



“TEACH US TO PRAY”

Living the Year of Prayer
in Preparation for Jubilee 2025



DICASTERY FOR EVANGELIZATION
SECTION FOR FUNDAMENTAL QUESTIONS
REGARDING EVANGELIZATION IN THE WORLD

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INTRODUCTION

As we move closer to the Jubilee of 2025, Pope Francis wants 2024 to be dedicated to prayer. Thus, he is inviting the whole Church to a time of intense commitment in preparation for the Opening of the Holy Door.

The celebration of a Holy Year has its earliest origins in the Jewish tradition of the jubilee (*yobel*) as a time of forgiveness and reconciliation. Since the 1300s this has been a special time to meditate on the great gift of divine mercy that always awaits us, as well as the importance of inner conversion. Both are necessary to be able to live out the spiritual gifts lavished on pilgrims during a Holy Year, and to renew the bond that unites all who are baptized as brothers and sisters in Christ, with all of humanity, in that everyone is loved by God.

The Jubilee will involve not only the city of Rome, but will extend far beyond, as God's mercy is proclaimed to the whole world, thus becoming a great opportunity for evangelization. As Christians, we are invited to bear witness as authentic "Pilgrims of Hope" walking toward the Lord, who opens his merciful and forgiving arms to us, as well as to our brothers and sisters who are still waiting for the Gospel to be proclaimed to them.

This resource aide, inspired by the magisterium of Pope Francis, is intended to be used by the faithful during this time of preparation for the opening of the Holy Door. It is an invitation to intensify prayer as a personal dialogue with God. It summons us to reflect on our faith, on our commitment in today's world in the different spheres in which we are called to live, in order to foster a renewed ardor for the Evangelization of modern man. When Pope Francis announced the Year of Prayer preceding the Jubilee 2025, he encouraged the faithful as follows: «I ask you to intensify your prayer

to prepare us to live well this event of grace, and to experience the strength of God's hope. [...] A year dedicated to rediscovering the great value and absolute need for prayer in personal life, in the life of the Church, and in the world» (*Angelus*, January 21, 2024).

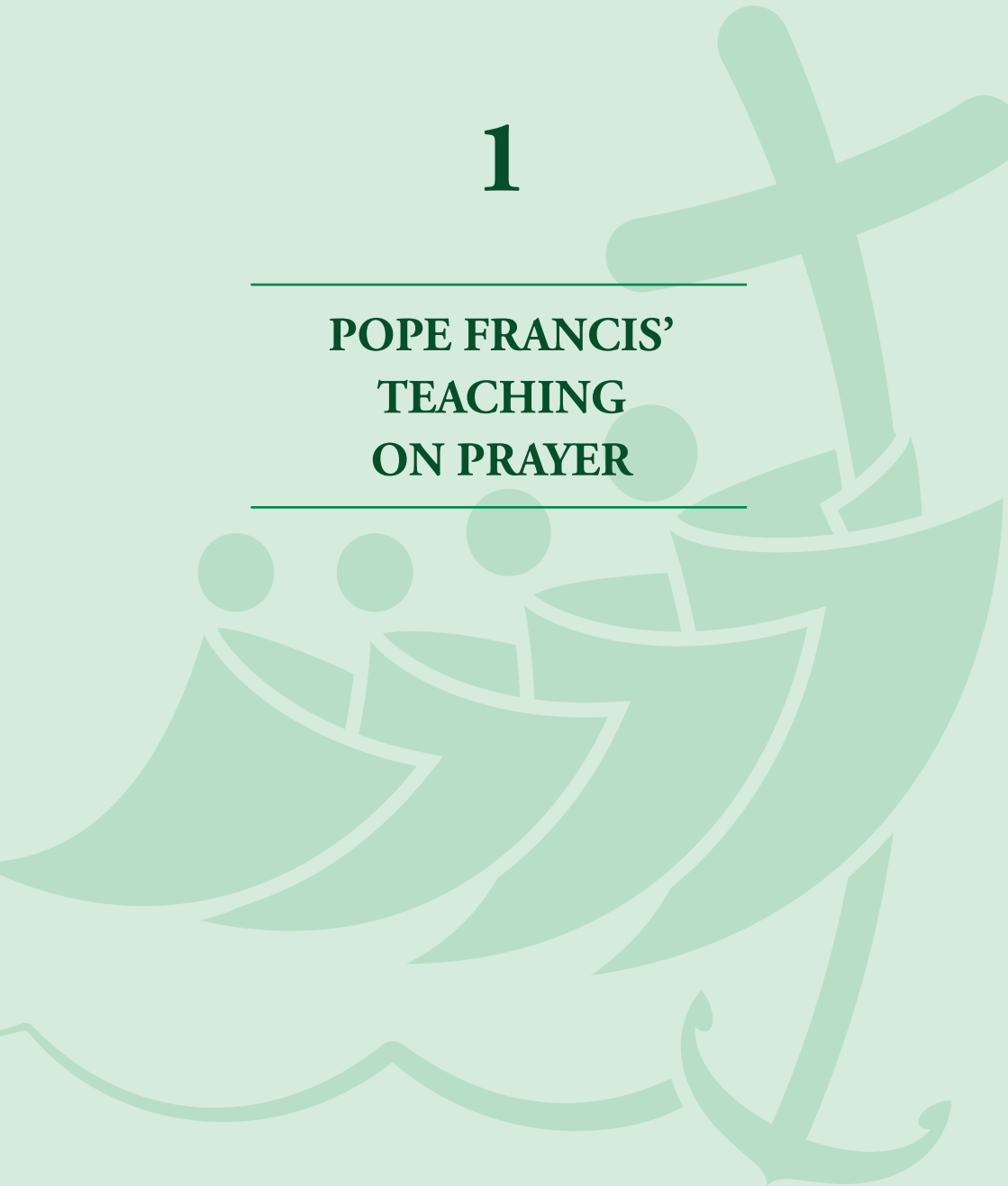
On several occasions in his catecheses, the Pope has indicated how prayer is the way to get in touch with our deepest truth, where God's own light is present, as St. Augustine taught. Pope Francis encourages people to persevere in prayer, emphasizing how constant prayer transforms not only the person, but also the wider community, even where evil seems to have the upper hand.

Thus, for every Christian, may prayer be the compass that guides, the light that illuminates the path and the strength that sustains us on the pilgrimage that will lead to entering the Holy Door. Through prayer, may we arrive at the Holy Door with our hearts ready to welcome the gifts of grace and forgiveness that the Jubilee offers as a vivid expression of our relationship with God. Let us immerse ourselves through prayer in an ongoing dialogue with the Creator, discovering the joy of silence, the peace of abandonment and the power of intercession in the communion of saints.

This resource aide is only meant to help renew the spirit of prayer in all those situations in which we are called to live in daily life. Each part - from the meaning of personal prayer to its practice in community life - offers reflections, guidance, and advice for living more fully in dialogue with the Lord present in our relationship with others and in every moment of our day. There are sections devoted to prayer in the parish community, in the family, and others are dedicated to youth, cloistered communities, catechesis and spiritual retreats.

1

POPE FRANCIS' TEACHING ON PRAYER



In the Year of Prayer 2024, we are called to prepare for the Jubilee of 2025, accompanied by the Holy Father's teachings on prayer. Through his reflections on several occasions and especially in the cycle of "Catechesis on Prayer", given between May 6, 2020 and June 26, 2021, Pope Francis reminds us that prayer is an intimate dialogue with the Creator, a dialogue that starts from the human heart and reaches the merciful "Heart" of God, that can transform our lives, amplifying, in its simplicity, the richness of the Church's magisterium.

For a Christian, prayer should be the spiritual «breath of life» (*General Audience*, June 9, 2021), that never ceases, «not even while we sleep» - as the Pope says - and without which that vital act that puts us in relationship with the Father would be lacking. Lived in this way, the life of prayer is not an alternative to the work and commitments to which we are called during the day, but rather that which accompanies every action of life, "even in the moments when it is not explicit". It fuels the lamp that illuminates the face of Christ present in our brothers and sisters, just as the Catechism teaches when it states that prayer is «the living relationship of the children of God with their Father who is good beyond measure, with his Son Jesus Christ and with the Holy Spirit» (CCC 2565). In this dialogue, the believer not only speaks to God but also learns to listen to Him, finding answers and guidance in the light of His silent presence. Prayer thus becomes the bridge between heaven and earth, a meeting place where the heart of man and the heart of God intertwine in an unceasing dialogue of love. Pope Francis encourages us to find moments of prayer in all the circumstances we are called to face, whether in the joys or challenges of life. In prayer, the Pope says, we discover how much we are loved by God, and this discovery gives us the hope and courage to live each day, so

that the problems we face are no longer obstacles to our happiness, but invitations from God, occasions for our encounter with Him (Cf. *Angelus*, January 9, 2022).

The Holy Father points out that in prayer divine mercy is manifested in a profound and personal way, because in it we discover that, deep down, every human need is a continual reminder of the Father's mercy. In fact, mercy can only be obtained through humble prayer. A pure heart is necessary for prayer to be vital and to show God what we need, just as the publican did in the Temple. «Prayer is not a magic wand!» - says the Pope – it is not a rigid formula that when repeated correctly gives the requested product, as in a business; «In prayer, it is God who must convert us, not we who must convert God» (*General Audience*, May 26, 2021). What is offered must be our own life, even our own misery! Only in this way can we experience «that compassion of God, who like a Father comes to encounter his children, full of merciful love» (*General Audience*, May 25, 2016).

From the very first months of his pontificate, the pope has described how prayer is the place where Christians recognize themselves as part of the «one family in God» (*General Audience*, September 25, 2013), because through prayer we strengthen those bonds of fellowship that unite us to the same Father. These words echo those of the Catechism, which teaches that it is in liturgical prayer that the Church recognizes herself as one Body addressing her Lord (Cf. CCC 2641-2643) – “Where there is prayer, there is fellowship; and where there is fellowship, there is prayer”.

