

EXPRESSIONS OF PRAYER

Readings: Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC) paragraphs 2700-2724
Mt 11:25-26; Mk 14:36; Mk 4:4-7, 15-19; Song 1:7, 3:1-4; Mt 26:40

REVIEW- FORMS OF PRAYER ARE

Blessing and Adoration, Petition, Intercession, Thanksgiving, Praise. These are the “content” of prayer. Can combine different **forms** with different **expressions**, although some naturally go well together.

EXPRESSIONS OF PRAYER

There are three basic ways to express or “communicate” our prayer

I. VOCAL

- a. We are called to pray with our whole being, including our voice
- b. Vocal Prayer is an exterior expression of our interior prayer
- c. Vocal is the best expression for group prayer
- d. Vocal Prayer can be formal or spontaneous

Mk 11:25-26

II. MEDITATION

- a. A quest to understand the Christian life
- b. Attaining the required attentiveness is VERY DIFFICULT
 - i. Sometimes the struggle to concentrate IS the actual prayer
- c. Meditation uses writings, scripture, books, art, etc. to focus on Christ
- d. It is to pass from **thought** to **reality**
 - i. This means spend some time **applying the thoughts to your life**

Proverbs 3: 5-6

III. CONTEMPLATION

- a. Silence in the presence of God
- b. True openness to listening to God
- c. Our willingness to “keep watch with [him] one hour.”

Mt. 26:40

IV. LECTIO DIVINA

- a. Choose a text of scripture that you wish to pray.
- b. Place yourself in a comfortable position and allow yourself to be silent
- c. Read the text slowly, and gently, focusing on a word or phrase
- d. Take the word or phrase into yourself, repeating it and allowing it to interact with your inner world of concerns, memories, and ideas. Give God any distractions that arise.
- e. Speak to God what you have discovered in the meditating on the scripture. Speak to Him as a friend, someone who loves you.
- f. Now, rest in God’s embrace. Rejoice in the knowledge that God is with you.