

Praying Together

Lesson 37 Summary

Lesson Learning Objectives

- The participants will examine communal expressions of prayer.
- The participants will explore the benefits of praying the traditional prayers and devotions of the Church.

Content Summary

1. The Church teaches that it is always possible to pray and that regular prayer is a vital necessity. Prayer and Christian life are inseparable.
2. Those who pray regularly report clarity in decision making, calm in the face of adversity, strength in the face of temptation, and growth in loving other people. They also note that in the absence of prayer, it is much easier to fall back into sin.
3. The Church invites us to be in constant prayer in one other important way: by praying together as a community. By the very nature of what it means to be a Christian, prayer is more than your own personal response to God's initiative.
4. When you pray, your voice is joined both to Christ's and to the voice of Christ in every member of his Body. For this reason Christians believe that the liturgy of the Church is the most authentic expression of what it means to be a member of Christ's Body.
5. Encountering the Word of God in Scripture changes us. That is why Scripture is a part of all Catholic communal prayer and worship.
6. The Eucharistic liturgy is the central prayer of the Church. It is the source and summit of the spiritual life in the Church.
7. Catholics developed private and public expressions of prayer before Christ's Real Presence in the Blessed Sacrament. Eucharistic adoration has taken on the prayer form of meditation or contemplation.
8. Benediction is another name for a blessing prayer. For Catholics, it more often refers to the prayer in which the Blessed Sacrament is used to bless the people.
9. The Liturgy of the Hours consists of a structured pattern of prayers that includes hymns, psalms, antiphons, Scripture meditation, the Lord's Prayer, and other readings and responses. It is the official nonsacramental, communal prayer of the Catholic Church, although it can also be prayed privately.
10. Family life is full of events that can be lifted in prayers. Many families pray grace at meals, and a Rosary or other prayers before bed. Even ordinary moments are deepened when we pause to connect our life with God, who gives us life.

(All summary points are taken from *The Catholic Faith Handbook for Youth, Third Edition*. Copyright © 2013 by Saint Mary's Press. All rights reserved.)

