

## Unit 5 Reading Guide Answer Key

# Prayer and Holiness

## Chapter 11: Holiness and Union with God

### Article 43: Being Holy

1. All of us are called to be holy. This is a lifelong commitment and challenge, but it is not an impossible goal. Because each one of us is made in God's own image and likeness, all human life is sacred and potentially holy.
2. Holiness not only describes who we are but also includes what we do and how we act.
3. First, something is holy because it somehow reveals God and shares in God's own life. Therefore, in a general sense, all creation is holy.
4. First and foremost are the gifts of our intellect and free will. Our intellect helps us to see and understand the natural order God has created. It helps us weigh decisions and evaluate outcomes, and in so doing, we can make good moral choices. Our free will allows us to act on those good choices that lead us to love God and one another.
5. Grace is God's gift that empowers us to respond to his love. Through grace, we receive a holiness that is a greater blessing than original holiness.
6. Sanctifying grace heals our human nature wounded by sin. It restores us to friendship with God by giving us a share in the divine life of the Trinity. Sanctifying grace is a supernatural gift of God, infused into our souls by the Holy Spirit, that continues the work of making us holy.
7. God has also given us the ability to reflect on our own thoughts and actions. This is sometimes called interiority, which is the practice of developing a life of self-reflection and self-examination to attend to our spiritual life and call to holiness.
8. The Church provides us with opportunities for education, for prayer, for community, and for service to the world. As the Body of Christ, the members of the Church give strength, hope, and support to one another in our common goal of becoming holy people.

### Article 44: Discipleship: The Path to Holiness

1. In other words, it's easy to say that Jesus Christ is your Lord. But living as a disciple of Jesus requires that we follow his teachings and live as he did.
2. Be humble. Don't overestimate your own worth, importance, or goodness. Always examine your motives; acknowledge that your gifts for service come from God and are to be used for the good of others.
3. Do not judge. Condemning others does not bring anyone closer to being holy. Be concerned about your own faults, not the faults of others.
4. Forgive others. When we forgive, not only is the sinner released from the burden, but we are as well. When someone harms you, do not retaliate, which would create a continuing loop of hatred and vengeance. Only forgiveness and refusal to retaliate can interrupt this cycle.



5. Care for those in need. Jesus says that our eternal welfare is dependent on our care for those in need, especially the poor and marginalized. All of us have been given certain gifts, talents, and resources. Our journey to holiness requires that we use our gifts in service to those in our community.
6. When asked about the Greatest Commandment, Jesus responded that it was to love God and love your neighbor (see Matthew 22:34–40). Love is the teaching on which the Apostles also focus.
7. This is also our call to engage in the mission of evangelization. Fortified by the Holy Spirit, we are called to continue Jesus' mission to build up the Kingdom of God here on Earth.

## Article 45: Mysticism: Seeking Union with God

1. A mystical experience is typically a spiritual event that is neither apparent to the senses nor obvious to the intellect.
2. Mysticism refers to intense experiences of the presence and power of God, resulting in a deeper sense of union with God. Those who regularly experience such union are called mystics.
3. These personal encounters with God not only assist a person on their spiritual journey; they can also offer hope and guidance to others. We can look to many Catholic mystics from all times, places, and various life circumstances for inspiration.
4. The heart of the Carmelite charism is prayer. But because Teresa suffered from repeated, painful, physical illnesses, she often struggled with prayer. Then, in her forties, Teresa began to have numerous mystical experiences. She had visions of Christ in which she felt blessed by his physical presence.
5. Brother Lawrence teaches us that God can be found in the normal activities of daily life. Simply reminding yourself that you are in the presence of God, again and again, can have a profound effect on your life.
6. In his book *The Ascent to Mount Carmel*, Saint John describes how the ascetical life can lead to a mystical union with God. Asceticism is the spiritual discipline in which a person leads a strict life of simplicity and self-denial.
7. Just as an open hand is far more likely to receive a gift than a clenched fist, you too have to be open to receiving God. One way to do this is through a dedicated life of prayer. Prayer is an essential exercise in preparing to receive God.

## Article 46: The Church's Sacramental Life Unites Us

1. A sacrament is an outward, visible expression of God's invisible grace that plays an essential role in connecting us with God.
2. Baptism: One becomes a member of the Church and a new creature in Christ.
3. Confirmation: Through an outpouring of special Gifts of the Holy Spirit, Confirmation completes the grace of Baptism by confirming or "sealing" the baptized person's union with Christ and by equipping that person for active participation in the life of the Church.
4. Eucharist: Based on a word for thanksgiving, it is the central Christian liturgical celebration, established by Jesus at the Last Supper. In the Eucharist, the sacrificial death and Resurrection of Jesus are both remembered and renewed.
5. Penance and Reconciliation: The liturgical celebration of God's forgiveness of sin, through which the sinner is reconciled with both God and the Church.



