



August 2025 - Faith Formation Helps

Theme: Prayer & Personal Relationship with God

Scripture: “O God, you are my God, for you I long.” — Psalm 63:1

Catechism Focus: CCC 2558–2565

Overall Goal: To awaken desire for deep, personal prayer in every parishioner—especially the uncatechised—and provide tools, stories, and teaching to begin or renew a real relationship with God.



FAMILY SECTION

† Opening Prayer

Lord Jesus, help our family learn to talk to You and listen for Your voice.
Teach us to pray with love and trust, like You did. Amen.



Simple Catechesis for Families

What is Prayer?

Prayer is talking *and* listening to God.

It’s how we become His friend, thank Him, ask for help, and say sorry.

“Prayer is the raising of one’s mind and heart to God.” — CCC 2559

Why do we pray?

Because we’re made for God—and prayer brings us close to Him.

Jesus prayed every day to stay close to His Father—and He wants us to do the same.



Family Discussion Prompts

When do you feel closest to God?

Do you think God listens when you talk to Him?

What would you like to say to Jesus today?

🔪 Family Activity Ideas

Light a candle at dinner and say: “Jesus, be with us.”

Build a “prayer corner” with a cross, Bible, and a cushion

Try silent prayer for 1 minute: “Jesus, I give you my heart.”

Pray one Hail Mary as a family at bedtime each night



ADULT SECTION



Simple Catechesis for Adults

“In the New Covenant, prayer is the living relationship of the children of God with their Father...” — CCC 2565

Prayer is not just words—it’s a relationship.

It can be quiet, spoken, written, or even groaned (Romans 8:26).

You don’t need to “feel holy” to pray. You just need to *begin*.

God speaks *through Scripture, in silence, in the sacraments, and through the Church*.



Reflection Questions

What holds you back from prayer?

Do you talk to God as your Father, or just “at” Him?

Have you tried just sitting in silence with God?



Try This Week

Set aside 10-minutes daily prayer time every day

Use the “Jesus Prayer”: “Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me.”

Visit the Blessed Sacrament—even for 5 minutes on Tuesday evening between 7:10pm and 7:40pm

Read one Psalm aloud and imagine it as *your* words to God



HELPS

What if I haven’ t prayed in years (or ever)?

That’s okay. God already knows your heart. Start simply:

“God, if You’re there, I want to know You.”

“Jesus, help me.”

“Lord, I’m here. Speak to me.”

Tip: You don't need perfect words. The Holy Spirit helps us pray (Romans 8:26). Just show up.

? APOLOGETICS SECTION

Objection	Catholic Response
"Prayer doesn't work."	Prayer isn't magic—it's relationship. God may change the situation—or change <i>you</i> .
"I don't feel anything."	Feelings are not the measure of prayer. Saints like Mother Teresa experienced dryness for years—and remained faithful.
"God already knows—I don't need to tell Him."	True, but like any loving father, He <i>wants</i> to hear from you. Love needs communication.
"I'm too sinful to pray."	No one is too far gone. God loves sinners and always invites us home. Prayer is how we return.
"Prayer is just self-help."	Not at all. Christian prayer is <i>to</i> Someone real. It's not mental exercise—it's love.
"Only spontaneous prayer is real."	Jesus gave us the <i>Our Father</i> , and the Church has always used both personal and written prayers. Rote prayers can become <i>heartfelt</i> when offered with love.

✦ Extra Defences from Scripture

Luke 11:1–13 — Jesus teaches us to pray and promises God hears

Matthew 26:39 — Jesus prays in Gethsemane, showing prayer in agony

James 5:16 — "The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective"

Psalms 63:1–8 — Prayer of longing and trust

Romans 8:26 — "We do not know how to pray as we ought, but the Spirit intercedes..."

✦ Additional Catholic Helps

Eucharistic Adoration – Prayer in the presence of Christ Himself

Liturgy of the Hours – Praying with the Church through the day

The Rosary – Scriptural meditation on Christ's life

Lectio Divina – Listening to God speak through the Bible

Saints' Prayers – Learning from those who walked closely with God

Illustration Stories for August: Prayer & Relationship with God

The Candle in the Window

Every night, during World War II, a little girl named Mary would light a candle in the front window of their home. Her father was away at war, and though she didn't understand exactly where he was, she knew one thing: she missed him.