Taking up the words of St. Pio of Pietrelcina, the Pope urges us to make prayer our own like a key that can open God's heart, a heart that «is not heavily guarded» - Pope Francis says: «You can open it with a common key, with prayer. For His is a heart of love, a

father's heart. And it is the Church's greatest strength!» (*Address for the Jubilee for Prayer Groups of Padre Pio*, February 6, 2016).

With these words in our hearts, we encourage all the faithful to set out on the path toward the gifts of the Jubilee, discovering God's mercy, strength and love, and to give concrete expression to the Pope's invitation, transforming 2024 into «a great “symphony” of prayer, [...] to renew our desire to be in the presence of the Lord, to listen to him and to adore him», thus making prayer the «royal road to holiness, which enables us to be contemplative even in the midst of activity» (*Letter to H.E. Msgr. Rino Fisichella for the Jubilee 2025*, February 11, 2022).

- Let us now be guided by some of the teachings from the 38 “Catecheses on Prayer” that Pope Francis gave between May 2020 and June 2021:

«Prayer is the first strength of hope. You pray and hope grows, it moves forward. I would say that prayer opens the door to hope. There is hope but I open the door with my prayer» (*General Audience*, May 20, 2020).

«Jesus' prayer is the place where we perceive that everything comes from God and returns to him. Sometimes we human beings believe that we are the masters of everything, or on the contrary, we lose all self-esteem, we go from one side to the other. Prayer helps us to find the right dimension in our relationship with God, our Father, and with all creation» (*General Audience*, November 4, 2020).

«Through prayer a new incarnation of the Word takes place. And we are the “tabernacles” where the words of God seek to be

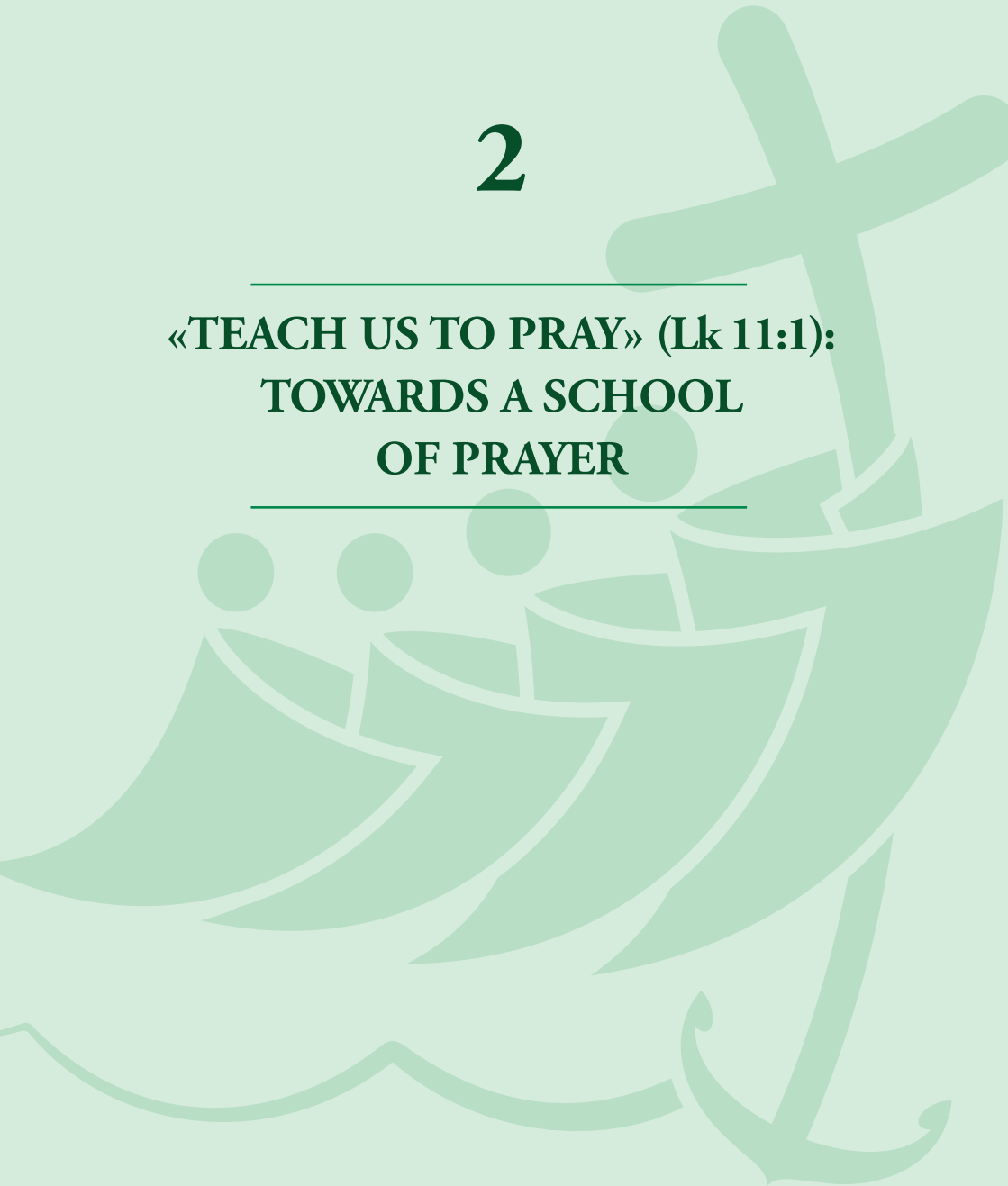
welcomed and preserved, so that they may visit the world [...]. Through prayer, the Word of God comes to abide in us and we abide in it. The Word inspires good intentions and sustains action; it gives us strength and serenity, and even when it challenges us, it gives us peace» (*General Audience*, 27 January, 2021).

«Everything in the Church originates in prayer and everything grows thanks to prayer. When the Enemy, the Evil One, wants to fight the Church, he does so first by trying to drain her fonts, preventing them from praying. [...] Prayer is what opens the door to the Holy Spirit, who inspires progress. Changes in the Church without prayer are not changes made by the Church. They are changes made by groups» (*General Audience*, April 14, 2021).

«Jesus not only wants us to pray as he prays, but assures us that, even if our attempts at prayer are completely vain and ineffective, we can always count on his prayer. We must be aware of this: Jesus prays for me» (*General Audience*, June 2, 2021).

2

«TEACH US TO PRAY» (Lk 11:1): TOWARDS A SCHOOL OF PRAYER



In Luke's Gospel we find Jesus' disciples coming to the Master with a profound and significant plea, «Lord, teach us to pray» (Lk 11:1). This request, which certainly reflects an awareness of their inadequacy and of the need for even practical guidance on how to pray, also conceals, at its core, a dimension inherent in every person: the need for a teacher, a guide to accompany them toward the most important things in life. In the school of a master, the disciple can only grow if he follows in the tracks of the one before him: in fact, by walking in the same footsteps as the master, he will be able to grasp his master's skill and, slowly, the sense of emulation will emerge which one day will enable him to attain the same knowledge: «you are my friends if you do what I command», «the one who believes in me will also do the works that I do and, in fact, will do greater works than these» (Jn 15:12; 14:12).

These words are experienced by the disciples, even as far as prayer is concerned. Being in the Master's presence, they are attracted to his way of praying, his withdrawal to a deserted place, and his relationship with the Father that is also manifested through consciousness deeply rooted in continuous prayer. Thus, an attraction to that relationship of Sonship was aroused to the point that the apostles wanted to share in it. Because of this desire, the Master decides to teach them to pray, thus giving rise to a real "School of Prayer" that will transform a desire into a real experience that can shape their relationship with God and, therefore, with other men.

All this echoes what the Holy Father has repeatedly emphasized: that prayer is not just a devout practice, but rather is like the «breathing of the soul»; it is the expression of a deep and natural need of every human being. Prayer, according to Pope Francis, is a true dialogue with God, a «face to face with Him» (*Morning Meditation, Chapel of Domus Sanctae Marthae*, March 15, 2018), a

time of listening and responding, where the believer opens him or herself to the Lord's will and guidance. In this sense, the disciples' plea shows us that prayer is not an automatic formula of communication. On the contrary, it demands teaching and discipline - the ways that only a Master can point out. Just as the disciples asked Jesus to teach them how to pray, we too, should not be afraid to ask for help to enter a more intimate and personal relationship with God, first from the Master and, then, from those who, as spiritual guides, have been walking in the Lord's presence for a longer time and have already learned to recognize His footsteps and way.

Adoration: Adoration is an act of humility and reverence before the greatness of God. In his reflections, the Pope often reminds us that in adoration we acknowledge God's sovereignty and our total dependence on Him. This form of prayer opens us to a deeper sense of wonder and awe before God's omnipotence and goodness, strengthening our faith and trust in Him. It is an act of recognizing God's majesty, not only as Creator but also as the Living Source of infinite love and mercy. In adoration, the Christian is called to reveal himself to God with a pure and humble heart, acknowledging his own smallness in the presence of divine grandeur. This kind of prayer does not require pleas or petitions, but is a pure expression of the soul turning to God in gratitude and reverence, as before the Uncreated Mystery.

Praise and Thanksgiving: The prayer of praise and thanksgiving is an expression of joy and gratitude to God for His countless gifts and blessings. In praise, we celebrate God's greatness, beauty, and goodness, acknowledging His living and life-giving Presence in our lives and in the world around us. We respond in thanksgiving

ing, expressing gratitude for the smallest to the greatest works of God, knowing that every blessing we receive is a sign of His infinite goodness. This form of prayer helps us cultivate an attitude of gratefulness, capable of shaping our outlook toward our brothers and sisters as a sign and witness of the charity with which God loves us.

Intercession: Intercessory prayer is the prayer that best expresses the Communion of Saints; in it we pray for the needs of others, showing solidarity, understanding and compassion. It is good to emphasize the importance of this form of prayer as an act of Christian love and solidarity, which unites us with others and makes us sharers in their sufferings and in their hopes. Intercessory prayer is a powerful tool of communion, through which we can bring before God the needs of the world and the needs of our brothers and sisters.

