

Prayer Types

from the Episcopal Catechism

Prayer is responding to God, by thought and by deeds, with or without words. The essence of prayer as the Christian faith understands it is response. Sometimes the prayer is an action without words. sometimes it's without physical action *and* without words.

The principal kinds of prayer are:

- Adoration
- Praise
- Intercession
- Penitence
- Oblation
- Petition
- Thanksgiving

Prayers of Adoration - lifting up the heart and mind to God, asking nothing but to enjoy God's presence. This is a pure form of the love of God. It does not require many words, if any. It may simply be enjoying God's presence.

Prayers of Praise - We praise God, not to obtain anything, but because God's Being draws praise from us. This is the logical result of the adoration of God.

Prayers of Thanksgiving - offered to God for all the blessings of this life, for our enlightenment and healing, and for whatever draws us closer to God. God is the source of every good and perfect gift and ought to be thanked for them.

Prayers of Penitence - we confess that we make mistakes and commit offenses against God and other people, and desire to make amends where possible. "Repent" means to turn around and go in the opposite direction. As the Anglican guideline suggests, no one has to confess and repent, but all may, and some should.

Prayers of Oblation - offering of ourselves, our lives and labors, in union with Christ, for the purposes of God. The oblation of Christ was the total offering of himself to God. In our oblations we offer the totality of ourselves in union with this perfect oblation.

Prayers of Intercession - bringing the needs of others to God. Being careful not to prescribe what God ought to do for others, we place before God a request to make another person whole, removing anything that is not of God. Prayers of intercession, like all the prayers, are most effective when we prepare for them - notice that they are often placed in the liturgy *after* we prepare ourselves through the Word, Creed, and Lord's Prayer. Fasting may also help these types of prayers.

Prayers of Petition - we present our own *real* needs (not *wants*), that God's will may be done through us. These are not selfish prayers; omission of prayers of petition *may* be a symptom of spiritual pride.

A healthy prayer life is a balanced prayer life.