

Going Deeper in Prayer

PRAYER TO JESUS

**Jesus, I believe in you. Jesus, I hope in You.
Jesus, I want to love You with all my heart.**

Jesus, I thank You for having come to dwell in me. I welcome You into my heart and I ask you to “crowd out” whatever might be there that is not of You. And I desire to give You full reign as my Lord, my Savior and my King. Thank You for giving Your life for me on the Cross; loving me this much and allowing me to receive You into my heart in this present moment.

**And now that You are so close to me, please help me love You more and more,
and serve You by loving the people around me. Amen.**

Praying and focusing on this one prayer throughout the entire year will allow you to encounter Christ and to deepen your friendship with Him. The following resources are meant to foster this process. Please pray the *Prayer to Jesus* every day and occasionally, such as once a week, look over one aspect from the resources below to help you go deeper.

At the heart of it all: Jesus cares deeply for you and wants you to get to know Him better
Jesus knows you personally and loves you, even with your faults and weaknesses. Jesus said: “I no longer call you servants, for a servant does not know what his Master is doing; but I have called you friends! For all things that I heard from My Father I have made known to you.” (John 15:15) Our Lord wants you to get to know Him by spending time with Him. You will better realize how much He loves you. Jesus “delights in you.” (Psalm 18:19)

Why do we want to pray the *Prayer to Jesus* every day?

- 1) To encounter the Person of Jesus on a daily basis and
- 2) To develop / deepen our friendship with the Person of Jesus
- 3) To become more attuned to Jesus’ True Presence in the Holy Eucharist
- 4) To develop a continual awareness of the reality of God’s presence, Who is always with us.



Meaning of the Words of the *Prayer to Jesus*

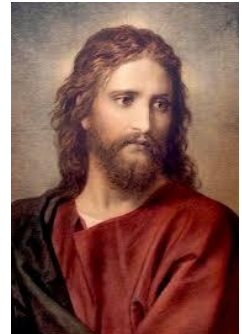
- This prayer expresses your faith in Jesus, which means that you believe that He is God; and it expresses your hope in Him that you trust in all of His Promises throughout the Bible, which He has kept. And you ask Jesus to strengthen your love for Him.
- You thank Jesus for dwelling in your soul through Baptism. Note: You don’t want to reject Him through serious sin.
- You ask Christ to purify your hearts of anything that is not good for you. And you ask that He have full reign of your heart as He is your Savior and God.



- You thank Jesus for His incredible love for you by giving His life for you and allowing you to be united with Him by receiving Him in Holy Communion.
- As Jesus dwells within you, He strengthens you through His grace. You show your love for Him by the way you love others.

Learning the Principles

- The words of this prayer are addressed to Jesus.
- The *Prayer to Jesus* is a powerful prayer for any time, and most appropriate for praying after receiving Jesus in Holy Communion.
- Prayer is a vital necessity. Prayer and Christian life are inseparable. (CCC 2744-2745) In other words, when you pray with your heart, you will come to know Jesus Christ personally and deeply. As this friendship with Him grows, you will recognize more and more how much He loves you and how much you love Him. From this love, received and given, you will respond from a natural desire to be one with Him in all things, and live your life in a way that is reflective of His own. This brings much peace and happiness – interior joy – to yourself and those around you.
- The *Prayer to Jesus* is a prayer that will help you on your spiritual journey to know, love and be more committed to Jesus as His disciple.
- The spiritual transformation that occurs upon reception of the Holy Eucharist during the Sacrifice of the Mass can be more fully realized and appreciated when approached with an attitude of humble and reverent prayer, asking God for the grace to internalize the beautiful, life-giving gift of His Son.
- **You will want to become more attuned to the Real Presence of Jesus in the Holy Eucharist.** One way is by attending Mass and thereby receiving Jesus in Holy Communion more often. Another way is to spend time in a Catholic Church and/or adoration Chapel to be with Jesus who is truly present.

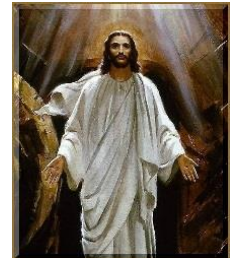


Activities for Learning the Words

- Pray the *Prayer to Jesus* every day, and at every appropriate opportunity throughout the year.
- Pray with your heart; not just rattling words. “Prayer is internalized to the extent that you become aware of Him ‘to whom we speak.’ In the case of the *Prayer to Jesus*, you are speaking with the Person of Jesus. If you become aware that you are distracted and not really addressing the words of the prayer to the Person of Jesus, simply re-focus and then continue. Don’t waste time getting frustrated; simply re-focus and continue.
- Make a request of Jesus for a specific need, such as healing for a sick child, help to find a good job, rain for the farmers, safe travel in a storm, etc. When a prayer is answered, it makes faith come alive and will help you to deepen your relationship with Jesus. At a time when you have a specific prayer that was answered, it is most helpful for you to write it down, in order to remember it in the future, and then possibly relate it to a trusted friend.