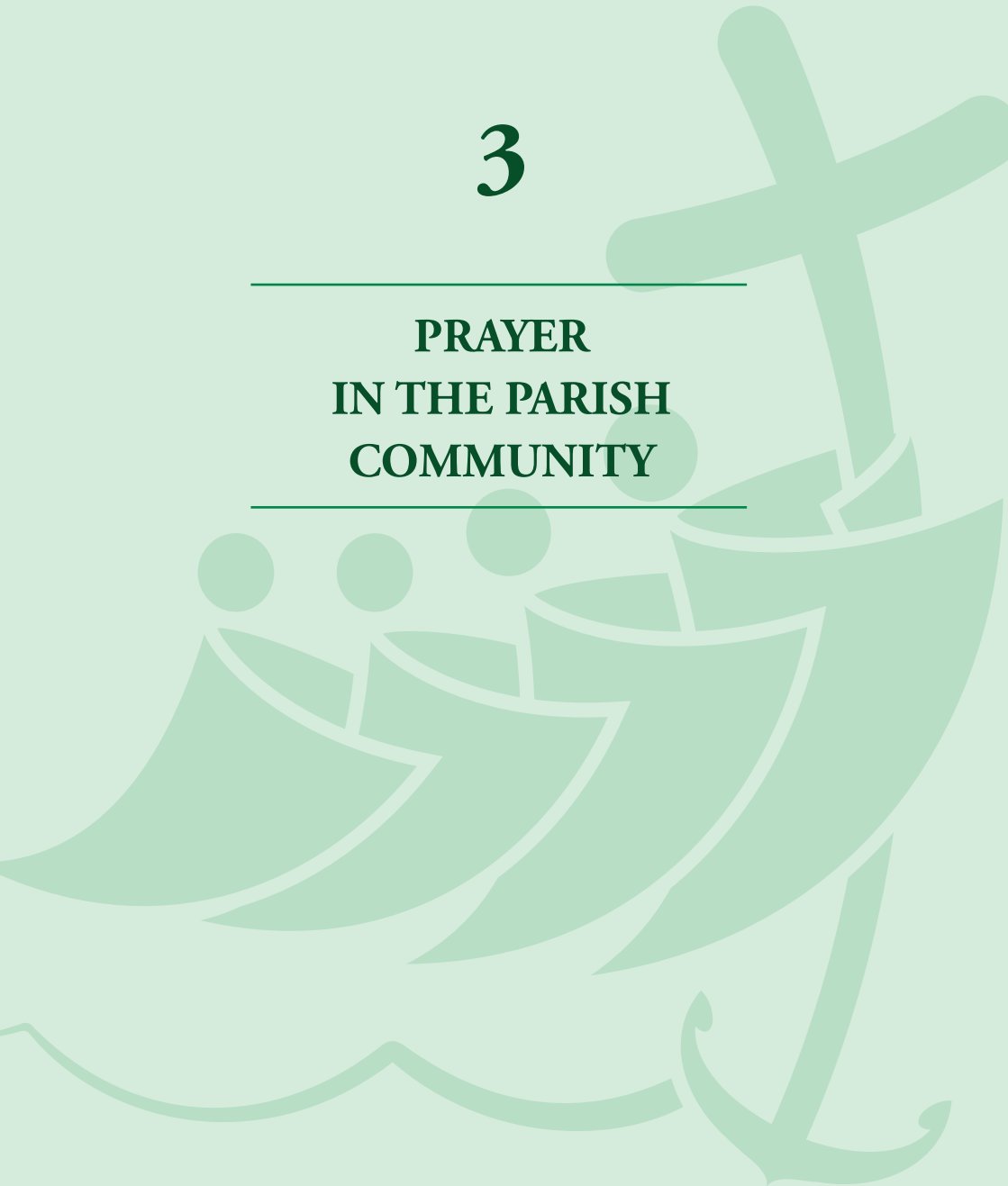
In this way, intercessory prayer becomes a bridge connecting the faithful and their intentions, transcending the boundaries of space and time, to share each other's joys and sufferings before God. In the context of the Jubilee, the grace of a plenary indulgence to be applied to a deceased believer is also an expression of the intercessory prayer that unites us with all our deceased loved ones, with whom we may one day enjoy heavenly riches.

Supplication: The prayer of supplication reflects our human vulnerability and need for help. With this type of prayer, we present our personal needs, deepest desires, and most urgent concerns to God. We are encouraged to present our requests to God with confidence and perseverance, remembering that He is always ready to listen to our hearts: «He asks us for constancy, He asks us to

be determined, without shame. Why? Because I am knocking on my friend's door. God is a friend, and with a friend I can do this. A constant, intrusive prayer» (*Morning Meditation Chapel of the Domus Sanctae Marthae*, October 11, 2018). Supplication, then, becomes a time of intimate communion with God, where our vulnerability meets His infinite mercy and love: through it, we learn to trust God more deeply, entrusting Him with our whole life, our concerns, our hopes, and desires.

3

PRAYER IN THE PARISH COMMUNITY



3.1 The Eucharist

The Year of Prayer in preparation for the Ordinary Jubilee of 2025 offers a valuable opportunity for preparing and deepening our understanding of the true meaning of the Eucharist. To fully experience this great mystery an appropriate inclination and disposition of heart and mind is necessary each time we approach the Eucharist. The small as well as the major daily decisions help the faithful to be more aware of what is being celebrated at Mass and, therefore, greater awareness and participation at the Eucharistic table will help them grow by enabling them to be an increasingly credible and authentic witness, becoming more effectively the: «salt of the earth and light of the world» (Mt 5:13-16).

The Sunday celebration of the Lord's Day and his Eucharist is at the heart of the life of the Church (Cf. CCC 2177) and the parish in that it is «the source and summit of all Christian life» (Dogmatic Const. *Lumen Gentium*, 11: AAS 57, November 21, 1964, no. 15), memorial of Christ's Passover and fulfillment of his sacrifice for the salvation of humankind: the highest point of prayer, lived in a communal manner, gathering the entire assembly around the table of Jesus' body and blood. For this reason, we propose a program of prayer that can help us Catholics have a greater awareness and be more fully engaged in living the great gift that is the Eucharist.

- **Prepare for Mass well:** approach the communal moment of the Eucharist with a brief personal preparation in silence that helps you step out of the hectic pace of daily life to reflect on the mystery you are about to experience. You can pause in front of the tabernacle, for a few minutes, where the Blessed Sacrament is present, recognizing that He will soon make Himself present on

the altar, giving Himself to us in His true Body. It would also be very helpful to read beforehand the passages of God's Word that will be proclaimed in the liturgy.

- **Make the Sign of the Cross well:** the words and gestures made in the initial rites enable us, from the very beginning, to be involved body, soul, and mind in the celebration. The sign of the cross, in fact, summarizes the whole of our Christian faith. When we sign ourselves with the symbol of the cross, we recall the incarnation, redemption, and resurrection of the Lord and when we pronounce the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, we recall the great Mystery of the Holy Trinity.
- **Listen carefully to the Word of God:** maintain a receptive, meditative attitude that enlightens the heart and mind of every Christian because the Word is "living". By listening and through personal recollection, it is possible to translate the Word into everyday life, receiving help and consolation. Therefore, especially when standing up at the time of the proclamation of the Gospel, we are called to recognize the presence of the Lord who, through the minister, still speaks to us today in the Eucharistic celebration.
- **Pray the Lord's Prayer attentively:** meditate on the prayer that Jesus taught by reflecting on the meaning of the words that are said. Even in personal prayer, one should not rush when reciting the words, rather, dwell carefully and reverently on every expression used to converse with the Father.
- **Welcoming the Eucharistic Jesus:** the broken bread becomes nourishment for the life and presence of God that strengthens

and sustains us. It is necessary to experience this important moment with greater awareness in the certainty that the Lord enters each person's life and desires to be received into a generous and attentive heart. As you approach Holy Communion, some silent prayers can be recited in your heart that will prepare you to receive the Lord with greater awareness and gratitude.

- **“*The Mass is ended, go in Peace*”**: Having been nourished at the table of bread and wine, with the final greeting, we are invited to become credible witnesses of Christ and bearers of peace in the world.
- **Thanksgiving**: Before leaving the church, it is good to pause (at least for five minutes) to give thanks for the gift received in Holy Communion, aware that the Lord has come to visit us. In this way, we can more carefully cherish the grace within us and be able to face the world with His help.

3.2 The Liturgy of the Hours

3.2.1 «*Pray without ceasing*» (1Thess 5:17): *the Church's public prayer*

Liturgy of the Hours - also called the Divine Office - is the public prayer of the Church, which through the centuries has responded to the mission to «pray without ceasing». Aware that the mystery of Christ penetrates and transfigures present time, this prayer enables us to make holy the whole course of the day and night by praising God.

All God's people exercise the royal priesthood of the baptized, uniting in one voice, with Christ, in praise of the Father. For this

reason, the Liturgy of the Hours is never private, but belongs to the whole Body of the Church. Moreover, when we pray the Liturgy of the Hours, we are made holy by the word of God present throughout the Office, especially in the Psalms, its central core, as well as in the readings and other hymns, texts, and prayers, which draw their primary inspiration from Scripture.

3.2.2 The Liturgy of the Hours in the parish community.

The prayer of the Liturgy of the Hours, being a celebration proper to the Church, radiates in its fullness when it is recited in the ecclesial community, brought together by its priest. It is of great value to encourage this prayer in the parish, especially with the recitation of the Main Hours (Morning Lauds and Evening Vespers), which, according to the Church's tradition, are the two cornerstones of the daily office:

- a liturgical celebration held in the church, in which as large a number of the faithful as possible can participate, taking into account working hours, so that the laity can also participate before going to work and, in the evening, when returning; with the hope that young people will take part.
- in each community, a group of volunteers could prepare the celebrations, learn the hymns, distribute the readings, or do other tasks. Catechesis should be offered to the volunteers to prepare them to carry out their service.
- in praying the Liturgy of the Hours, it is helpful to have organ accompaniment with a cantor who can lead the faithful with some simple psalm tones; should it be considered more appropriate to recite the psalter in a plain voice, special attention should be given to singing the Benedictus and Magnificat, inviting those present to stand and reflect on the words of the canticle.

