

Going Deeper in Prayer

THE MORNING OFFERING

O Jesus, through the Immaculate Heart of Mary, I offer You all my prayers, works, joys, and sufferings of this day in union with the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass throughout the world.

I offer them for all the intentions of your Sacred Heart: the salvation of souls, reparation for sin, and the reunion of all Christians.

I offer them for the intentions of our bishops and of all Apostles of Prayer, and in particular for those recommended by our Holy Father this month. *Amen.*

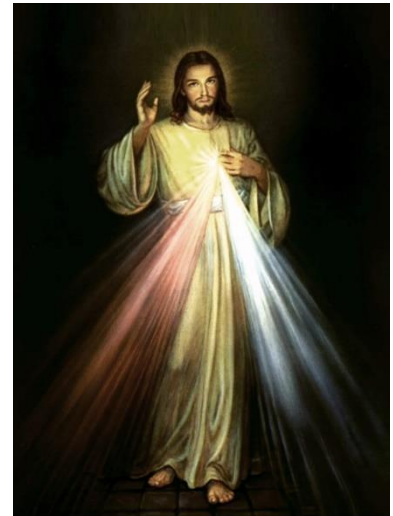
Praying and focusing on this one prayer throughout the entire year will allow the you to encounter Jesus and to deepen your friendship with Him. The following resources are meant to foster this process. You are invited to commit to praying *The Morning Offering* every day.

Jesus' love for you

Jesus knows you and loves you. In the Bible the LORD says, "Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name; you are Mine!" (Isaiah 43:1)

Why do we want to pray the *Morning Offering* each day?

- 1) We want to encounter the Person of Jesus on a daily basis.
- 2) Deepen our friendship with the Person of Jesus.
- 3) Become accustom, at the beginning of each day, to become aware of God's presence within us and to greet Him. This will lead to a continual awareness of the reality of His presence.



Jesus I trust in You

Meaning of the Words of the *Morning Offering*

O

Jesus, through the Immaculate Heart of Mary,

Begin the prayer by addressing Jesus, your Creator and Lord, your Savior and God, your Model and Friend. Remember with gratitude all that Jesus did out of His deep love for each individual person. Jesus died on the Cross to forgive your sins and open the gates of Heaven. Begin your Morning Offering in a spirit of gratitude and generous devotion.

Further, offer this prayer through the Immaculate Heart of Mary. God chose Mary to be the Mother of Jesus. And Mary freely gave her "yes" to God's plan. Jesus took on human flesh so that He could save you from your sins. Therefore, Mary's role in God's plan of salvation



is extremely important.

Mary's Heart is referred to as Immaculate because she was preserved from the stain of Original Sin from the first moment of her conception. Further, Mary, through her own free will and in cooperation with God's grace, never sinned throughout her entire life. Therefore, Mary's Heart is pure, in other words, immaculate.

I offer You all my prayers, works, joys, and sufferings of this day in union with the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass throughout the world.

It is so important that you offer your entire day to God. According to St. John Vianney, "All that we do without offering it to God is wasted." Pope Saint John Paul II observed that the Morning Offering is "of fundamental importance in the life of each and every one of the faithful." This prayer is simple but if you truly believe that each new day is a gift from God, it follows that you would want to show your gratitude by making the most of that gift. By starting your day with the Morning Offering, you are turning each moment of your life into a prayer, even though it will not always be on your mind. You want to offer everything in union with the Masses being offered throughout the world because the Mass is the highest form of prayer. In the Eucharist, the sacrifice of Jesus on the Cross is made present, and this perfect sacrifice reconciled us to God.

(Catechism of the Catholic Church, hereafter CCC; paragraph 1436)

I offer them for all the intentions of your Sacred Heart: the salvation of souls, reparation for sin, and the reunion of all Christians.



Jesus' Heart is called the Sacred Heart and is a sign of perfect love for you. The intentions of Jesus' Sacred Heart are the most important things in life and for which you need and want to pray.

Jesus knew and loved you during His life, His agony and His Passion, and gave Himself up for you. He has loved you with a human heart. For this reason, the Sacred Heart of Jesus, pierced by your sins and for your salvation, "is quite rightly considered the chief sign and symbol of that . . . love with which the divine Redeemer continually loves the eternal Father and all human beings without exception." (CCC 478)

Salvation of souls: Jesus came and gave His life for you and all humanity so that each person can be saved and spend eternity with God in Heaven. Jesus said, "And this is the will of God, that I should not lose even one of all those he has given me, but that I should raise them up at the last day." (John 6:39)

Reparation for sin: You are to make reparation for something that you have done wrong, such as an offense against another person's reputation. (CCC 2487) Reparation means to make amends for your sins and the sins of others. You make reparation for sin through prayer, fasting and almsgiving.