- One thing you can be sure of is that God always answers every prayer. The answer might be “yes”, the answer could be “no”, or the answer could be “not yet” because God knows there is a “right timing” involved and that timing has not yet come. Sometimes the answer is “yes” because God knows that what you are praying for is for your good. Sometimes, the answer to your prayer might be “no” because sometimes you pray for something that you think will be the best thing for you, while indeed, you are wrong. Thank goodness the answer from God is sometimes ‘no,’ if what you are asking for is not good for you. And sometimes the answer to your prayer is “not yet” because God’s timing is always perfect. For example: He knows that you need a more mature disposition of heart in order to receive the answer. Further, this could also include the hearts of other persons as well as circumstances surrounding the situation. When you seemingly don’t receive an answer because of God’s perfect timing, you need to remember the importance of patience.
- The answer to prayer may also come in the form of silence, which is also guidance for you from the Lord. A lesson to learn from this situation – feeling like God is not responding over a long period of time – is to grow in your trust of Jesus; that He always wants what is best for you. God is always good even when the circumstances around you are seemingly difficult and last much longer than you want them to. The “Good News” is that “God is shaping all things together for good for those who love Him.” (Romans 8:28) It is the very nature of Who He is. Nothing in the world can change that; and you want to hold onto this truth with your whole heart for the duration.
- God desires a relationship with you. You don’t want to just ask for good things from God with no desire to speak with Him and develop a friendship with Him.
- To become more attuned to Jesus’ True Presence in the Holy Eucharist, visit your parish Church or a local Chapel. You show your belief by your attentiveness to Jesus and genuflecting on the right knee to the floor, or a profound bow if you cannot genuflect. Therefore, take time to acknowledge and think about the Person of Jesus when you enter a Catholic Church or Chapel, and genuflect in a reverent way. Life brings distractions and therefore this is something to be mindful of in an ongoing way.
- Language is important for how you refer to the Holy Eucharist. Avoid referring to the Holy Eucharist as the bread and wine; rather the Eucharist is the Body and Blood of Jesus. This change occurs after the consecration during Mass where the priest repeats the words of Jesus from the Last Supper, “This is My Body.” The host become the Body of Christ – Jesus Himself. When the priest prays, “This is My Blood,” the wine becomes the Precious Blood of Jesus.
- See the key Scriptures on the Holy Eucharist below regarding the Real Presence of Jesus: The sixth chapter of the Gospel of John 6. All of the sixth chapter in John’s Gospel refers to the Holy Eucharist, including the multiplication miracle of the loaves and fishes, which points to Christ feeding us in the Eucharist.



- Jesus said, “Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in you” John 6:53.
- “I Myself am the living bread which came down from Heaven; if any one eats of this Bread, he will live forever” John 6:51.
- The Institution of the Holy Eucharist at the Last Supper: Luke 22:7-20; Matthew 26:17-29; Mark 14:12-25.
- Ask the Holy Spirit to help you to prepare for Mass with an attitude of love and worship. You will want to prepare to worship God in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass that will be made present on the holy altar.
- Read and study the words of the hymn, *Down in Adoration Falling* by St Thomas Aquinas
- After praying the *Prayer to Jesus*, allow time for silence so that you may journal about your thoughts or feelings or desires or problems or intentions etc.
- Recite the *Prayer to Jesus* before a Crucifix, or a statue of Jesus, and then allow time for silence so you may speak with Jesus.
- Commit the *Prayer to Jesus* to memory - learn the words by heart! In order for this to happen, you will need to be “taken in” with the meaning of the words, letting yourself be deeply touched in a personal way. Then you will be personally engaged, and as a result, your heart will be open to Jesus.

Spiritual Comprehension

- The *Prayer to Jesus* is the prayer that you will want to know by heart and with good understanding before you decide to go deeper with another prayer. Plan to spend an entire year praying it every day.