- give special attention to preparing for the celebrations of First Vespers on Saturday evening and Second Vespers on Sunday.

3.3 24 Hours for the Lord

3.3.1 *Pope Francis' initiative*

The initiative called “24 Hours for the Lord” is a prayer event desired by Pope Francis that is celebrated on the Friday and Saturday preceding the Fourth Sunday of Lent. The aim is to offer the faithful the opportunity to experience a time of intense prayer and find their way back to the Lord. Concretely, it is suggested that on Friday evening and throughout the day on Saturday, there is an extraordinary opening of the churches and sanctuaries, offering the possibility to access Confessions, preferably in the context of animated Eucharistic Adoration, well aware that «at the center of Christian life is the Sacrament of Reconciliation [...] enabling people to touch the grandeur of God’s mercy with their own hands» (*Bull of indiction of the extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy Misericordiae Vultus*, April 11, 2015, no. 17).

3.3.2 *Lenten prayer and reconciliation*

The “24 Hours for the Lord” event is an excellent opportunity to reconnect Catholics who are far from the Church. The invitation addressed to ecclesial communities is to rediscover, with greater ardor and enthusiasm, the beauty of this initiative and the surprising fruits of conversion that this event can bring forth. It would be good to make use of the grace-filled time of Lent to offer intense times of prayer and reconciliation.

- communities can begin on Friday evening with Mass or the Liturgy of the Word, followed by exposition of the Blessed Sacra-

ment and Eucharistic Adoration, animated by the various parish groups.

- those in charge could prepare both the schedule for Adoration and its duration, with the possibility of shifts for confessions. In the different hours of Adoration, times of singing, silence, *Lectio Divina*, meditated Rosary recitation, etc. could be interspersed. The event could conclude with the celebration of the Saturday evening festive Mass.
- in smaller communities, night Adoration could be substituted by a short prayer time on Friday evening such as: 1) a penitential liturgy 2) exposition of the Blessed Sacrament 3) Eucharistic adoration, silent or animated by a prayer group, inviting everyone to sacramental reconciliation with God.

The presence of the Missionaries of Mercy, who have been ministering sacramentally since the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy, will be of great help in the celebration of this event.

3.4 Eucharistic Adoration

3.4.1 Being in the presence of the Lord

As belief in the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist deepened, the Church became conscious of the meaning of silent adoration of the Lord present under the Eucharistic species (Cf. CCC 1379). Eucharistic Adoration makes it possible to prolong and give more space for a personal encounter with Jesus truly present in the Eucharistic species outside the time of Mass. If in the Eucharist the Church demonstrates her fidelity to the command of the Lord «Do this in memory of me», to adore the Sacramental Body of the Lord is to continue to make His

remembrance. We contemplate Him whom we receive in Communion, to remain with Him, to be in His presence, the only one capable of transforming our lives and giving it meaning. Indeed, it is the real body of Christ, the Eucharist, that gives strength for the journey of this earthly pilgrimage and sanctifies the mystical body, which is the Church.

3.4.2 Introduction to contemplative silence: a proposed format for prayer

In this Year of Prayer, all communities are invited to promote times of Eucharistic Adoration, an indispensable element for encountering the Lord. Each community should find the most appropriate ways and times to develop this practice that brings so many fruits of holiness to the Church.

We offer a traditional format for Adoration that may be helpful in fostering the faithful in prayer and in recognizing the presence of the Lord who is waiting for us to turn to Him:

- Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament: while waiting for the Lord to be exposed on the altar, it would be good to recollect ourselves in silence, aware that we will soon be before Him, ready to listen in prayer to what He wants to say to us and ready to place our requests at His feet. To foster an atmosphere of prayer, exposition can be accompanied by singing and the use of incense, all of which aid in recognizing the specialness of the moment and the divinity of the Lord present under the species of the consecrated bread.
- Asking for forgiveness: once exposition is over, to prepare your heart in the best way possible, a brief time can be devoted

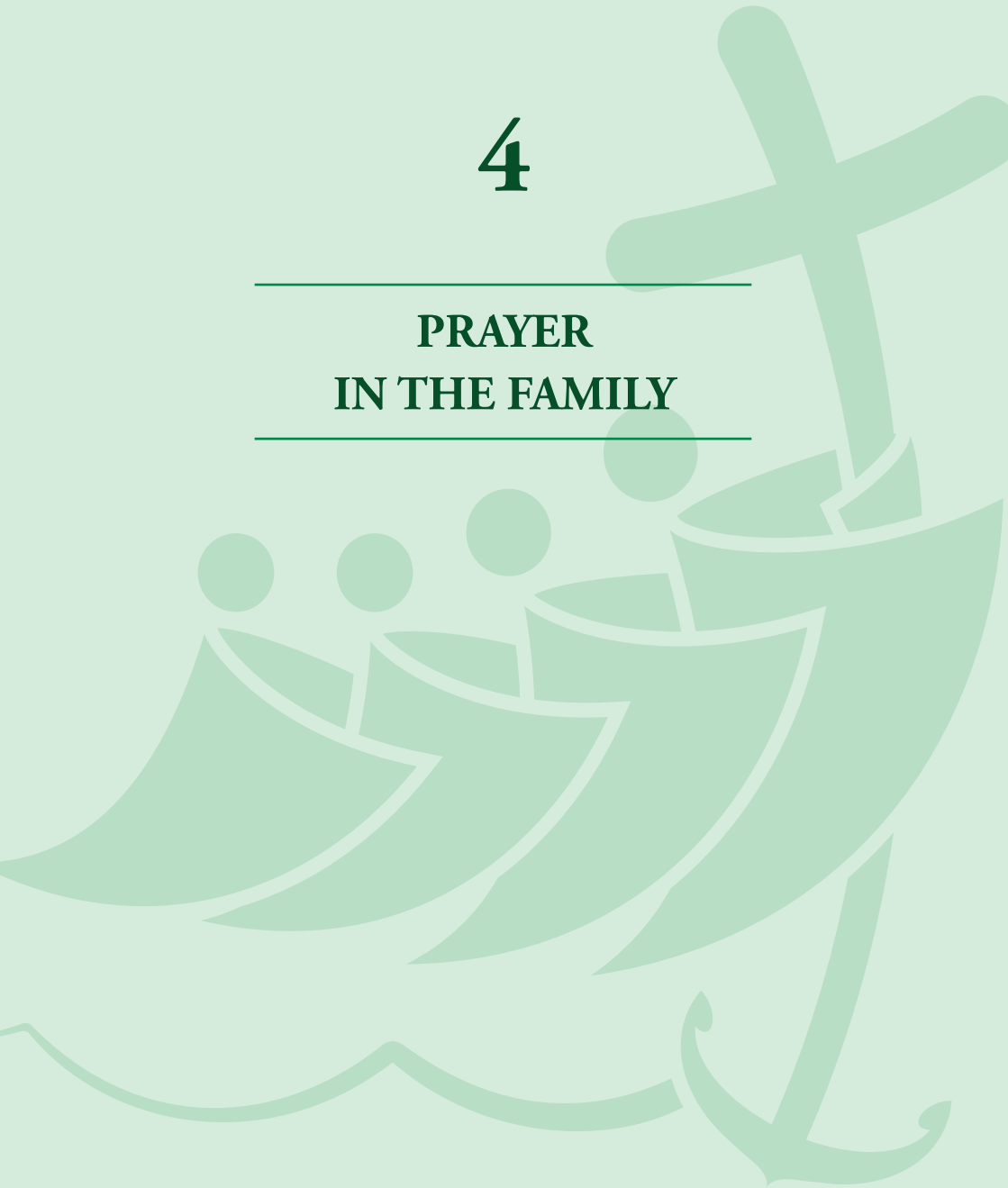
to asking for forgiveness for your sins. The Lord knows our wounds, our shortcomings, and our sins: no one can boast of anything before Him, what is asked of us is to place everything in His Presence, certain that the greatness of His mercy can embrace our whole being.

- **Invocation of the Holy Spirit:** following the teaching of St. Paul, for Eucharistic Adoration, let us also invoke «the Spirit of God to know what God has given us» (1Cor 2:12). Only with the help of the Spirit within us, can we recognize the real presence of the Lord in the consecrated Host. Therefore, it is good to prepare our hearts to meet the Lord by invoking the Paraclete, possibly in song, asking him to enlighten our minds with the gift of faith.
- **Silent Adoration:** the central moment of Eucharistic Adoration should be a special time devoted to silent prayer, to that special dialogue with the Lord Jesus in which the heart of God speaks to the heart of man - cor ad cor loquitur - as St. John Henry Newman taught us. At this time, we can present special prayer intentions to the Lord to which Eucharistic Adoration can be dedicated: for example, for vocations to the priesthood and consecrated life, for the sick, for families, etc. This silence can be interspersed with short hymns - even a litany - or a few short readings, taken either from Sacred Scripture or from the teaching of the saints; likewise, it can be very beneficial to recite the Holy Rosary before the Blessed Sacrament, knowing that we are invoking the one who first accepted the Lord's words -allowing God who became incarnate to bring about Redemption- and who is present with us, in adoring her Son in the consecrated Host.

- **Eucharistic Blessing:** the celebration concludes with blessing the faithful with the Blessed Sacrament. This blessing, although it always retains the character of a sacramental, is unique compared to all other types of blessings (with holy water, with the relics of the saints, through the intercession of the B.V. Mary, etc.) because in this blessing the Lord is present with His Body, in a true, real, and substantial way. With the Eucharistic blessing, He comes close to us in a very special way, embracing everyone present and drawing everyone to Himself. This moment can be considered the culmination of the rite of adoration, the crowning of that dialogue which has been going on in silence before Jesus and which, now, like a shining sun, infuses His warmth into our souls.
- **Reposition in the Tabernacle:** enriched by the gift received in the blessing, we accompany the reposing of the consecrated Host in the tabernacle with reverence, standing up and, if possible, singing an appropriate song to greet the Lord. All this should help us remember that the Eucharistic Jesus is always waiting for us in the tabernacle: He is continually present in our churches and, even when no one shows up to pray to Him, He is there, eager to speak to the hearts of the faithful who approach Him. Let us remember, even during our busy and sometimes distracted days, to visit the Blessed Sacrament, to devote even a few minutes to offer praise, thanksgiving or to entrust our needs and sufferings. The Lord, who certainly “knows what you need before you ask Him” (Mt 6:8), will not be slow to listen to us.

