



APPROACHES TO PRAYER

SPIRITUALITY AND ME

EPISCOPAL CHURCH
OF THE REDEEMER



what is prayer?

Prayer makes our hearts ready to experience the love of God in Jesus Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit.

At the heart of prayer is a means of encounter (and relationship building) with God.

Prayer is a reaching for God, opening desire for Christ, which promotes, seals, and gives expression to love.

How do you define prayer? What does it mean to you?



what is prayer?

St. Maximilian Kolbe: "Prayer is still a little-known means; however, it is the most effective way to reestablish peace in our souls because it allows us to get ever closer to God's love."

St. Benedictine: "Prayer is the raising of one's mind and heart to God or the requesting of good things from God"

How are both ideas similar? How do they differ?



St. Teresa of Calcutta:

"The fruit of silence is prayer, the fruit of prayer is faith, the fruit of faith is love, the fruit of love is service, and the fruit of service is peace."

St. John Chrysostom:

"Prayer is the light of the soul."

Which quote aligns most with your beliefs?



the workings of prayer.

Praying regularly helps us develop a spiritual rhythm.

A discipline of prayer creates new habits of heart and mind, enabling one to see life differently.

Prayer opens us more deeply to the transforming grace of God.





more workings...

Prayer likely does not change God; it changes us.

As relationships with God deepen, faith and trust in God grow because you will know and understand God better.

Walking in faith (with prayer) makes space for the presence of the Holy Spirit in your life.

Prayer can take us beyond words, into the realm of sacredness.

presuppositions of prayer

Our God is a personal God.

God hears our prayers.

God is omnipresent, omnipotent, and omniscient.

God exercises a providential love for all of creation.

The Biblical promises of God still apply.

God's character will never change!

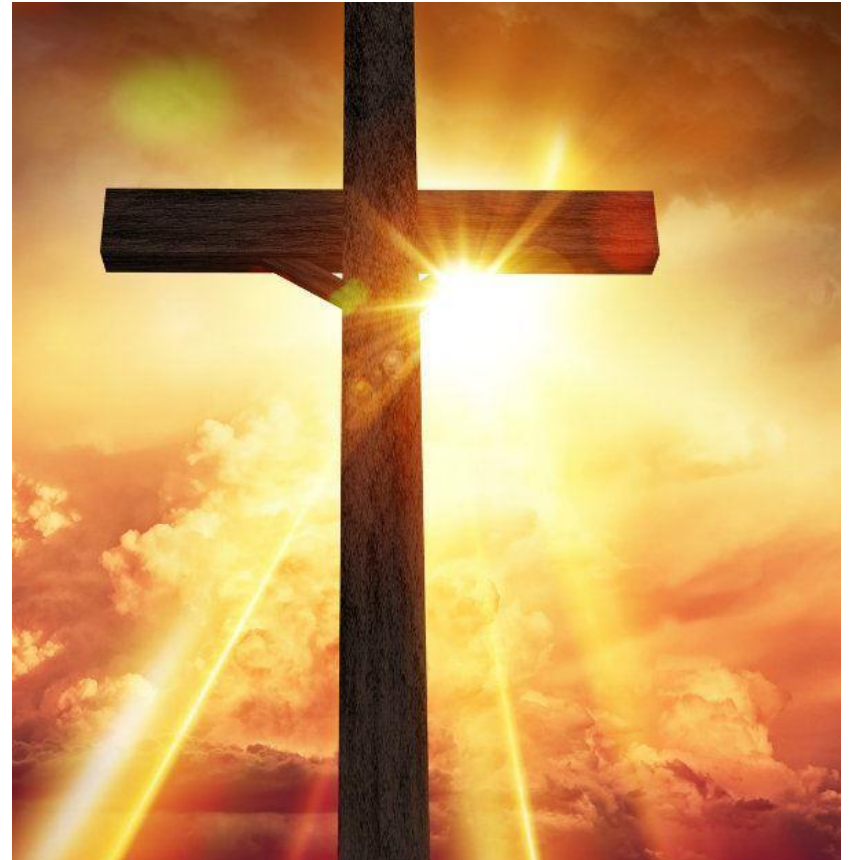
what do these statements say about God and prayers?

on prayer and the gospel

Our prayers are not disconnected from the work of Christ.

We pray because we need God's Good News of reconciliation, redemption, and salvation.

We pray because we believe that all of it (reconciliation,...,) has been accomplished through Jesus Christ.



on prayer and the gospel

God's Good News and victory over the forces of evil is a reality within us through our prayers and fellowship with God.

Prayer is a response to God's promises, loving mercies, and salvific works through Jesus Christ.

In prayer we align ourselves to the rule of God.



approaches to prayer

scripture-based prayers

- *Lectio Divina* (READ, REFLECT, RESPOND, REST)
- Gospel Contemplation
- Lectio 365

breath prayers

- complete focus on prayer-breathing rhythms

song prayers

- *Visio Divina*

written prayers

- prayers written by others can speak deeply to your heart and soul

approaches to prayer

internal prayers (internal dialogue)

- warning: does prayer sound like a monologue?

imaginative (faith) prayer

facilitated prayers

- icons, cross/rosary, Stations of the Cross, Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament.

other prayer forms

- Adoration, Praise, Thanksgiving, Penitence, Oblation, intercession, Petition, Examen, and Lament.

unifying elements for different approaches

Each draws us into the presence of God.

Each form of prayer emphasizes focus, mindfulness (being full present), listening, and intentionality.

God's presence is requested for guidance; requests are followed by listening, watching (awareness), and wondering patiently.

All emphasize the importance of the imagination, creativity, and an openness to look at things in brand new ways.

listening while praying

Is God requesting a new level of awareness? Is it time to let something go? Is it time to look at something in a new, fresh way?

Do not be afraid to be confronted during prayerful experiences. Pray to God for understanding and insights.



imaginative prayer: faith imagination

prayers that invite Jesus to enter our experience in a way that we can perceive God's work in us.

prayers are done in faith because we believe that Jesus is with us at our growing edges and most vulnerable moments.

faith imagination

why imagination? we believe that God speaks through our imaginations; our imaginations are the language of our hearts and souls.

Einstein: imagination is more powerful than knowledge.

E.Peterson: “imagination is essential to a full-bodied and full-soul life in Christ.