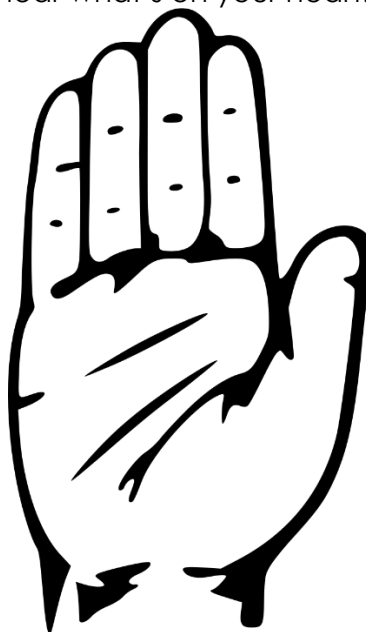
Prayer is a conversation with God, not a formula. Yet sometimes we might need to use a “method” to freshen up our prayer time. We can pray the Psalms or other Scriptures (such as The Lord's Prayer), or use the ACTS method (Adoration, Confession, Thanksgiving, and Supplication). I recently came across this “Five-Finger Prayer” to use as a guide when praying for others:

1. When you fold your hands, the thumb is nearest you. So begin by praying for those closest to you—your loved ones (Phil. 1:3–5). Father, give me the wisdom to know how to pray for others.
2. The index finger is the pointer. Pray for those who teach—Bible teachers and preachers,

and those who teach children (1 Thess. 5:25).

3. The next finger is the tallest. It reminds you to pray for those in authority over you—national and local leaders, and your supervisor at work (1 Tim. 2:1–2).
4. The fourth finger is usually the weakest. Pray for those who are in trouble or who are suffering (James 5:13–16).
5. Then comes your little finger. It reminds you of your smallness in relation to God's greatness. Ask Him to supply your needs (Phil. 4:6, 19).

Whatever method you use, just talk with your Father. He wants to hear what's on your heart.



A Very Special Bank Account

Imagine you had a bank account that deposited \$86,400 each morning. The account carries over no balance from day to day, allows you to keep no cash balance, and every evening cancels whatever part of the amount you had failed to use during the day. What would you do? Draw out every dollar each day!

We all have such a bank. Its name is Time. Every morning, it credits you with 86,400 seconds. Every night it writes off, as lost, whatever time you have failed to use wisely. It carries over no balance from day to day. It allows no overdraft so you can't borrow against yourself or use more time than you have. Each day, the account starts fresh. Each night, it destroys an unused time. If you fail to use the day's deposits, it's your loss and you can't appeal to get it back.

There is never any borrowing time. You can't take a loan out on your time or against someone else's. The time you have is the time you have and that is that. Time management is yours to decide how you spend the time, just as with money you decide how you spend the money. It is never the case of us not having enough time to do things, but the case of whether we want to do them and where they fall in our priorities.

Breaking Open the Word

April 29, 2018 Fifth Sunday of Easter Lectionary: 53 Gospel JN 15:1-8

Jesus said to his disciples: "I am the true vine, and my Father is the vine grower. He takes away every branch in me that does not bear fruit, and every one that does he prunes so that it bears more fruit. You are already pruned because of the word that I spoke to you. Remain in me, as I remain in you. Just as a branch cannot bear fruit on its own unless it remains on the vine, so neither can you unless you remain in me. I am the vine, you are the branches. Whoever remains in me and I in him will bear much fruit, because without me you can do nothing. Anyone who does not remain in me will be thrown out like a branch and wither; people will gather them and throw them into a fire and they will be burned. If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask for whatever you want and it will be done for you. By this is my Father glorified, that you bear much fruit and become my disciples."



Spiritual Reflection:

Receive by St. Ignatius of Loyola

Take Lord, and receive all my liberty, my memory, my understanding, and my entire will, all that I have and possess. Thou hast given all to me. To Thee, O lord, I return it. All is Thine, dispose of it wholly according to Thy will. Give me Thy love and thy grace, for this is sufficient for me. - Amen.