4

PRAYER IN THE FAMILY



4.1 The family as a school of prayer

Numerous times the magisterium has reaffirmed the importance of prayer in the family and has reminded us how the first teachings received as children are the crucial ones that remain steadfast in daily life, even when we have grown up. The family, within which the child will take his or her first steps and say his or her first words, such as “mom” or “dad,” “thank you” and “please,” is also the place of teaching prayer and saying “thank you” to the Lord. As the child grows up, he or she will devote himself or herself to prayer following his or her parents’ example, learning to rely on the Lord even in the most difficult times, certain of His support.

In his Apostolic Exhortation *Amoris Laetitia*, Pope Francis stresses that «moments of family prayer and acts of devotion can be more powerful for evangelization than any catechism class or sermon» (Ap. Ex. *Amoris Laetitia* [AL], March 19, 2016, no. 288), concluding that «only on the basis of this experience will the Church’s pastoral care for families enable them to be both domestic churches and a leaven of evangelization in society» (AL, no. 290).

St. John Paul II, in his Apostolic Exhortation *Familiaris Consortio*, recognized the importance of shared prayer in the family, because «in the family the human person is not only brought into being and progressively introduced by means of education into the human community, but by means of the rebirth of baptism and education in the faith the child is also introduced into God’s family, which is the Church» (FC, no. 15).

4.2 Examples of family prayer

4.2.1 At the table before and after meals

One of the main places where families gather is definitely sharing at least one meal a day. This time could be a short but meaningful opportunity to pray together as a family, thanking the Lord for what we have received and praying for those most in need. Children can thus learn that the daily bread, which we ask for with the Lord's Prayer, is not just an abstract concept, but a very concrete request that we make as children to our Heavenly Father. The meal that we eat together is a providential blessing received from the Lord, which accompanies us throughout our lives. Here are suggestions for prayers that each family can adapt according to their own perspective.

- **Before Meals**

“Heavenly Father, we thank you for this food, may we make your will our daily nourishment. We pray to you for the poor who have none: give them what they need to live according to your will. Amen.”

- **After Meals**

“We thank you, Lord, for all your blessings: may we always use them for good. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.”

4.2.2 Prayer at the beginning and end of the day

Another opportune time for family prayer is when children go to bed. Praying to the Lord for the day finished, for sick relatives, or even just thanking Him for the afternoon spent playing with their little friends, helps the children recognize the bless-

ings received from the Lord on that day. It would be nice to end these prayers with the exchange of peace among siblings, so that they do not go to bed angry about what happened during the day, thus following Pope Francis' suggestion: never end the day without making peace!

One of the finest examples of this kind of prayer is what are commonly called the "Basic Christian Prayers," that is, those prayers that have become part of the Christian tradition of recent centuries and that many of us have received as gifts from grandparents or other relatives.

- **Morning Prayer**

"I adore You, my God, and I love You with all my heart. I thank You for creating me, making me a Christian and keeping me through this night. I offer You the day's activities, let them all be according to Your holy will for Your greater glory. Keep me from sin and from all evil. May your grace be always with me and all my loved ones. Amen."

- **Evening Prayer**

"I adore You, my God, and I love You with all my heart. I thank You for creating me, making me a Christian and keeping me through this day. Forgive me the wrong that I committed today, and accept any good I have done. Guard me through the night and deliver me from danger. May your grace be always with me and all my loved ones. Amen."

Together with these and other prayers-such as the Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be, Angel of God and Eternal Rest, or the recitation of one or more decades of the Holy Rosary or the Chaplet of Divine Mercy, all together - you can invite

the little ones to enter a relationship with the Lord through spontaneous prayer, prayer that comes from the heart. In this way, the children learn to dialogue with Jesus, to become true friends of the Lord, entrusting their needs, desires, and concerns to Him.

4.2.3 Praying Lauds on Sunday

Sunday Lauds with the reading of a short gospel reading, later explained by the parents, could provide an opportune occasion not only to pray together, but also to share the week's events with each other in light of God's Word.

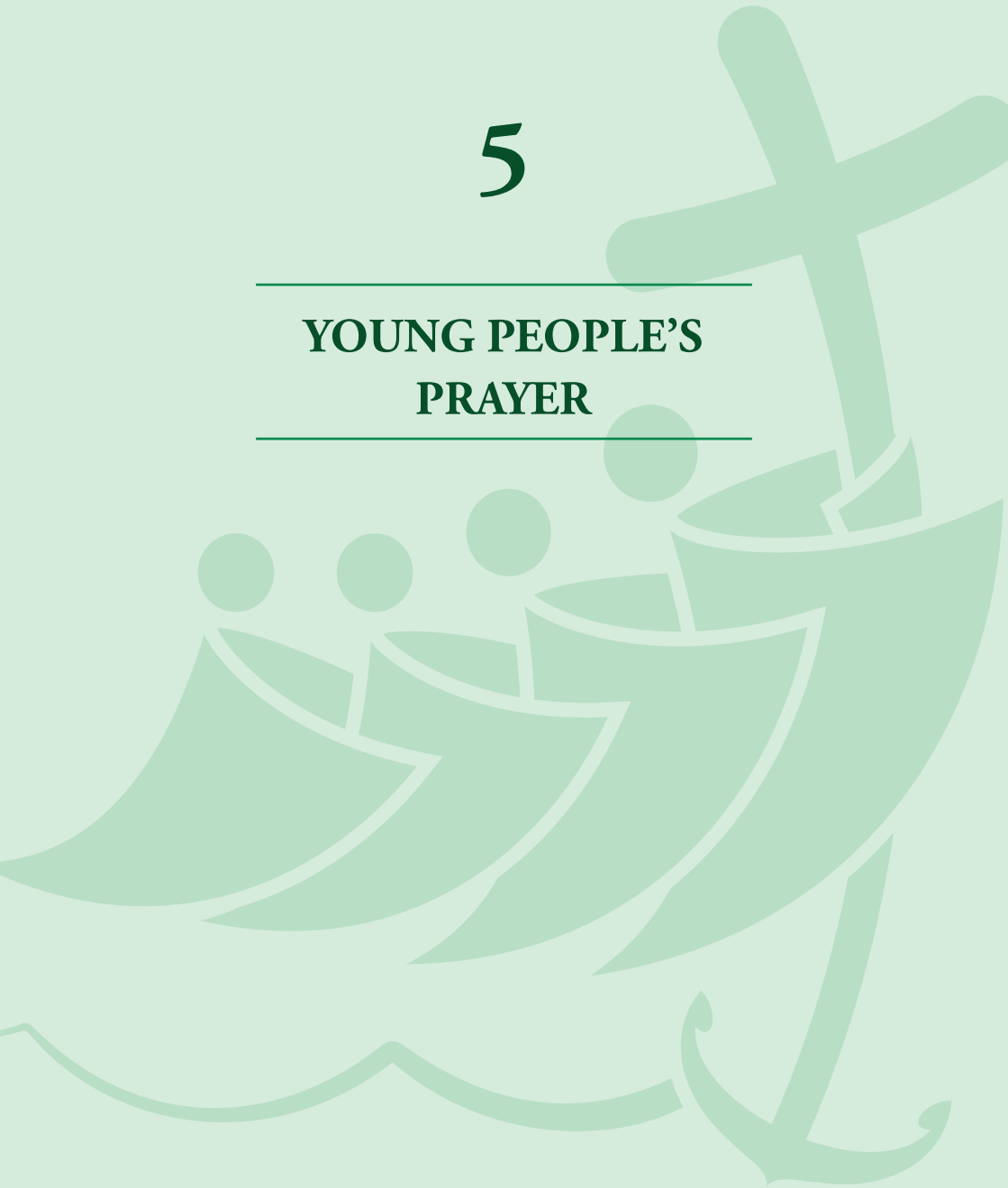
In the Apostolic Exhortation *Familiaris Consortio* St. John Paul II stated that «the Christian family fulfills its prophetic role by welcoming and announcing the word of God: it thus becomes more and more each day a believing and evangelizing community» (*FC*, no. 51).

- For praying Morning Lauds, it may be helpful to share the roles of who recites the antiphons and who recites the psalms, who reads the Bible passage, and so on, thus encouraging the involvement of everyone, even the youngest.
- parents could spend a little time explaining the readings they heard. To do this, some connections could be made with daily life in the family and school, showing how the Gospel and the Word of God are words of true life and can offer light and accompaniment in all the activities of our days.
- if a member of the family plays a musical instrument, Lauds could be accompanied with songs and some suitable melodies; it would be a beautiful way to experience the original spirit in which the psalms, hymns and canticles were composed.

- Finally, a very uplifting practice, especially for younger children, could be to read together briefly the life of the saint of the day, explaining “why” he or she became a saint and showing that we can ask for his or her intercession and protection on the day dedicated to him or her.

5

YOUNG PEOPLE'S PRAYER



5.1 «Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening» (1Sam 3:9): how to understand God's will

Youth is an important time of transition. At a certain point in one's journey of faith, as with other aspects of life, childhood practices are questioned in the search of a more personal and intimate way of relating to the Lord. While it is true that the relationship between young people and prayer may seem like a touchy subject, one cannot help but recognize that, when approached carefully and courageously, many young people show a surprising interest and response.

Prayer experiences with young people will certainly include doubts and questions about their feelings and relationships, fears, and desires. It is the silence and intimacy of prayer that can offer the setting in which to tell the Lord about the turmoil in one's heart and receive encouraging words from Him: «if you can make friends with him and start to talk to him, the living Christ, about the realities of your life, then you will have a profound experience capable of sustaining your entire Christian life» (Ap. *Ex Christus Vivit* [CV] March 25, 2019, no. 129).

