



Engaged Catholic Prayer

Put on the Life Savior

Below you'll find our new form of prayer on which to build up to 20 minutes of prayer as a household this month. The prayer for January is *Praying with the Scriptures*, which is a wonderful way to hear what God has to say to you each day for the Scriptures are the *Living Word* of God.

Praying with the Scriptures

We pray the Scriptures because it is the living Word of God who speaks to us. In Hebrews 4:12 we hear, "*The word of God is living and effective, sharper than any two-edged sword, penetrating even between soul and spirit, joints and marrow, and able to discern reflections and thoughts of the heart.*" **Choose a regular time** in your day ie. before breakfast, following lunch and **a prayer space** in your home (preferably a place that has no technology/little distraction in the room). I suggest you use the *daily Scriptures* to pray with, listed in the bulletin or on www.usccb.org

1. **Bring yourself into God's presence.** Consider how God looks upon you and loves you; become aware of God waiting for you!
2. **Pray before you read the Scripture**, asking the Holy Spirit to open your *heart* to hear what the Lord has to say to you. Ex: offer to God your will, desires,

thoughts, and actions, especially in this time of prayer; ask God for a specific “grace” that you need and desire right now (peace, consolation, hope, etc.)

3. **Read the Scripture.** I suggest the *daily readings*, listed in the bulletin, or you can find them on www.usccb.org (*The United States Council of Catholic Bishops site*)

Read the Scripture through slowly, for *understanding*, to know what the Scripture is saying.

4. **Read the Scripture through a second time, even more slowly, *listening especially for what God has to say to you, personally.*** Let God’s Word come alive for you! If you come to a verse that touches a particular need of yours or spotlights a sin you've given in to, stop and pray about it. And when you finish reading, pray again that God would help you act on what He's said to you.

- **Reflect** on the truths that God wants to teach you in the Scripture text.
- **Ponder** the rich meaning of each word, phrase, and sentence in the text.
- **Focus** on the--words, phrases, images, ideas---that stand out to you.
- **Embrace** what God is saying to **you**; let your heart be moved with love and desire.
- **Notice** what is going on *inside you* as you pray: joy, sorrow, peace, confusion, love, anger, etc.
- If you get *distracted* or your mind wanders, gently *return to the Scripture and the words the Lord is speaking to you.*

5. **Sacred Conversation.** Enter into a short personal conversation with Jesus (God the Father, or the Holy Spirit); speak *heart-to-heart*, as if conversing with a close friend. Enter a period of *listening* to hear what the Lord is saying to you. Pray again that God would help you to respond to what He’s saying to you.

6. **Closing Prayer.** Conclude by praying the *Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be.* or another familiar/favorite prayer.

7. Afterward, briefly *review* what you experienced during this time of prayer (maybe *journal* about what happened), and *look forward* to your next prayerful encounter with God (when? where? which biblical text will you use?).

To have Scriptures on your phone or tablet, download the app: *Laudate* (Free Catholic App)

To view the daily Scriptures, www.usccb.org (United States Council of Catholic Bishops)

Other resources to help you pray the Scriptures:

- www.gcdiscipleship.com/how-should-you-meditate-on-gods-word
- www.ignatianspirituality.com/ignatian-prayer/the-what-how-why-of-/praying-with-scripture
- holdingtotruth.com/2012/06/01/12-tips-on-how-to-pray-read-the-word-of-god-to-be-spiritually-nourished

+++ Learn to Pray the Scriptures on **Thursday, January 7** at **1 pm** or **6pm** +++

Enjoy the goodness of the Lord speaking to you in His Word!

Betty Schwandt, Pastoral Associate