

# Prayer 101 – Session 2. Prayer as a Cry of Recognition and Love

## Prayer Prompts based on Session 2

### Day 1

Pray with the following quotation from Pope Benedict XVI:

“We are not some casual and meaningless product of evolution. Each of us is the result of a thought of God. Each of us is willed, each of us is loved, each of us is necessary.”<sup>1</sup>

- Why do you think that some people find it easier to believe that we are the product of evolution rather than the result of a thought of God? Give thanks for your own faith and pray for those whom you know who don't believe that God created us.
- God created you personally. You are not an accident. You are willed. You may sometimes wonder why God created you. The answer is simple – because He wanted to. Spend some time reflecting on the fact that God created you, not because He had to, but because He wanted to.
- *“God is love, and those who abide in love abide in God, and God abides in them”* (1 John 4:16). God didn't just will you into existence. He wanted to share His own divine life with you: *“God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us”* (Romans 5:5). Give thanks to God for the gift of His infinite and unconditional love for you.

### Day 2

Pray with this quotation from St. John Henry Newman:

“God has created me to do Him some definite service. He has committed some work to me which He has not committed to another. I have my mission. I may never know it in this life, but I shall be told it in the next. I am a link in a chain, a bond of connection between persons. He has not created me for naught. I shall do good; I shall do His work. I shall be an angel of peace, a preacher of truth in my own place, while not intending it if I do but keep His commandments. Therefore, I will trust Him, whatever I am, I can never be thrown away.”<sup>2</sup>

- Looking back on your life, ask the Holy Spirit to help you recognise times when it seemed that you were in exactly the right place at the right time to do something for God. It may be as simple as offering a kind word or a smile that changed someone's entire outlook that day.

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<sup>1</sup> Pope Benedict XVI, 2005. Available online: [http://www.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/homilies/2005/documents/hf\\_ben-xvi\\_hom\\_20050424\\_inizio-pontificato.html](http://www.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/homilies/2005/documents/hf_ben-xvi_hom_20050424_inizio-pontificato.html)

<sup>2</sup> St. John Henry Newman. Available online: <http://www.johnhenrynewmancatholiccollege.org.uk/john-henry-newman-prayers/>

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- What does it mean to be a ‘preacher of truth in my own place’? Invite God to show you how you can be a witness to His love and truth in your own family, or workplace, or community.
- “I will trust Him, whatever I am, I can never be thrown away.” The human being is not disposable. We are some ones not some things. Pray for an increase of trust in God so that you may accept how truly loved you are.

### Day 3

Pray with the following quotation from Pope Benedict XVI:

“There is nothing more beautiful than to be surprised by the Gospel, by the encounter with Christ. There is nothing more beautiful than to know Him and to speak to others of our friendship with Him.”<sup>3</sup>

- What does it mean to be surprised by the Gospel? Ask the Holy Spirit to help you encounter God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit in the Scriptures.
- “There is nothing more beautiful than to know Him.” What are the ways in which your life has changed for the better since coming to know God?
- How would you describe your friendship with God? Invite the Holy Trinity to draw you even deeper into knowledge and love of them.

### Day 4

Pray with paragraph 2559 from the Catechism of the Catholic Church:

“*Humility* is the foundation of prayer, Only when we humbly acknowledge that "we do not know how to pray as we ought," are we ready to receive freely the gift of prayer. "Man is a beggar before God."” (CCC 2559)

- Humility comes from the Latin *Humus*, which means earth. Humility in prayer means to be grounded, to acknowledge as St. Augustine says, that the human person is a beggar before God. In other words, we rely on God for absolutely everything, from our existence to our ability to pray. Humbly acknowledge your need of God in all things.
- When you do not know how to pray, entrust yourself to the Holy Spirit and ask Him to pray in and through you.
- Prayer is a free gift. It is not something we can demand from God, but if we humbly ask for this gift, He will answer that prayer in the way that is best for us. Surrender to God and ask Him to lead you in the type of prayer that is most pleasing to Him.

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<sup>3</sup> Pope Benedict XVI, 2005. Available online: [http://www.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/homilies/2005/documents/hf\\_ben-xvi\\_hom\\_20050424\\_inizio-pontificato.html](http://www.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/homilies/2005/documents/hf_ben-xvi_hom_20050424_inizio-pontificato.html)

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### Day 5

Pray with paragraph 2560 from the Catechism of the Catholic Church:

“Christ comes to meet every human being. It is he who first seeks us and asks us for a drink. Jesus thirsts; his asking arises from the depths of God's desire for us. Whether we realize it or not, prayer is the encounter of God's thirst with ours. “God thirsts that we may thirst for him.” (CCC 2560).

- Each time we come to pray, it is in response to God’s thirst and desire for us. Are there ways in which you can become more attuned to the sound of His voice?
- Pray that the Lord will implant in your heart a deep desire and thirst for Him.
- St. Teresa of Calcutta spent her whole life responding to the words Jesus spoke on the cross as He was dying: “I thirst” (John 19:28). Are there other ways in your life that you can help satisfy this thirst of Jesus?

### Day 6

Prayer is both a covenant and communion. Pray with the following quotation from Fr. Paul Hinnebusch’s book, *Friendship in the Lord*:

Intimacy “means being fully at home with someone. Home is where I am fully known and loved and received just as I am. Only in trusted love do I have intimacy.”<sup>4</sup>

- Prayer is a covenant, an exchange of persons. God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit give themselves entirely to you. What is your response? Will you give yourself entirely to God?
- Do you believe that God loves you and receives you just as you are?
- Pray that the Lord will increase your trust in His love for you so that you may have true intimacy with Him.

### Day 7

Look back on the quotations you have been praying with this week.

- What quotation spoke most strongly to you?
- What is the abiding thought or over-arching theme to your prayer this week?
- What do you sense the Lord is teaching you through this?

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Scripture quotations are taken from the Christian Community Bible – Catholic Pastoral Edition.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church is available online at:

[https://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0015/\\_INDEX.HTM](https://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0015/_INDEX.HTM)

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<sup>4</sup> Hinnebusch, P. O.P. (1974) *Friendship in the Lord*, Ave Maria Press, p. 91.