It is also inevitable that vocational questions will arise during a prayer experience with young people. The time of youth is the best time to look at and begin to plan one's future, including being at the service of others. Helping young people to pray means helping them to dream and explore their future with the Lord, perceiving Him as their constant friend. In prayer, young people can learn to look up and count the stars, like Abraham; they can be fascinated by a bush that is not being burned up, like Moses; they can listen in the dead of night, like Samuel; they can open the door to the Lord who is knocking, like Mary. During this year of prayer, it is

essential for every Christian community to know how to rekindle this vocational dialogue in the hearts of young people, rejoicing that it is the Lord who passes by and calls.

5.2 Prayer events and meetings with youth

In addition to highlighting Part IV of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* for a systematic catechesis on the theme of Christian prayer or exploring the prayer of some biblical characters, one can delve into Pope Francis' *Christus vivit*. In particular, numbers 150-157, 250-252 and 287-290 present the relationship with the Lord in terms of friendship and address young people in a simple, straightforward way.

- times could be arranged for young people to get together and pray before starting their daily routine. For example, get together in the morning, before school, to read the gospel of the day or recite morning Lauds; likewise, come together weekly for Eucharistic adoration, during which the young people can present their intentions and share them with their classmates so that all can pray for one another's intentions.
- young people need to see and touch through firsthand experiences as well as sharing. During this year, places of prayer could be set up and promoted. In addition, in youth centers, oratories or association meeting rooms, a corner or a small chapel simply furnished could be set-up with a sacred image and a Bible, and, if possible, the presence of the Blessed Sacrament, to create a quiet atmosphere conducive to prayer. Similarly, a "prayer tent" could be set up, with suitable means and materials, in town squares, at schools or other places, during missions or pastoral initiatives created *ad hoc* or as part of summer camp experienc-

es. Being that young people are attracted to 'strong' experiences, at certain times of the year, evening or nighttime gatherings could be planned to foster an atmosphere of silence, listening, and adoration.

- the experience of a “community week” is spreading among different parishes and study groups. While continuing their usual study or work commitments, small groups of young people, along with some priests, religious and lay adults, meet regularly in areas provided by the parish or the diocese. In addition to experiences of fraternal life and service, it also provides an excellent opportunity to introduce the younger generation to prayer: lectio, liturgy of the hours, adoration, etc..
- many seminaries or monasteries open their doors to offer “Schools of Prayer”. Generally, it is an ongoing program that takes a biblical character or vocational issues in a language suitable to the younger generation, incorporated in prayer.
- young people also respond to walking pilgrimages to major shrines and hiking in the mountains or in nature. The rhythm of walking and contemplating creation easily opens the heart to awe, praise, and thanksgiving; these times are an excellent opportunity for teaching and practicing the “prayer of the heart” as well as reciting the Pilgrimage Psalms along the way.
- invite small groups of young people to be responsible for leading some traditional community activities such as those held on the first Friday of the month, the Stations of the Cross, rather than reciting the rosary or praying vespers.
- many apps and podcasts are now available that offer formative content on prayer as well as brief daily commentaries on the Gospel of the day. These tools make it possible to pray in everyday life, while travelling to school, work, or recreation. Using and

promoting these apps and sharing the knowledge gained from them, including the insights of young people, is another way of praying when, for a variety of reasons, one cannot be in the parish or at other community activities.

6

**«HE WENT OUT TO A DESERTED PLACE,
AND THERE HE PRAYED» (Mk 1:35):
RETREATS ON PRAYER**

In Mark's Gospel, we read that Jesus «Went out to a deserted place, and there he prayed» (Mk 1:35). The Evangelist gives us an image of Jesus that points to two essential dimensions of Christian prayer: removing oneself from the daily routine - necessary for seeking personal dialogue with the Father – and a silent heart - indispensable for listening for God's voice and hearing what He wants. In this perspective and in the context of the Year of Prayer, a spiritual retreat can provide an unparalleled opportunity for spiritual conversion and a renewal of heart to which we have all been invited by the Holy Father.

6.1 «Where two or three are gathered in my name» (Mt 18:20): the meaning of spiritual retreat

Jesus taught us that when Christians come together in prayer, He is in their midst in a special way. In this respect, participating in a spiritual retreat is a great opportunity to experience the Lord's presence more fully through common life and prayer shared during retreat days. A spiritual retreat is not an escape from reality, but rather a fuller immersion into reality through the silence of prayer. The fruit of an authentic spiritual retreat will not be a yearning for days off from ordinary routines, but rather a new light transforming everyday life by the presence of the Lord. In a world that often distracts us and pulls us away from our life of faith, a prayer retreat is like stopping at an oasis in a desert, in our cities, although full of ways and opportunities for encounters, often shroud or hide from view the true source of hope, the fount of joy that only the Lord can give us.

- thus, the Year of Prayer can be an opportunity for the laity as well as for consecrated persons to rediscover the importance of devot-

ing a few days of the year to a special encounter with the Lord. Some suggestions for retreat places are monasteries, convents, or pilgrimage sites, where there are regular times dedicated to prayer and spirituality.

- our parishes can take the lead in organizing retreat days. Although at times it may be difficult, effort should be made to organize monthly one-day or half-day retreats - preferably on a Saturday afternoon or Sunday, so that those who work are free to participate.
- throughout the year we can live out a practice that is common in spiritual retreats: the so-called “Jesus’ prayer” (also known as the “prayer of the heart”) - so dear to the Church Fathers. These are ejaculatory prayers that can be prayed throughout the day, and that constantly remind us of the Lord’s presence. We raise a continuous hymn of praise to God who is always with us. These are prayers that can be recited in a car or on public transportation, as well as a form of intercession for strangers we meet along the way.

If possible, try to make time during the week, perhaps on the way home from work or on lunch break, to stop to pray before the Blessed Sacrament. Some practices that need to be revived include visiting the cemetery regularly and praying for the deceased.

- During certain times of the year, we are invited to nurture and strengthen our relationship with the saints and the Blessed Mother through specific prayers. For example, during the months of May and October, it would be good, as is already a practice in many areas, to recite the Rosary in neighborhoods or apartment buildings.
- In the context of vocational discernment, prayer is the place to meet the Lord and discern how to respond to His Will. In the silence of prayer, one must lovingly implore Christ to shine His Light in our lives.

6.2 The Lord's Prayer: the model of all prayers

In the Our Father, the Lord Jesus introduces the apostles and, with them, all Christians, to what can be considered the “model of all prayer”. It can be said that the Lord's Prayer is a School of Prayer.

Indeed, in the prayer Jesus taught us, we find the very heart of our faith. The Lord's Prayer is the prayer that embraces the universality of human experience and divine mystery. It can unite the simplicity of a child addressing his “daddy” and the depth of one who knows he is in the presence of the Mystery. As the Catechism of the Catholic Church teaches, in quoting Tertullian, The Our Father is «the synthesis of the whole Gospel» (Cf. CCC 2761-2776). It is a prayer that touches every dimension of our lives: the holiness of God, His kingdom, our daily lives, mutual forgiveness, our struggle against evil. By saying the “Our Father” we are brought closer and closer to the heart of God and the heart of our faith.

Through the Holy Father's catecheses, he leads us to understand that this prayer is not a mere set of words and needs, but a pathway toward intimacy with our Heavenly Father. It teaches us to address God in filial trust, calling him “Father” in simplicity and love. There is no need - says the Pope - «to multiply empty words» (*General Audience*, February 27, 2019): Jesus teaches us what is essential. He shows us that we can speak to the Father with simplicity of heart, because He «knows what you need even before you ask Him» (Mt 6:8).

- Traditionally, the Lord's Prayer is made up of seven parts, also called “the seven petitions”, to which the Catechism of the Catholic Church devotes Nos. 2803-2854. It summarizes the very spirit of the Christian faith in the relationship that each believer

is called to have with the Heavenly Father. These seven petitions could be used as an outline for monthly retreats leading up to the Jubilee as a part of a “School of Prayer”, by dedicating each retreat to one part of the prayer that Jesus taught us.

7

CATECHESIS ON PRAYER



Catechesis, as a key step in the process of evangelization, promotes growth and maturation in the faith (Cf. *Directory for Catechesis* [DfC] no. 56) and «has the task of educating for prayer and in prayer, developing the contemplative dimension of Christian experience» (DfC, no. 86).

7.1 «Whenever Moses held up his hand» (Ex 17:11): the shepherd's exhortation prayer

Although it is true that the entire Christian community is responsible for the ministry of catechesis, each according to his particular condition in the Church (Cf. DfC, no. 111), nevertheless «the Bishop is the first preacher of the Gospel by his words and by the witness of his life». (Ex. Ap. *Pastores Gregis* [PG], October 16, 2003, no. 26; Cf. DfC, no. 114) and, as the one primarily responsible for catechesis in the diocese, has the primary function, together with preaching, of promoting catechesis and providing the different forms of catechesis necessary for the faithful (Cf. DfC, no. 114).

In this sense, the Year of Prayer is a special opportunity for bishops to encourage diocesan communities, first of all by praying for each of the faithful entrusted to them, because, like Moses they are called to invoke the Lord by interceding for the people; secondly, by calling attention to and preaching on the value of prayer in the different aspects that the rich tradition of the Church preserves; and, finally, by providing the most appropriate means for this catechesis to take place in their dioceses.

Priests, deacons, consecrated men, and women, lay men and women catechists, parents, grandparents, (Cf. DfC, nos. 115-129), all in their own spheres and united with their bishop, can creatively and enthusiastically contribute to this work of the universal Church.