Spiritual Questions:

1. How can you remain with God?
2. What prevents you from trusting God completely?
3. Is God sufficient for you?
4. How do you cut yourself off from God?
5. What can you do to increase your trust with God?

Prayers for the Week

NOVENA OF SURRENDER TO THE WILL OF GOD

DAY 1

Why do you confuse yourselves by worrying? Leave the care of your affairs to me and everything will be peaceful. I say to you in truth that every act of true, blind, complete surrender to me produces the effect that you desire and resolves all difficult situations.

Repeat 10 times: O Jesus, I surrender myself to you, take care of everything!

DAY 2

Surrender to me does not mean to fret, to be upset, or to lose hope, nor does it mean offering to me a worried prayer asking me to follow you and change your worry into prayer. It is

against this surrender, deeply against it, to worry, to be nervous and to desire to think about the consequences of anything. It is like the confusion that children feel when they ask their mother to see to their needs, and then try to take care of those needs for themselves so that their childlike efforts get in their mother's way. Surrender means to placidly close the eyes of the soul, to turn away from thoughts of tribulation and to put yourself in my care,

Repeat 10 times: O Jesus, I surrender myself to you, take care of everything!

DAY 3

How many things I do when the soul, in so much spiritual and material need turns to me, looks at me and says to me; "You take care of it," then

close its eyes and rests. In pain you pray for me to act, but that I act in the way you want. You do not turn to me, instead, you want me to adapt to your ideas. You are not sick people who ask the doctor to cure you, but rather sick people who tell the doctor how to. So do not act this way, but pray as I taught you in the Our Father: "Hallowed be thy Name", that is, be glorified in my need. "Thy kingdom come", that is, let all that is in us and in the world be in accord with your kingdom. "Thy will be done on Earth as it is in Heaven", that is, in our need, decide as you see fit for our temporal and eternal life. If you say to me truly: "Thy will be done" which is the same as saying: "You take care of it" I will intervene with all my omnipotence, and I will resolve the most difficult situations.

Repeat 10 times: O Jesus, I surrender myself to you, take care of everything!

DAY 4

You see evil growing instead of weakening? Do not worry, close your eyes and say to me with faith: "Thy will be done, You take care of it." I say to you that I will take care of it, and that I will intervene as does a doctor and I will accomplish miracles when they are needed. Do you see that the sick person is getting worse? Do not be upset but close your eyes and say "You take care of it." I say to you that I will take care of it, and that there is no medicine more powerful than my loving intervention. By my love, I promise this to you.

Repeat 10 times: O Jesus, I surrender myself to you, take care of everything!

DAY 5

And when I must lead you on a path different from the one you see, I will prepare you; I will carry you in my arms; I will let you find yourself, like children who have fallen asleep in their mother's arms, on the other bank of the river. What troubles you and hurts you immensely are your reason, your thoughts and worry, and your desire at all costs to deal with what afflicts you.

Repeat 10 times: O Jesus, I surrender myself to you, take care of everything!

DAY 6

You are sleepless; you want to judge everything,

direct everything and see to everything and you surrender to human strength, or worse - to men themselves, trusting in their intervention, - this is what hinders my words and my views. Oh how much I wish from you this surrender, to help you and how I suffer when I see you so agitated! Satan tries to do exactly this: to agitate you and to remove you from my protection and to throw you into the jaws of human initiative. So, trust only in me, rest in me, surrender to me in everything.

Repeat 10 times: O Jesus, I surrender myself to you, take care of everything!

DAY 7

I perform miracles in proportion to your full surrender to me and to your not thinking of yourselves. I sow treasure troves of graces when you are in the deepest poverty. No person of reason, no thinker, has ever performed miracles, not even among the saints. He does divine works whosoever surrenders to God. So don't think about it anymore, because your mind is acute and for you it is very hard to see evil and to trust in me and to not think of yourself. Do this for all your needs, do this all of you and you will see great continual silent miracles. I will take care of things, I promise this to you.

