

Today's readings teach us some important things about prayer.

We need to pray.

Prayer is not always words.

Prayer is a dialogue, a conversation with God.

Prayer is more than a shopping list; more than I want, I need.

One can pray at any moment and sometimes just for a moment.

We need to pray.

Jesus often went off alone to pray, especially at the most critical times in his life.

Elijah is alone and afraid, fleeing for his life from Jezabel.

Peter is afraid, feeling threatened by the storm around him.

Why do we need to pray?

The world around us. Our families, our communities.

We need to pray in our moments of joy, frustration, hope, pain, gratitude, anger and fear.

We saw in the first reading that after the winds, earthquakes, and fire Elijah encountered God in peace, a quiet whisper.

After Peter cried out to Jesus to save him, the storm was calmed.

We need prayer to find peace in our lives that sometimes get stormy.

“Be still, and know that I am God”

Jesus says “Take courage, it is I; do not be afraid.”

Jesus says “Come”, and we start to go focused on him.

The world around us distracts us and we become afraid.

We shouldn't be afraid.

Prayer is not always words, but more a longing in the heart for God's presence.

In St. Paul's letter, we hear the words but the prayer is in his longing for the good of the Israelite people.

Pope Francis has suggested this prayer:

Holy Spirit may my heart be open to the Word of God, may my heart be open to good, may my heart be open to the beauty of God, every day.
Pray every day for the Holy Spirit to open our hearts to Jesus.

Prayer is more a state of our hearts than words in our minds

Prayer is a dialogue, a conversation with God.

Dialogue (implies 2)

We don't do all the talking.

Sometimes we have to shut up and listen.

We need to make time, even if just a few minutes, several times a day, to be alone and quiet with God.

Let our hearts do the talking and the listening.

Prayer is more than a shopping list; more than I want, I need.

Thanksgiving, Praise

Pope Francis' five finger prayer guide.

1. The thumb is the closest finger to you. So start praying for those who are closest to you. They are the persons easiest to remember

2. The next finger is the index. Pray for those who teach you, instruct you and heal you

3. The following finger is the tallest. It reminds us of our leaders, the governors and those who have authority.

4. The fourth finger is the ring finger. It may surprise you, it is our weakest finger. It should remind us to pray for the weakest, the sick or those plagued by problems.

5. And finally we have our smallest finger, the smallest of all. Your pinkie should remind you to pray for yourself. When you are done praying for the other four groups, you will be able to see your own needs but in the proper perspective.

One can pray at any moment and sometimes just for a moment.

Pray often.

It's important and it's possible.

Pray the vocal prayers of the Mass, the sacraments, the rosary.

Pay attention to the words of these prayers, ponder them in your heart.

At any moment, let your thoughts call out to God.

Share whatever is in your heart with God in prayer and trust.

When we trust that no matter what storms seem to threaten us, God is with us, we feel peace.

Mary is our most beautiful example of trust in God.

Jesus, in the garden of Gethsemane

Let your prayer be a constant awareness of the presence of God in your life; he hears every word your heart says.