7.2 Guidelines for catechesis on prayer

Following are some practical suggestions for catecheses on prayer:

- during the intense periods of the liturgical year (Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter), the bishops should invite the people of God to come to the cathedral to catechize them on prayer (Cf. *DfC*, no. 114).
- in addition to explaining the importance of prayer and encouraging the people to live a life of prayer, it may be beneficial to have some practical prayer exercises with the community. These could be presented by consecrated or lay people, during catechesis for children or for adults, so that practical ways are given for growing in the practice of prayer;
- time during catechesis could be devoted to prayer: time for Eucharistic Adoration, inviting them to experience the feelings that Jesus had toward his Father: adoration, praise, thanksgiving, filial trust, supplication, and admiration for His glory; short prayer exercises with the Word of God, such as *Lectio Divina*; or even propose praying the Rosary, leading some meditations on the mysteries being contemplated or using some signs that foster reflection; encourage the recitation of the Liturgy of the Hours;
- invite parents to encourage prayer in their homes in daily life, such as in thanksgiving and blessing of food, praying in the morning, and before going to bed, to acquire the habit of blessing their children with a short prayer in the evening or when they leave the house, to entrust themselves to God when going on a trip, to make the sign of the cross when passing by a church, to thank God for his blessings, etc.;

- carefully prepare the beginning and ending prayers for community meetings;
- the “Notes on Prayer” by the Dicastery for Evangelization is a reference and in-depth study of the various aspects of the great and varied Christian tradition on prayer and could therefore become a useful tool for preparing sermons in catechesis.

8

THE PRAYER OF THE CLOISTERED: THE BURNING LAMP OF PRAYER

In this Year dedicated to prayer, cloistered monks and nuns undoubtedly play a prominent role in their dedication to prayer. Indeed, monks and nuns, by totally consecrating their lives to the Lord, devote an essential part of their lives to an encounter with God through prayer.

Monasteries «are for the Church a reason for pride and a source of heavenly graces. By their lives and mission, the members of these Institutes imitate Christ in his prayer on the mountain, bear witness to God's lordship over history and anticipate the glory which is to come. They offer the ecclesial community a singular testimony of the Church's love for her Lord, and they contribute, with hidden apostolic fruitfulness, to the growth of the People of God» (Ap. Ex. *Vita Consecrata* [VC] 25 March, 1996, no. 8) «In the light of this vocation and ecclesial mission, the cloister responds to the need, felt as paramount, *to be with the Lord*» (VC, no. 59).

It is very beautiful and reassuring to think that the lamp of prayer of so many monks and nuns is always lit in monasteries scattered throughout the world. In a special way, we ask these communities to keep the upcoming Jubilee 2025 in their intentions, so that in all of us that deep union with God may grow through our prayer life and, strengthened in hope, we may live our faith with joy.

8.1 «Continue steadfastly in prayer» (Col 4:2): the contemplative vocation of the Church.

Paul the Apostle invites us to remain in constant relationship with the Lord and with our gaze fixed on Him, despite any difficulties that may arise. In this sense, the whole Church has a contemplative vocation. Every baptized person must contemplate Christ and be configured to Him in the light of His Word and actions. It is from here

that the call arises for every Christian to live contemplating the Lord.

One can always enter into inner prayer, independently of the conditions of health, work, or emotional state. It is the prayer of the son of God, of the forgiven sinner who opens himself to receive the love with which he is loved and who wants to respond to it by loving even more. Contemplative prayer is *communion* with God, it is a *gaze* of faith fixed on Jesus. «I look at him and he looks at me», said, the Curé of Ars, the peasant praying before the Tabernacle. Contemplative prayer is *listening* to the Word and obedience in faith. Contemplative prayer is also *silence* and *union* with Christ's prayer to the extent that it makes one participate in his paschal mystery (Cf. CCC 2710-2724).

8.2 Pilgrimages to monasteries

Pilgrimage is an experience of conversion, of changing one's life to direct it toward God's holiness. Just as we prepare our pilgrimage for Jubilee 2025, appropriately planned pilgrimages to monasteries in one's own diocese can also be made in 2024, the Year of Prayer:

- pilgrimages with young people so that they may experience this special vocation in the Church which consists of Eucharistic adoration, meditation on the Word of God, contemplation, Liturgy of the Hours, and its direct relationship to the daily experience of Christian virtues directed towards holiness;
- periodic pilgrimages to a monastery to spend time in prayer;
- pilgrimages for the purpose of thanking the monks and nuns for their generous response in totally consecrating their lives to God, and entrusting them with the spiritual fruits of the upcoming Jubilee 2025, and reciprocating with various offerings that can help the monastery and their needs.

• **From the writings of holy monks and nuns:**

<i>Nada te turbe, nada te espante;</i>	Let nothing disturb you,
<i>todo se pasa, Dios no se muda;</i>	let nothing frighten you,
<i>la paciencia todo lo alcanza.</i>	he who has God
<i>Quien a Dios tiene nada le falta.</i>	nothing lacks:
<i>Sólo Dios basta.</i>	God alone suffices.

(ST. TERESA OF ÁVILA)

The principal author of our perfection and holiness is God himself, and prayer keeps the soul in frequent contact with God. It ignites and, after having lit it, stays in the soul like a hearth, in which the fire of love always burns, even if in latent form. As soon as this soul is put in direct communication with the divine life, for example in the sacraments, it is as if a powerful breath set it on fire, lifted it, filled it with a wonderful superabundance. The supernatural life of a soul is valued by its union with God through Jesus Christ, in faith and love. This love must produce acts; but these acts, to be produced in a regular and intense way, require the life of prayer. It can be asserted that, in the ordinary way, our progress in divine love practically depends on our prayer life.

(BLESSED COLUMBA MARMION)

My God, blessed Trinity, I desire to love You make You loved, to work for the glory of the Holy Church, by saving the souls on earth and liberating those suffering in purgatory. I desire to accomplish Your will perfectly and to reach the degree of glory You have prepared for me in Your kingdom. In a word, I desire to be a saint, but I feel my helplessness and I beg you, O my God, to be Yourself my Sanctity. [...]

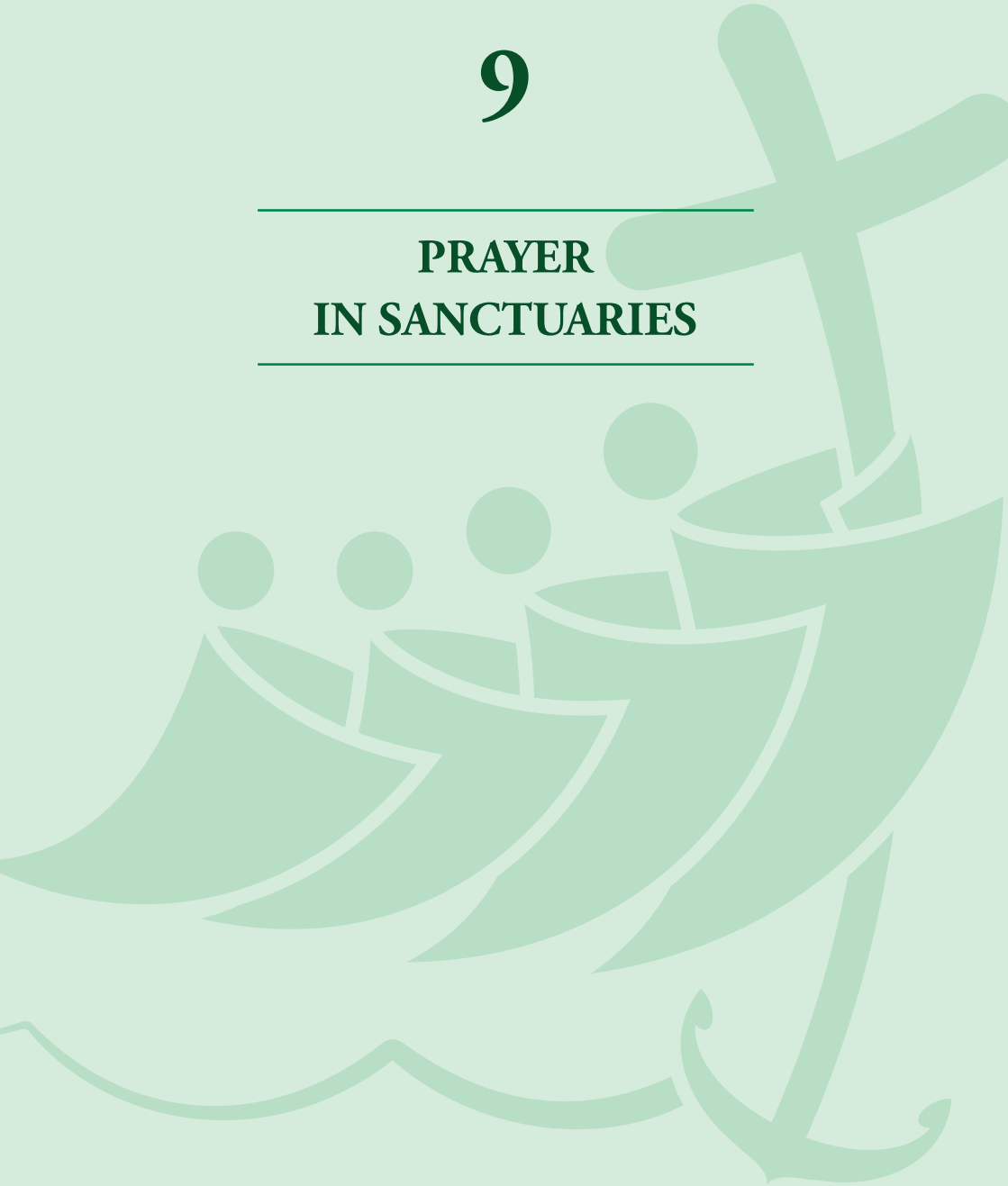
To order to live in an act of perfect love, I offer myself as a victim of holocaust to your merciful love, asking you to consume me without incessantly, allowing the waves of infinite tenderness shut up within you to overflow into my soul, and that thus I may become a martyr of Your love, O my God! May this martyrdom, after having prepared me to appear before you, finally cause me to die and may my soul take its flight without any delay into the eternal embrace of Your merciful love.

I want, O My Beloved, at each beat of my heart to renew this offer to You an infinite number of times, until, the shadows have disappeared, and I am able to tell You of my Love in an Eternal Face to Face!