Repeat 10 times: O Jesus, I surrender myself to you, take care of everything!

DAY 8

Close your eyes and let yourself be carried away on the flowing current of my grace; close your eyes and do not think of the present, turning your thoughts away from the future just as you would from temptation. Repose in me, believing in my goodness, and I promise you by my love that if you say "You take care of it," I will take care of it all; I will console you, liberate you and guide you.

Repeat 10 times: O Jesus, I surrender myself to you, take care of everything!

DAY 9

Pray always in readiness to surrender, and you will receive from it great peace and great rewards, even when I confer on you the grace of immolation, of repentance and of love. Then what does suffering matter? It seems impossible to you? Close your eyes and say with all your soul,

“Jesus, you take care of it.” Do not be afraid, I will take care of things and you will bless my name by humbling yourself. A thousand prayers cannot equal one single act of surrender, remember this well. There is no novena more effective than this:

Repeat 10 times: O Jesus, I surrender myself to you, take care of everything!

Mother, I am yours now and forever. Through you and with you I always want to belong completely to Jesus.

Saint Monica Society Prayer For April

PRAYER TO KNOW THE WAY TO PEACE



Jesus, Lord, don't let the fear of death overpower us. And don't let the loss of our loved ones cause us to doubt Your power to "Easter" everybody. Remind those who have fallen away and us, Lord, that You have the last words over death. You are risen! You are not "among the dead." Neither are we. We shall live forever in Your triumphant love. - Amen.

St. Monica Society

Please join us in praying a special prayer each month for Catholics who have fallen away from their faith.

Catholic Trivia

Last Week's Answers



Match Day with things created.

1st Day F 2nd Day A 3rd Day B
4th Day C 5th Day E 6th Day D

- A.** A dividing of the waters above from the waters below to create the Firmament of Heaven
- B.** A dividing of the waters under the heavens to form dry land; then grass, herbs, and fruit trees
- C.** Sun, Moon and Stars
- D.** Creatures of the land, then Man
- E.** Creatures of the waters and of the air
- F.** A dividing of light from darkness brings forth Heaven and a formless, water-covered Earth, then Light

This Week's Questions



Number the choirs of angels with 1 being the lowest and nine being the highest.

- | | |
|-------------------|---------------|
| __ Angels | __ Archangels |
| __ Principalities | __ Powers |
| __ Virtues | __ Dominions |
| __ Thrones | __ Cherubim |
| __ Seraphim | |



Quotes of the Week

To know Jesus, to hear Jesus, to love Jesus, to trust Jesus, to obey Jesus, to share His life in the deepest fiber of our being, and then to serve Him—this is our goal. Beware, though. As Cardinal William Baum once preached, “The danger... is to know about Jesus without knowing Him, to talk about Jesus, but to speak about Himself. A deep, personal, intimate relationship with Jesus Christ is the foundation of holiness!” – Cardinal Dolan

The danger we all face is a life of formalism, where we passively do things just to get by, not allowing the values of formation to sink in and become part of us. – Cardinal Dolan

Hope is the firm, joyful reliance on the utter dependability of God's promises, and a rejection of the despair, gloom, and discouragement we often face. – Cardinal Dolan

Pro-Life Corner

Pro-Life Prayer for April

Lord Jesus Christ, You are the Author of Life, Who died and now lives forevermore. May we who work and pray That children in the womb may be protected Always draw strength, confidence, and joy From Your victory over death, For you are Lord forever and ever.



Catholic Humor

The last time we changed from daylight saving time, a preacher friend posted, “For those who habitually show up 15 minutes late to church, allow me to remind you that tonight is the night you set your clock back 45 minutes.”

“What's wrong, Bubba?” asked the pastor.

“I need you to pray for my hearing,” said Bubba.

The pastor put his hands on ^[L]_[SEP]Bubba's ears and prayed. When he was done, he asked, “So how's your hearing?”

“I don't know,” said Bubba. “It isn't until next Tuesday.”