

Prayer – an introduction

Prayer is how we connect with Jesus.



God wants us to be still and know that he is God.

and to make a joyful NOISE to him!



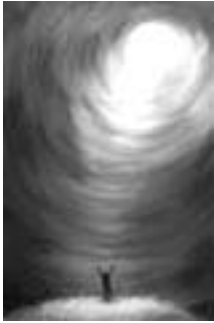




We can learn when to be still and when to make a joyful noise by talking and listening to God. We do this through prayer.

If you pray often, you'll get the hang of it. Here are some tips to get you started.

- Find a quiet spot where you won't be interrupted. Don't be embarrassed, just say 'I'm going to say my prayers.' Make sure you pick a time when you don't have to help with things around the house.
- Use the five types of Talking Prayer to guide you. Start with 'God, you're great.'
- If you have enough time and it's quiet enough, try the Listening Prayer on page 3.
- Do this almost every day, even when you don't feel like it. It is at times like these when Jesus can help you the most!

Some types of TALKING prayer

	<p>God, you're great! Because...</p>
<p>I'm sorry, God, that I did ... or didn't do ...</p>	
	<p>Jesus, please help ... (a person I know)</p>
<p>Thank you, God, for ...</p>	
	<p>Jesus, please help me walk with you, by ... (doing what)</p>

A type of LISTENING prayer



This is an ancient way of praying. These are Father Thomas Keating's instructions.

Choose a sacred word. For example, God, Jesus.

Jesus

Sitting comfortably and with your eyes closed, concentrate lightly on your chosen word.

Concentrate on your word, relaxing so you can notice that you are close to God.



Your thoughts will come in. When they do, return ever-so-gently to your word.

Adults do this for 20 minutes once or twice a day.

It is enough for young people to spend 5 minutes at first, working towards 10 minutes.

Fr Paul, Madeleine or Meg at Church can help you with this listening prayer.

A special type of

LET'S GET TOGETHER AT A MEAL prayer

At mealtimes, we talk to each other and we listen to each other.



When we have lunch with God, we talk to him and listen to him by praying.

We call this meal the Thanksgiving Feast (the Eucharist).

(Eucharist = *yoo-kar-ist*)

God wanted to be really close friends with us. But we weren't really that close, and we didn't know him very well. And some people did really bad things.

But God still loves us, and wanted us to be closer to him...



So he sent Jesus to us.



Now, Jesus is really God, and he was a real person too.



When Jesus died, he took with him all our badness, and all our separate-ness from him, so that we can be close friends with God and himself.

After Jesus died, God gave Jesus new life! Everyone who saw him was amazed.



But it wasn't just Jesus who got the new life! Everyone who believes in Jesus has that new life too!

Because we have that new life, we can be close friends with God.



So, at the Eucharist meal, we are having lunch with our close friend God, and living that new life with him.

And that's exactly what God wants.

If this is hard to understand, don't worry – adults keep learning new understandings of these amazing facts too. The Eucharist is at the centre of the Christian faith.

Keep asking questions – of people – and from God – in your prayers.