Christ made amends for Adam's disobedience and our sins (CCC 411, 615).

In the sacrifice of the Mass, Jesus in the Eucharist is offered in reparation for the sins of the living and the dead. (CCC 1414)

Reunion of all Christians:

Jesus founded only one Church and gave the Keys of the Kingdom to Peter, the first Pope. It is God's desire that all Christians be united in His one true Church. At the Last Supper,



Jesus prayed the High Priestly Prayer as found in the Gospel of John. Jesus prayed, "My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their word, that all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me and I am in You. I pray that they may be [one] in us, that the world may believe that you sent Me." (John 17:20-21)

I offer them for the intentions of our bishops, and of all Apostles of Prayer, and in particular for those recommended by our Holy Father this month. Amen.

You will want to offer your prayers, works, joy and sufferings for the intentions of bishops, who are the successors of the Apostles. Bishops are to guard and protect the Deposit of Faith, so that it is not changed, as the Faith was given to the Apostles by Christ. (1 Timothy 6:20) The bishop, here in the Diocese of La Crosse, is the chief teacher of the Faith and shepherd of our souls.

About the bishop (CCC 1555-1556)

To fulfill their exalted mission, "the apostles were endowed by Christ with a special outpouring of the Holy Spirit coming upon them, and by the imposition of hands they passed on to their auxiliaries [the bishops] the gift of the Spirit, which is transmitted down to our day through episcopal consecration." (Acts 1:8, 2:4; John 20:22-23; 1 Timothy 4:14; 2 Timothy 1:6-7)

About the Pope (CCC 880-882)

When Christ instituted the Twelve, "He constituted [them] in the form of a college or permanent assembly, at the head of which he placed Peter, chosen from among them." (Luke 6:13; John 21:15-17) Just as "by the Lord's institution, St. Peter and the rest of the Apostles constitute a single apostolic college, so in like fashion the Roman Pontiff, Peter's successor, and the bishops, the successors of the Apostles, are related with and united to one another."

The Lord made Simon, whom he named Peter, the "rock" of his Church. Jesus gave Peter the authority of His Church – the power of the keys – to bind and loose sin, and instituted him shepherd of the whole flock. (Matthew 16:18-19; CCC 981)

St. Peter holding the keys of the Kingdom, symbolic of his authority given by Christ

"The office of binding and loosing which was given to Peter was also assigned to the college of apostles united to its head."

This pastoral office of Peter and the other apostles belongs to the Church's very foundation and is continued by the bishops under the primacy of the Pope.

The Pope, Bishop of Rome and Peter's successor, "is the perpetual and visible source and foundation of the unity both of the bishops and of the whole company of the faithful."

The Pope is the Vicar (representative) of Christ on earth.



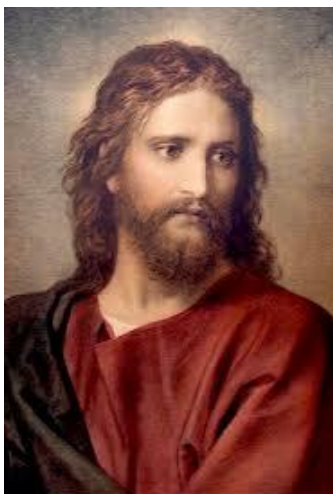
Learning the Principles

- *The Morning Offering* is a prayer to Jesus. It was written in 1844 by Fr. François-Xavier Gautrelet for his Apostleship of Prayer.

- The main focus of the *Morning Offering* is to start the day by giving everything to God: all the people that you are called to love today, and all that you are called to, including difficulties, joys and sufferings. Prayer is the best thing that you can give God as the first thing of your day by recognizing His presence and putting the day in His hands.
- This prayer truly offers God *everything* in your day, both the good and bad, while reminding you of the importance of praying for others, with the help of our Blessed Mother.
- *The Morning Offering* provides a great foundation for building a solid prayer life. You can supplement your offering by speaking to Jesus throughout the day, reaffirming your desire to offer up all daily activities. When problems arise or you are faced with a mundane task, a quick “I offer this to you, Lord” helps you to focus on the prayerful nature of the activity. On the other hand, saying “Thank you, Jesus” for a pleasant experience is a great way to express your appreciation for the many joys that you are granted. Such comments also allow your friendship with Christ to grow. As time goes on, you will find yourself becoming more aware of Our Lord’s presence in your daily activities.