She asked her mother, "Will Daddy see the candle from the battlefield?" Her mother smiled gently, "He may not see the light, love—but God will. And He knows where Daddy is."

Mary kept lighting that candle every night for months. One snowy evening, long after bedtime, a knock came at the door. Her mother opened it—and there stood her father, thin, worn, but safe. "I saw the candlelight as I came down the road," he said. "And I knew I was home."

Lesson: Prayer may feel small or unseen, but God sees our faithfulness. Every time we "light the candle" of prayer—even in darkness—God moves. Sometimes the answer is closer than we think.

Catechetical Tie-in: Perseverance in prayer (Luke 18:1), even when we feel it's unnoticed, is heard by the Father who rewards what is done in secret (Matthew 6:6).

The Phone That Was Always On

A teenage boy grew frustrated with his father. "He never listens," the boy muttered. "I text him when I'm upset, when I need something, when I'm afraid. And I get nothing back."

One day, while looking for something in the kitchen, the boy found his father's old phone. Curious, he opened it—and his jaw dropped. Dozens, even hundreds, of unread messages. Every single one of *his*. All there.

Just then his father walked in and saw him holding the phone. "Son, I kept them all. I didn't know how to reply to some of them. But I never ignored you."

The boy's eyes filled with tears. "I thought you didn't care."

"I did," the father said quietly. "I just didn't always know how to show it."

Lesson: God is not distant or indifferent. He hears every cry—even when we don't see a response right away. Like a loving Father, He stores up our prayers, never forgetting even one (Psalm 56:8).

Catechetical Tie-in: The apparent "silence" of God in prayer is not absence. God hears and acts in His own time (Isaiah 55:8–9). Our prayers are heard, even when the answer isn't immediate.

The Empty Chair

An old man named Joe had never learned to pray. One day, he asked his priest, “How do I even begin?” The priest gave him simple advice: “Place an empty chair in front of you. Then, talk to Jesus like He’s sitting there. He is.”

So Joe tried it. At first it felt strange, but soon it became habit. Every day, he’d sit and speak: “Hi Jesus, it’s me again. I don’t have much to say... but I’m glad You’re here.”

Years passed. Joe grew sick. One morning, a nurse found him in his room—gone peacefully. But something was odd. He had turned in bed and was leaning forward, resting his head on the empty chair.

Lesson: Prayer is a real encounter, not an imaginary ritual. Even when we feel nothing, Someone is listening. Joe died leaning into the friendship he had come to believe in.

Catechetical Tie-in: Prayer is the heart-to-heart encounter with Christ (CCC 2565). Even in silence, faith builds a relationship that sustains us to the end.

The Broken Microphone

During a school assembly, a child was chosen to speak into the microphone. But the mic wasn’t working properly. Frustrated, the boy gave up. “No one hears me,” he muttered and walked off the stage.

Later that day, his teacher pulled him aside. “I was sitting at the back. I heard you perfectly. The sound wasn’t going through the speakers, but the mic was still connected to the recorder.”

The boy blinked. “So... it wasn’t wasted?”

“No,” she said. “Every word is there.”

Lesson: Sometimes we think our prayers go unheard—but God is always recording. What we say in faith is not lost, even if we don’t get applause or feel the answer.

Catechetical Tie-in: God stores up every act of faith, including silent prayers (Revelation 5:8). What feels unheard is never ignored.

WEEKLY GOSPEL HIGHLIGHTS (YEAR C)

Theme: Listening, Asking, Trusting

Date	Gospel (Luke)	Summary	Discipleship Focus
4 Aug - 18th Sunday OT	Luke 12:13 - 21	Parable of the rich fool	Prayer reorients us from possessions to eternal purpose
11 Aug - 19th Sunday OT	Luke 12:32 - 48	“Be ready, stay awake”	Prayer keeps our hearts watchful and responsive
18 Aug - 20th Sunday OT	Luke 12:49 - 53	Jesus brings fire and division	Prayer gives courage when the world resists truth
25 Aug - 21st Sunday OT	Luke 13:22 - 30	“Strive to enter by the narrow door”	Prayer helps us stay humble and focused on salvation