



Prayer Changes Things

Developing a Living Relationship with God

There is always a need with any relationship to have daily communication, which should include both speaking with and listening to the other person. Honest conversation between husband and wife, friends and even colleagues can include questioning, thanking, debating, balking, and arguing. In our relationship with God, our prayerful conversation may include these aspects, as well as complaining, interceding, asking, beseeching, pleading, invoking, entreating, crying out, praising, contemplating, and even struggle! (See Catechism paragraphs 2575-2577, 2629)

Most notable is the fact that God desires a relationship with each one of us, which He is continuously and tirelessly instigating. Wow! This sure warms the heart, and hopefully it moves us to respond to His intense love.

One way to dialogue with God is by following a prayer card that provides a format which incorporates some of the means of conversation as mentioned. A sample prayer card is provided:

Begin your prayer with the *Sign of the Cross.*

The *Sign of the Cross* affirms our belief in the three Persons of the Triune God and that we are saved by Jesus' death on the cross.

Sign of the Cross

**In the name of the Father, and of
the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.**

Amen

(Pray together aloud)

Heavenly Father, please give me the grace to quiet down inside so as to become aware of Your love for me. Heavenly Father, I want to spend this time with You. Help me to give You my full attention and to pray from my heart.

Our Father

**Our Father who art in Heaven,
hallowed be Thy name.**

**Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be
done on earth as it is in Heaven.**

**Give us this day our daily bread
and forgive us our trespasses as
we forgive those who trespass
against us and lead us not in to
temptation but deliver us
from evil. Amen.**

- **EXPRESS** silently your sorrow for any unkindness, selfishness or disrespect toward other people, remembering that all sin offends God.
- **PRAY** the *Our Father* a second time, silently from the heart, more slowly than the first time.
- **CHOOSE a word** or phrase from the Prayer that stands out for you. Silently think about it, speak with God about it, and share it aloud with those with whom you are praying.
- **THANK** our Heavenly Father in your own words for a blessing.
- **ASK** the Lord for any request that is in your heart. Share aloud.

Close this time of prayer with the *Sign of the Cross*

This basic format is part of the "Going Deeper in Prayer" Initiative. Along with each prayer card, there are also resources, including an explanation of the meaning of the words, the principles underpinning the prayer and the Scriptural foundation. Fourteen different prayers are available at www.dioc.org/prayer/.

The prayer cards also provide reasons why we want to pray a specific prayer each day. With the *Our Father*, Jesus wanted us to experience peace by asking the Father for everything that we need. He knows the most important things in life that will bring us true joy and peace and He is continually faithful. As we speak with our Heavenly Father each day in prayer, we will come to recognize more and more how much He loves us and find **peace** and **calm** in the midst of life's difficulties.

May each of us "go deeper" in our relationship with God. He waits patiently for you and I to respond.

By Ann Lankford
Office for Catechesis and
Evangelization



DIocese of LA CROSSE