6. Anointing of the Sick: A gravely ill, aging, or dying person is anointed by the priest and prayed over by him and attending believers.
7. Matrimony: A lifelong covenant, modeled on that between Christ and the Church, in which a baptized man and a baptized woman make an exclusive and permanent commitment to faithfully love each other and to cooperate in the procreation and education of children.
8. Holy Orders: The sacrament by which baptized men are ordained for permanent ministry in the Church as bishops, priests, or deacons.
9. In general, the Seven Sacraments offer us a path to holiness and union with God. They touch all the stages of our lives, from birth to death. Because they touch both our body and soul, they are the means by which our invisible God becomes both tangible and present.

## Chapter 12: Communing with God

### Article 47: What Is Prayer?

1. Prayer is lifting up one's mind and heart to God or requesting good things from him. It is communication with God in a relationship of love.
2. Prayer does not only consist of asking God for help; listening to God is how we learn what his will is for our lives.
3. But sometimes, it's the inner distractions that can really make it challenging to enter into prayer. The mind is never quiet; it races with ideas, concerns, worries, etc.
4. In prayer, dryness is experienced as feeling separated from God. When this happens, the strength, joy, and peace of prayer run dry, and nothing seems to change the situation. If this is the case, keeping faith will see you through.
5. That you need to be some kind of prayer expert is a misconception about prayer. Anyone can pray, and you probably already do.

### Article 48: Forms of Prayer

1. Adoration is the prayerful acknowledgment that God is God and Creator of all that is. It's a recognition of the awesome power of God.
2. Petition is a prayer form in which you ask God for something you need. We offer petitions all of the time.
3. Intercession is a prayer on behalf of another person or group. When we offer intercessions, we join our love with God's love in prayerful concern for someone else.
4. When we pray in thanksgiving, we grow in awareness that all we have comes to us as a gift from God's abundant love. It is a prayer of gratitude for the gift of life and the gifts of life.
5. Praise is a prayer of acknowledgment that God is God, giving him glory not for what he does, but simply because he is. We can find numerous examples of praise in the Book of Psalms.



## Article 49: Expressions of Prayer

1. Vocal prayer, which uses words either spoken aloud or recited silently, is similar to this kind of sharing [conversation with a friend] because it focuses on your conversation with God, which grows over time. Memorized prayer is the first way most people learn to pray vocally.
2. Contemplation is a form of wordless prayer in which one is fully focused on the presence of God. This type of prayer is often associated with mysticism.
3. Contemplation requires no words, no rational thought, no imagination, no activity. Rather, it is arrived at by love.
4. Meditation is a prayer expression that uses a variety of methods and techniques. When we meditate, our mind, our imagination, our desires, and our emotions focus on a particular truth, biblical theme, or other spiritual matter.
5. We use these faculties to ponder God's presence and activity in our lives and in the world, to discover the movements that stir our hearts, and to say, "God, I want you to be the focus of my life."
6. In his Spiritual Exercises, Saint Ignatius of Loyola (1491–1556) developed a method of prayer in which you use your imagination to immerse yourself in a story from the Bible.

## Article 50: Scripture- A Source and Guide

1. Most important, the supreme model of prayer was Jesus. He often withdrew alone to deserted places to be alone with God (see Luke 5:16). He taught the importance of prayer and humility (see Matthew 6:5–8).
2. Sacred Scripture is an important source for prayer. Many of our formal prayers come directly from or are based on passages from the Bible.
3. For example, the Hail Mary is based on the angel Gabriel's announcement to Mary that she will become the Mother of God, and the words of her cousin Elizabeth in the Gospel of Luke (see Luke 1:28,42).
4. It has been said that the Lord's Prayer "is truly the summary of the whole gospel"<sup>1</sup> (CCC, number 2761). It is an essential prayer for Christians because it was taught to us by the Son of God. The Lord's Prayer is focused on "seven petitions, seven blessings" (CCC, number 2803).
5. The Lord's Prayer probably sounded a little familiar to those who first heard it. There are a number of lines in it that are similar to a Jewish prayer called the Kaddish.
6. Though it is certainly good and acceptable to say the Lord's Prayer privately on your own, it is essentially a communal prayer because it begins with "Our Father." Even when we do say it alone, we pray on behalf of the whole Church. It is the ultimate prayer of our community.

## Chapter 13: Praying with the Triduum

### Article 51: The Paschal Mystery and the Triduum

1. Like the school year, the Church also commemorates significant events through an annual cycle called the Liturgical Year. In our liturgical celebrations on Sundays and holy days throughout the year, the Church recalls God's plan for our salvation, fulfilled in the Paschal Mystery.