(ST. THÉRÈSE OF THE CHILD JESUS)

9

PRAYER IN SANCTUARIES



During his address to the *International Convention of the Rectors and Pastoral Workers of Shrines* in 2018, the Holy Father reminded participants of the ever-increasing number of people who visit shrines, driven by their desire to ask for a blessing. Pope Francis also emphasized that “This prayer makes the Shrines fruitful places, because the piety of the people is always nourished and grows in the knowledge of God’s love” (*Address of his Holiness Pope Francis to participants at the International Convention of the Rectors and Pastoral Workers of Shrines* November 29, 2018).

Prayer at holy places takes on a greater depth, which reverberates beyond the person who is praying. An aspect of this was emphasized by Pope Francis during the general audience on May 20, 2020: “Prayer is the first strength of hope. You pray and hope grows, it moves forward. I would say that prayer opens the door to hope. There is hope but I open the door with my prayer. Because people of prayer safeguard basic truths; they are the ones who repeat, first and foremost to themselves and then to all the others, that this life, despite all its toils and trials, despite its difficult days, is full of a grace that is awe inspiring” (*General Audience*, May 20, 2020).

9.1 The place of reconciliation and hope

Hope, then, is not foreign to shrines, quite the contrary. We will have to get used to talking about faith by wrapping it in a mantle of hope. The hope for serenity and consolation enables us to understand the extraordinary life-giving value of faith.

A Shrine should be a special place where the faithful can come to understand how vital it is to pray the *Our Father* because it invokes the Lord’s return. At a Shrine our gaze is raised to see the

mysterious presence of God in our history and in our personal lives. A pilgrim who comes to a Shrine often needs *hope* for what he asks for in prayer. These desires are good and deserve attention. For this reason, pastoral efforts should help pilgrims look beyond the present moment to allow their prayers to be granted by virtue of *hope*. A Christian is a “Pilgrim of Hope”, who sets out not as an aimless wanderer, but as one who knows where he wants to go. A pilgrim crosses borders to reach the place where he hopes to fulfill his desires, the yearnings of his heart.

The need for pastoral outreach becomes ever more evident when viewed through the lens of hope. Hope helps one see the reality of the reconciliation that the Lord has accomplished for each of us. The apostle Paul teaches that our whole existence is illuminated by hope, even though it may be hidden at times by the dark folds of our often fragmented and perplexing lives.

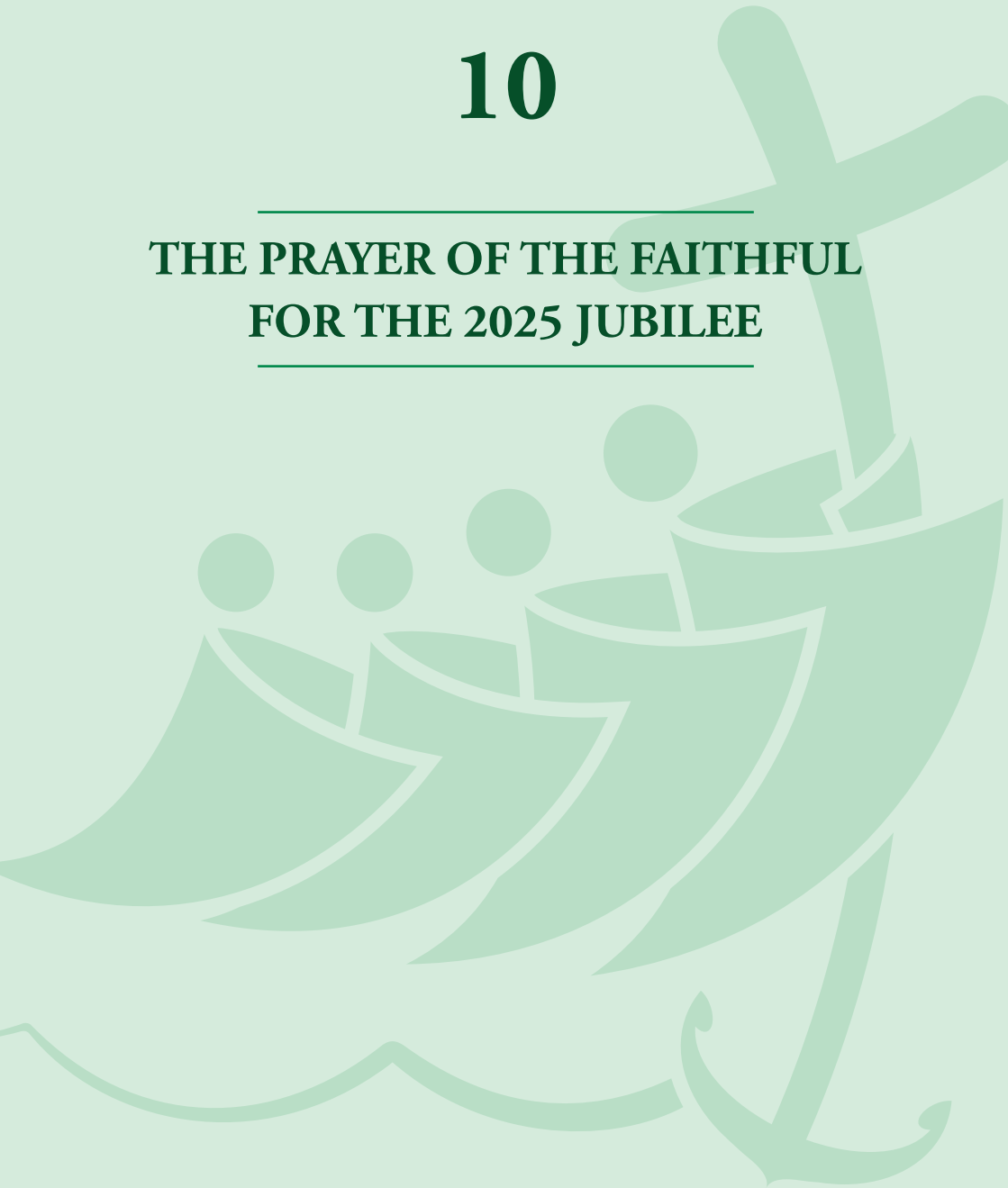
- shrines are places of hope that invite us to entrust our prayer intentions to the intercession of the saints, trusting that, thanks in part to their help, the intention will be heard and granted by the Lord. Our shrines are truly precious “treasure chests” of prayer, filled with signs - such as votive offerings, candles, and devotional practices - that show us how in the past and in the present our prayers are answered according to the will of the Father who never refuses to listen to the pleas of his children. Let us not be afraid to ask God for what we need!
- sanctuaries are often the great “confessionals” of dioceses, in which priests are always present and ready to listen to penitents. Through reconciliation, the Lord welcomes us with open arms, like the merciful Father in the parable who, longingly awaits the return of the son to his home. We hope that in this year of preparation for the Jubilee, pilgrims will be able to recognize the

immense grace that flows from these places and to experience in their confessionals the true “doors of divine mercy” for the world. May all pilgrims abandon themselves, through prayer, into that trusting embrace of those who know that, without the Father, without a home, one is lost within the glitter of the world.

- in view of the Jubilee, in this Year of Prayer we are invited to entrust special intentions with the desire that it will truly be a year of reconciliation, overflowing with spiritual graces for all the situations that are dear to us, especially for those local and global situations in which hope seems to have faded in the face of so much evil and such great suffering.

10

THE PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL FOR THE 2025 JUBILEE



10.1 The importance of the prayer of God's people for the Holy Year

In this Year of Prayer, the formation, and prayerful efforts of God's people and of each believer is especially important. Prayer becomes even more an act of authentic communion, not only between the individual and God, but between all the members of the Church, uniting them in one voice that rises to Heaven.

The Catholic tradition has always emphasized the importance of communal prayer, in which faith is expressed in a participatory way. Ecclesial intercessory prayer which is part of the communion of saints is a powerful expression of the Church's unity. This unity will be manifested in a particular way during the Holy Year, when the faithful from all over the world join in prayer, sharing in their desire for spiritual conversion that will enable them to experience the forgiveness proclaimed by the Jubilee Year.

10.2 Examples of prayers of the faithful in preparation for Jubilee 2025

With hearts overflowing with hope and faith and conscious that each of our prayers is a golden thread that is woven into the great tapestry of ecclesial communion, the last part of this resource aide offers some examples of prayers that are the fruit of the Church's different spiritual traditions.

The first one is the "Jubilee Prayer" composed by Pope Francis. It would be very meaningful if this were prayed in our communities, especially during Sunday Mass, in anticipation of the Jubilee. This could help prepare the hearts of the faithful to welcome the extraordinary graces that the Lord wants to give us.

Prayer of Intercession:

“O Father, in Your mercy, hear Your children’s pleas. As we prepare for the Jubilee of 2025, renew our faith, increase the virtues of hope and charity in us, and help us be witnesses of Your love in the world.”

Prayer of Praise:

“We praise You, Lord, for Your infinite goodness. In the upcoming Jubilee, open our eyes to the beauty of Your creation so that our hearts may rejoice in the wonder and greatness of Your works.”

Prayer of Thanksgiving:

“We thank You, O God, for every blessing and for all the gifts we have received. As we prepare for the Jubilee, teach us to recognize Your hand in every moment of our lives and to welcome each day as a gift of Your mercy and love.”

Prayer of Petition:

“Lord, source of all wisdom, guide us during this Year of Prayer as we prepare to celebrate the upcoming Jubilee. Open our hearts and enlighten our minds so that we may understand and fully experience the gifts of mercy and forgiveness.”

THE JUBILEE PRAYER

Father in heaven,
may the *faith* you have given us
in your son, Jesus Christ, our brother,
and the flame of *charity* enkindled
in our hearts by the Holy Spirit,
reawaken in us the blessed *hope*
for the coming of your Kingdom.

May your grace transform us
into tireless cultivators of the seeds of the Gospel.
May those seeds transform from within both humanity
and the whole cosmos
in the sure expectation
of a new heaven and a new earth,
when, with the powers of Evil vanquished,
your glory will shine eternally.

May the grace of the Jubilee
reawaken in us, *Pilgrims of Hope*,
a yearning for the treasures of heaven.

May that same grace spread
the joy and peace of our Redeemer
throughout the earth.

To you our God, eternally blessed,
be glory and praise for ever.

Amen

Franciscus



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