

## Questioning Together: Saint Mark's Episcopal Cathedral

Efficacy of Prayer: Sunday, April 30, 2023

Created and facilitated by the 20's and 30's Group.

Rev. Linzi Stahlecker and Fraser Reach will facilitate the discussion.

*Saint Mark's Cathedral acknowledges that we gather on the traditional land of the first people of Seattle, the Duwamish People, who are still here, and we honor with gratitude the land itself and the life of all the Coast Salish tribes.*

### Prayer

“The experience of corporate or individual nearness with God, through words, acts, or silence. Any act or activity offered to God in a spirit of dedication may be prayerful. This nearness may take the form of addressing God, as in prayers of petition, praise, and thanksgiving; or the form of listening, as in contemplative and meditative prayer. Both forms assume a relationship between God and the one who prays. Prayer is the opening of the direct relationship between God and humanity. The Catechism states, ‘Christian prayer is response to God the Father, through Jesus Christ, in the power of the Holy Spirit’ (BCP, p. 856).”

Source: *The Episcopal Church Glossary*,

<https://www.episcopalchurch.org/glossary/prayer/#:~:text=The%20experience%20of%20corporate%20or.of%20dedication%20may%20be%20prayerful.>

“Although the very consideration of such a possibility may appear scientifically bizarre, it cannot be denied that, across the planet, people pray for health and for relief of symptoms in times of sickness. Healing through prayer, healing through religious rituals, healing at places of pilgrimage and healing through related forms of intervention are well-established traditions in many religions.”

Source: *Prayer and healing: A medical and scientific perspective on randomized controlled trials*, <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2802370/>

"A lot of the time we don't know when we're surrendering that we're actually, at the same time, maybe establishing connection ... to a power greater than ourselves — or something in the next concentric circle out whose name is not *me*. So, that to me is where help begins. You know, we're often ashamed of asking for so much help because it seems selfish or petty or narcissistic, but I think, if there's a God — and I believe there is — that God is there to help. That's what God's job is."

Source: *Anne Lamott interviewed in NPR*,

<https://www.npr.org/2012/11/19/164814269/anne-lamott-distills-prayer-into-help-thanks-wow>

"The whole reason why we pray is to be united into the vision and contemplation of God to whom we pray."

Source: *Julian of Norwich*,

<https://www.xavier.edu/jesuitresource/online-resources/quote-archive1/quotes-about-prayer#:~:text=%22Prayer%20is%20the%20raising%20of,of%20good%20things%20from%20God.%22&text=%22It%20is%20better%20in%20prayer,words%20than%20words%20without%20heart.%22&text=%22Whether%20we%20realize%20it%20or,we%20may%20thirst%20for%20him.%22>

Note: Xavier University has many more quotes on prayer within this citation.

## Prayer in Scripture

Jesus replied, “Truly I tell you, if you have faith and do not doubt, not only can you do what was done to the fig tree, but also you can say to this mountain, ‘Go, throw yourself into the sea,’ and it will be done. If you believe, you will receive whatever you ask for in prayer.” (Matthew 21:21-22 NIV)

But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you... (Matthew 5:44 NRSV)

“And whenever you stand up to pray, if you have something against anyone, forgive so that your Father in heaven may forgive you your wrongdoings.” (Mark 11:25 CEB)

1 Then Jesus told them a parable about their need to pray always and not to lose heart. 2 He said, “In a certain city there was a judge who neither feared God nor had respect for people. 3 In that city there was a widow who kept coming to him and saying, ‘Grant me justice against my opponent.’ 4 For a while he refused; but later he said to himself, ‘Though I have no fear of God and no respect for anyone, 5 yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will grant her justice, so that she may not wear me out by continually coming.’” 6 And the Lord said, ‘Listen to what the unjust judge says. 7 And will not God grant justice to his chosen ones who cry to him day and night? Will he delay long in helping them? 8 I tell you, he will quickly grant justice to them. And yet, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?’” (Luke 18:1-8 NRSV)

And they went to a place called Gethsemane. And he said to his disciples, “Sit here while I pray.” (Mark 14:32 ESV)

### *Two Variants of the Lord's Prayer:*

#### **The Lord's Prayer (Traditional)**

Our Father in heaven,  
hallowed be your Name,  
your kingdom come,  
your will be done,  
on earth as in heaven.  
Give us today our daily bread.  
Forgive us our sins  
as we forgive those  
who sin against us.  
Save us from the time of trial,  
and deliver us from evil.  
For the kingdom, the power,  
and the glory are yours, now and for ever.  
Amen.

#### **The Lord's Prayer (Contemporary)**

Heavenly Father, heavenly Mother, holy and  
blessed is your name.  
We pray for your reign of peace to come,  
We pray that your will be done, on earth as it  
is in heaven.  
Give us this day the bread we need, give it  
to those who have not enough.  
Let forgiveness flow between us. Deliver us  
from evil.  
For yours is the power and the glory and the  
mercy now and forever. Amen.