Encountering Jesus in Prayer

- Take some time to quiet down interiorly. Slowly pray the *Prayer to Jesus*. Pick out a phrase or two from the Prayer. For example: Jesus, I thank You for having come to dwell in me. I welcome You into my heart. Repeat these words over and over again slowly. Think about how these words relate to Jesus and His love and care for you. Have a heart-to-Heart conversation with Jesus about something that is weighing on your heart. This takes prayer to the next level of a deep personal encounter. Another helpful step is to write down some notes about the prayer experience for future reference.
- Sometimes, after praying the *Prayer to Jesus*, allow time for journaling your thoughts or feelings or desires or problems or intentions etc.
- Since the *Prayer to Jesus* is a Christ-centered prayer, you will want to pray this prayer with deep respect and love for Christ, which will lead to deeper friendship with Him and adoration of Him each time you recite it.
- “Adoration of the Eucharist is acknowledgment that, because the whole Christ is really present in the Blessed Sacrament, He is to be adored in the Eucharist as the incarnate God.” (Modern Catholic Dictionary, p. 13) Jesus is truly present in the consecrated Host in the monstrance. If your parish Church has adoration of the



Blessed Sacrament, schedule a time when you may go to be quiet and simply rest in the presence of Jesus.

- If your parish does not have times of adoration, you may go early to Mass on Sunday, or remain after Mass. Spend time in silence, focusing on Jesus truly present in the tabernacle. The tabernacle is the beautiful “receptacle in the Church in which the consecrated Eucharist is reserved for Communion for the sick and dying. Reservation of the Eucharist in the tabernacle lends itself to private devotional visits and adoration of our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament by the faithful.” (Glossary of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*) The red sanctuary candle is burning to alert you to the fact that Jesus is present in the tabernacle.



Scriptural Foundation of the words of the *Prayer to Jesus*

- Faith, hope and charity (love) are mentioned in the first two lines of the *Prayer to Jesus*. You are given the supernatural gifts of faith, hope and love in the Sacrament of Baptism. These gifts make it possible for you to live in relationship with the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. “And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.” (1Corinthians 13:13)
- The middle part of the *Pray to Jesus* is focused on giving Him thanks. In Scripture we read, “Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you”; “Continue steadfastly in prayer, being watchful in it with thanksgiving.” (1Thessalonians 5:18; Colossians 4:2)
- The middle part of the *Pray to Jesus* is also focused on Jesus coming into your heart – abiding in you: “As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Abide in My love. If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in His love. These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full.” (John 15: 9-11)
Jesus most truly abides in you in Holy Communion. The 6th Chapter of John’s Gospel is called the Bread of Life Discourse, with verses 53-58 quoted here:
“So Jesus said to them, ‘Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. Whoever feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day. For My flesh is true food, and My blood is true drink. Whoever feeds on My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him. As the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father,



so whoever feeds on Me, he also will live because of Me. This is the Bread that came down from Heaven, not like the bread the fathers ate, and died. Whoever feeds on this Bread will live forever.”

- You are asking Jesus to “crowd out” of your heart what is not of Him. We read in Psalm 51, “Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.” (verse 10) As Jesus “crowds out” what is not of Him, there is more room for Him.
- You want Jesus to be the King of your heart. On the last Sunday of the Church Year, usually the last Sunday of November, the entire Universal Church celebrates the Feast of “Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe.

Scriptures on Jesus as King:

Therefore Pilate said to Him, "So You are a king?" Jesus answered, "You say correctly that I am a King. For this I have been born, and for this I have come into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice." (John 18:37)

...Which He will bring about at the proper time--He who is the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords.. (Timothy 6:15)

- Thank Jesus for giving His life for you on the Cross. Jesus reminds you, “Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends.” (John 15:13)
- Jesus gives us His Divine Life in the Sacraments, which we call sanctifying grace. By cooperating with His grace, we are strengthened to love Him and our neighbor out of love for Him. Jesus said, “This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you...You are my friends if you do what I command you. No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from My Father I have made known to you. You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide, so that whatever you ask the Father in My name, He may give it to you. These things I command you, so that you will love one another. (John 15:12, 14-17)



Resources

- How to Get More out of Holy Communion by St. Julian Eymard, Sophia Institute Press
- Excellent books by St. Julian Eymard, “the Apostle of the Eucharist”:
Vol 1 The Real Presence A collection of sermons dealing with the Eucharist leading to a better knowledge and deeper love of Christ in the Eucharist.
Vol 2 Holy Communion concentrates on how to attend Mass meditatively, to make a better Communion, a more perfect thanksgiving, and much more. A real gem of a book.
- Eucharist – Sacred Meal, Sacrifice, Real Presence DVD Series by Bishop Robert Barron. This is available for free rental from the Office for Catechesis and Evangelization.
- The Mass DVD Series by Bishop Robert Barron (excellent) Go to Word on Fire <https://mass.wordonfire.org/study>

