

An aerial photograph of a river winding through a rocky, mountainous landscape. The water is a deep teal color, and the surrounding rocks are light-colored. The entire image is overlaid with a semi-transparent teal filter. A white rectangular border frames the central text area.

# BODY, MIND & SPIRIT

Christian prayer  
and our human relationship with God.

# WHAT ARE YOUR QUESTIONS ABOUT PRAYER?

- Queries?
- Curiosities?
- Wonderings?

## *“TRUE PRAYER” – KENNETH LEECH*

The human experience of God has often been described as an awakening, a heightening of consciousness and perception. One in which we move from the shadows to a more illuminated reality. To know God is also to know one's own true Self.

It is the human experience which is the starting point of prayer.

## *“TRUE PRAYER” – KENNETH LEECH*

We can be made most aware of our human experience in moments of awe. A breath-taking sunset or a mountain, or the night sky. Awe is a cocktail of fear, wonder, and also a kind of reassurance that, deep down, the universe is filled with glory.

At heart prayer is a process of self-giving and of being set free ... it is to choose to enter into a relationship with God and so be transformed.



IS PRAYER EFFECTIVE?

DOES IT PRODUCE  
RESULTS?

# PRAYER & THEOLOGY

*Experiencing* prayer is to experience God.

Prayer & theology are inseparable.

“THE GLORY OF GOD IS THE HUMAN BEING FULLY  
ALIVE”

St. Irenaeus of Lyon (2<sup>nd</sup> C)

“GOD BECAME HUMAN SO THAT HUMANS MIGHT  
BECOME DIVINE”

St. Athanasius (4th C)

# BREAKOUT GROUPS

What is your response to this idea about prayer as experience?

- if this was already your understanding, share a little of what your prayer life has taught you about God. Or, has an experience of God changed the way you pray?

How do you cultivate your own self-awareness? ( ... or do you?)

- if you have already experienced a deepening awareness of God this way, share a little of how self-awareness has deepened your awareness of God.



# THE IMPORTANCE OF THE BODY & “THE BODY”

*resurrection*

Climb back inside  
Your body  
No more split  
Selves  
Minds without  
Skulls  
Thirst without  
Tongues – flail  
and shake like a haunting  
You are alive

from  
*Black Liturgies*, Cole Arthur Riley



THE “CHEMISTRY”  
OF PRAYER  
TOGETHER

# THE CATECHISM

Q: What is prayer?

A: Prayer is responding to God, by thought and by deeds, with or without words.

# THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH DEFINITION OF 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.”

[www.episcopalchurch.org/glossary](http://www.episcopalchurch.org/glossary)

[h.org/glossary](http://www.episcopalchurch.org/glossary)

# THE CATECHISM CONT...

Q: What are the principal kinds of prayer?

A: The principal kinds of prayer are:

*ADORATION*

PRAISE

THANKSGIVING

PENITENCE

OBLATION

INTERCESSION

PETITION

Q: What is adoration?

A: Adoration is the lifting up of the heart and mind to God, asking nothing but to enjoy God's presence.



ADORATION

# BREAKOUT GROUPS

What did you notice in 'your being'?  
- resistance or release?

Did it feel easy or was it difficult?

Where do you see opportunities to notice *adoration* in your daily life?

# A COLLECT

*Invocation*

which is an address to God, with an attribute or action of God

*Petition*

this is the prayer's content, what are you praying for?

*Aspiration*

why are you praying this?

*Ascription*

by what power, whose authority are we praying?