

TRINITARIAN PRAYER
**Communion with the One God -
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit**
Texts from the
Catechism of the Catholic Church



In the living tradition of prayer, each Church proposes to its faithful, according to its historic, social and cultural context, a language for prayer: words, melodies, gestures, iconography. The Magisterium of the Church has the task of discerning the fidelity of these ways of praying to the tradition of apostolic faith; it is for pastors and catechists to explain their meaning, always in relation to Jesus Christ. (2663)

Prayer to the Father

Through Christ we come to the Father

There is no other way of Christian prayer than Christ. Whether our prayer is communal or personal, vocal or interior, it has access to the Father only if we pray “in the name” of Jesus. The sacred humanity of Jesus is therefore the way by which the Holy Spirit teaches us to pray to God our Father. (2664)

Prayer to the Son of God

The Church teaches us to pray to the Lord Jesus

The prayer of the Church, nourished by the Word of God and the celebration of the liturgy, teaches us to pray to the Lord Jesus. Even though her prayer is addressed above all to the Father, it includes in all the liturgical traditions forms of prayer addressed to Christ. Certain psalms, given their use in the Prayer of the Church, and the New Testament place on our lips and engrave in our hearts prayer to Christ in the form of invocations: Son of God, Word of God, Lord, Saviour, Lamb of God, King, Beloved Son, Son of the Virgin, Good Shepherd, our Life, our Light, our Hope, our Resurrection, Friend of mankind... (2665)

The holy name of Jesus

But the one name that contains everything is the one that the Son of God received in his incarnation: JESUS. The divine name may not be spoken by human lips, but by assuming our humanity The Word of God hands it over to us and we can invoke it: “Jesus”, “YHWH saves”. (Cf. Ex 3:14; 33:19-23; Mt. 1:21) The name “Jesus” contains all: God and man and the whole economy of creation and salvation. To pray “Jesus” is to invoke him and to call him within us. His name is the only one that contains the presence it signifies. Jesus is the Risen One, and whoever invokes the name of Jesus is welcoming the Son of God who loved him and who gave himself up for him. (Rom 10:13; Acts 2:21; 3:15-16; Gal 2:20) (2666)

The “Jesus Prayer”

This simple invocation of faith developed in the tradition of prayer under many forms in East and West. The most usual formulation, transmitted by the spiritual writers of the Sinai [desert], Syria and Mt. Athos, is the invocation, “Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on us sinners”. It combines the Christological hymn of *Philippians* 2:6-11 with the cry of the publican and the blind men begging for light. (Cf. Mk 10:46-52; Lk 18:13) By it the heart is opened to human wretchedness and the Saviour's mercy. (2667)

Pray to Jesus at all times

The invocation of the holy name of Jesus is the simplest way of praying always. When the holy name is repeated often by a humbly attentive heart, the prayer is not lost by heaping up empty phrases, but holds fast to the word and “brings forth fruit with patience”. (Cf. Lk 8:15) This prayer is possible “at all times” because it is not one occupation among others but the only occupation: that of loving God, which animates and transfigures every action in Christ Jesus. (2668)

Prayer to the Heart of Jesus and the Way of the Cross

The prayer of the Church venerates and honours the *Heart of Jesus* just as it invokes his most holy name. It adores the incarnate Word and his Heart which, out of love for men, he allowed to be pierced by our sins. Christian prayer loves to follow *the Way of the Cross* in the Saviour's steps. The stations from the Praetorium to Golgotha and the tomb trace the way of Jesus, who by his Holy Cross has redeemed the world. (2669)

Prayer to the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit teaches us to pray

“No one can say 'Jesus is Lord' except by the Holy Spirit” (1 Cor 12:3). Every time we begin to pray to Jesus it is the Holy Spirit who draws us on the way of prayer by his prevenient grace. Since he teaches us to pray by recalling Christ, how could we not pray to the Spirit too? That is why the Church invites us to call upon the Holy Spirit every day, especially at the beginning and the end of every important action.

“If the Spirit should not be worshipped, how can he divinize me through Baptism? If he should be worshipped, should he not be the object of adoration?” (St. Gregory of Nazianzus) (2670)

“Come, Holy Spirit”

The traditional form of petition to the Holy Spirit is to invoke the Father through Christ our Lord to give us the Consoler Spirit. Jesus insists on this petition to be made in his name at the very moment when he promises the gift of the Spirit of Truth. But the simplest and most direct prayer is also traditional, “Come, Holy Spirit”, and every liturgical tradition has developed it in antiphons and hymns. (Cf. Lk 11:13. Jn 14:17; 15:26; 16:13).

“Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and enkindle in them the fire of your love.” (*Roman Missal*, Pentecost, Sequence)

“Heavenly King, Consoler Spirit, Spirit of Truth, present everywhere and filling all things, treasure of all good and source of all life, come dwell in us, cleanse and save us, you who are All-Good.” (*Byzantine Liturgy*, Pentecost Vespers) (2671)

The Holy Spirit, Master of Christian Prayer

The Holy Spirit, whose anointing permeates our whole being, is the interior Master of Christian prayer. He is the artisan of the living tradition of prayer. To be sure, there are as many paths of prayer as there are persons who pray, but it is the same Spirit acting in all and with all. It is in the communion of the Holy Spirit that Christian prayer is prayer in the Church. (2672)

IN BRIEF

- **Prayer is primarily addressed to the Father; it can also be directed toward Jesus, particularly by the invocation of his holy name: “Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on us sinners”. (2680)**
- **“No one can say 'Jesus is Lord', except by the Holy Spirit” (1 Cor 12,3). The Church invites us to invoke the Holy Spirit as the interior Teacher of Christian prayer. (2681)**