Explanation

- *The Morning Offering* reminds you that you want to engage in your actual work with a spirit of excellence in conjunction with the intention of doing it all for Christ and the conversion of souls – those who do not believe in God or have rejected Him.
- Saint Mechtilde was a Benedictine nun from Germany (1241-1298) who had visions of Jesus. She related the following words of Jesus: "When you awake in the morning, let your first act be to greet My Heart, and to offer Me your own. Whoever shall breathe a sigh toward Me from the bottom of his heart when he awakes in the morning and shall ask Me to work all his works in him throughout the day, will draw Me to himself. For never does a man breathe a sigh of longing aspiration toward Me without drawing Me nearer to him than I was before." (St. Joseph’s Abbey, Spencer, MA)



- Saint John Mary Vianney said: "All that we do without offering it to God is wasted."
- “The Christian begins his day, his prayers, and his activities with the Sign of the Cross... and dedicates the day to the glory of God and calls on the Savior's grace which lets him act in the Spirit as a child of the Father.” (CCC 2157)
- Be encouraged to make a request of Jesus for a specific need. Give an example from your own life, such as help on a test, for a sick grandmother, rain for the farmers, safe travel in a storm. When a prayer is answered, it makes faith come alive for you and will help you to develop a deeper relationship with Jesus. When you have a specific prayer that was answered, thank Him for this blessing. 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. It is also beneficial to share it with someone, building up their faith.
- Seek to pray this prayer with their heart; not just rattling words. “Prayer is



internalized to the extent that you become aware of Him ‘to whom you speak.’ In the case of the *Morning Offering*, you are speaking with the Person of Jesus.

- Prayer is a vital necessity. Prayer and Christian life are inseparable. (CCC 2744-2745)

Activities for Learning the Words

- Pray the *Morning Offering* every day and at every appropriate opportunity.
- Seek the deeper meaning of one phrase at a time, over a period of time before moving to the next phrase.
- Learn the prayer “by heart.”
- Speak with a friend about how the *Morning Offering* is meaningful to your life.
- Ponder the pictures of Sacred Art included on these pages, to notice something new. What significance does this have for you?

Spiritual Comprehension

- You will want to understand the wording well and develop a daily habit of praying *The Morning Offering* before you decide to go deeper with another prayer. Plan to spend an entire year praying *The Morning Offering* each day.
- Are you encountering the Person of Jesus when you pray this prayer?
- Allow time to journal at various times, noting what stands out for you in the prayer.
- After becoming familiar with this prayer, write down the effects that it has on your life.

Encountering Jesus in Prayer

- After you feel that you understand each phrase of the *Morning Offering*, allow some time for silence, to reflect on what stood out for you. This takes it to the next level of a deep personal encounter with Jesus.
As a further progression, have a “heart-to-heart” conversation with Jesus or Mary.
- Since the *Morning Offering* is a Christ-centered prayer, you want to pray this prayer with deep respect and love for Jesus, which will lead to deeper friendship with Him and adoration of Him each time we recite it.
- Visit your parish Church or a Chapel where Our Lord is reserved in the tabernacle and allow a time of silence. Acknowledge that you truly believe that the Person of Christ is in the tabernacle by a reverent genuflection and attentiveness to Him. As you spend time with Him, gradually He will give you an awareness of His Presence.



- Allow a time of silence where you may pray *The Morning Offering* in the following manner:
 1. Read the words slowly and thoughtfully, 2 or 3 times
 2. Consider the meaning of the words and does it remind you of something in your life? (In other words, ponder how this does or might relate to your life.)
 3. Notice what word or phrase stood out for you and why (Conversation with God) (The first three steps above are considered meditation)
 4. Repeat silently a word or phrase several times slowly and then rest in God (This step is considered contemplation – being still and resting in God’s presence)
 5. Allow time to journal

Scriptural Foundation

- Jesus loves us and gives us everything. We want to offer the gift of our lives back to Him. “...God proves His love for us: that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.” (Romans 4:8) “He loved me and delivered Himself for me.” (Galatians 2:20)
- Immaculate Heart of Mary: God created Mary “full of grace” (Luke 1:28) and her heart was completely pure with no stain of sin because she always cooperated with God’s grace.
- The Sacred Heart of Jesus is the chief sign of His love, and immediately after dying on the Cross, was pierced by a lance for our sins and for our salvation. (John 19:34)



Longinus piercing Christ’s side with a spear

- The blind man kept calling out to Jesus. Jesus said to Bartimeus, “What do you want Me to do for you?” (Mark 10:46-52) In the same way, Jesus wants you to ask Him for what you need. Jesus loves you and so ask Him simply and directly.

Resources

- Video of Msgr. Joseph Hirsch, priest of the Diocese of La Crosse, singing “Salvation Poem” at the Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe. The song is about living for Jesus and why we would want to do this. <https://vimeo.com/37612135> (4min. 22 sec.)