2. Liturgy is the Church's official, public, communal prayer. The term *liturgy* comes from the Greek word *leiturgia*, which means "work of the people." This has an important implication for us. The liturgy is not just the work of the priests, deacons, and other ministers leading the congregation. It is our responsibility too, and our participation is important and required!
3. Triduum (pronounced TRI-doo-um) is a Latin word that means "three days." The Easter Triduum, then, encompasses the three holy days that are at the center of the Church's Liturgical Year.
4. It begins with the Mass of the Lord's Supper on Holy Thursday night, continues with the Celebration of the Lord's Passion on Good Friday afternoon, reaches its climax with the Easter Vigil on Holy Saturday night, and ends with evening prayer on Easter Sunday.
5. The liturgies of the Triduum form one continuous celebration, each liturgy picking up where the previous one leaves off. We follow Jesus' Paschal journey from the Last Supper, through his arrest, torture, and Crucifixion, and finally to the joy of the empty tomb and his Resurrection.
6. The Triduum liturgies are meant not to reenact these events but to help us to remember them and celebrate them in a sacramental way.

## Article 52: Holy Thursday

1. On the day before Jesus died, he gathered his closest friends together and entrusted them with the mission that he started. We recall these events in the Mass of the Lord's Supper on Holy Thursday, the first day of the Easter Triduum.
2. Here, we recall how Christ instituted the Eucharist at the Last Supper. In the opening prayer, we ask God to grant the fullness of life and love through the sacrifice of the Eucharist.
3. At the beginning of the liturgy, members of the parish community process in with three containers of consecrated oil that were recently blessed by the bishop.
4. After the homily, the priest washes the feet of some of the parishioners in memory of what Jesus did. This also acts as a reminder of his commandment to serve one another.
5. The call to serve that is symbolized in the washing of the feet is further carried out in the collection for the poor. Usually, the money collected at Mass goes toward parish expenses. But on Holy Thursday, many parishes take up separate collections for those in special need.
6. Because the Liturgy of the Eucharist is not celebrated on Good Friday, enough bread is consecrated at the Holy Thursday liturgy for both Holy Thursday and Good Friday. At the end of Mass, the remaining consecrated hosts are taken to the chapel where they stay until the Good Friday liturgy.
7. After the Mass of the Lord's Supper, the Paschal Fast begins. The Church calls for us to fast on Good Friday, meaning that we eat only one full meal, as well as two smaller meals that together are not equal to a full meal.

## Article 53: Good Friday

1. Good Friday is the second day of the Easter Triduum, on which we commemorate Jesus' Passion and death on the cross.
2. "Good" describes the work of salvation that Christ accomplished on that day. Because of the twofold nature of this day, the liturgy reflects both the sorrowful and hopeful nature of this celebration.



3. It begins in silence, picking up where the Holy Thursday liturgy ended. It is usually held in the afternoon near the time of Christ's death (3:00 p.m.).
4. The general intercessions on Good Friday are a little different than at the average Mass. They are longer and instead of being read, they are usually sung.
5. The congregation is then invited to come forward and venerate the cross, in which we offer some sign of our respect and devotion for Christ's sacrifice.
6. The Liturgy of the Eucharist is not celebrated on Good Friday. The congregation prays the Lord's Prayer together, and then receives the Eucharist that was consecrated on Holy Thursday. After receiving Communion, the priest offers a blessing, and the liturgy ends with everyone leaving in silence.

## Article 54: Easter Vigil

1. Easter begins on Holy Saturday with the celebration of the Easter Vigil. Many consider this liturgy to be the highlight of the Liturgical Year. The Easter Vigil celebrates the light of the Risen Christ coming into the world.
2. The word vigil is the term we give to liturgies held on the evening before the feast day. Vigil means "to be awake, to be watchful." The Easter Vigil begins sometime after dark on Holy Saturday and must conclude before daybreak on Sunday.
3. The priest blesses the fire and then lights the Easter candle, or Paschal candle—a large candle symbolizing the light of the Risen Christ. The members of the congregation process by, light their individual candles from the Easter candle flame as they do so, and enter the darkened church.
4. The Liturgy of the Word is an inspiring and unique experience. There are three to seven readings from the Old Testament and two from the New Testament that offer us an overview of salvation history. It is kind of like hearing your family's history.
5. After the homily, the catechumens—those who have been preparing to join the Body of Christ—receive the first two Sacraments of Initiation: Baptism and Confirmation. First, the Litany of the Saints is sung.
6. With the fasting of Good Friday behind us, we participate in the Eucharistic feast by consuming the Body and Blood of Christ, our spiritual food and drink. This is also the First Eucharist for those who were just baptized or were just received into the Church.
7. It is a time to be happy and rejoice! Christ has conquered death and leads us toward eternal life with God. Jesus is the bridge that repairs the separation caused by sin.

(The quotations marked CCC on this answer key are from the English translation of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* for use in the United States of America, second edition. Copyright © 1994 by the United States Catholic Conference, Inc.—Libreria Editrice Vaticana [LEV]. English translation of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church: Modifications from the Editio Typica* copyright © 1997 by the United States Catholic Conference, Inc.—LEV.)

### Endnote Cited in Quotation from the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, Second Edition

1. Tertullian, *De orat.* 1: J. P. Migne, ed., Patrologia Latina (Paris 1841–1855) 1, 1155.

