

Adult VBS –Hearing God’s Voice and Praying with God’s Word
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1. General Introduction to Prayer & Where to Begin

- a. CCC 27: The desire for God is written in the human heart, because man is created by God and for God; and God never ceases to draw man to himself. Only in God will he find the truth and happiness he never stops searching for: the dignity of man rests above all in the fact that he is called to communion with God. This invitation to converse with God is addressed to man as soon as he comes into being. For if man exists it is because God created him through love, and through love continues to hold him in existence. He cannot live fully according to truth unless he freely acknowledges that love and entrusts himself to his creator.

- b. CCC 2560: “If you knew the gift of God!’ The wonder of prayer is revealed beside the well where we come seeking water: there, 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.”

- c. Relationship – Identity – Mission (pp. 10-15 in “Have I Been With You?”)

- d. Methods of Prayer

A Method for Relational Prayer

Preparation:

1. Where will I go to pray?
2. At what time and for how long will I pray? (minimum of 30 min)
3. What do I want to pay attention to or pray with? (mostly Scripture passages)
4. What grace do I want to ask for?

Steps of Prayer:

1. Step One: Become aware of God's presence.
 - a. "A step or two before the place where I am to contemplate or meditate, I will stand for the space of an Our Father and, with my consciousness raised on high, consider how the Lord my God looks upon me. Then I will make an act of reverence or humility" (Spiritual Exercises, no. 75).
 - b. When I feel stuck during prayer, I will gently turn back to focus on the reality of God's presence at that very moment.
2. Step Two: Make the Sign of the Cross and invoke the Holy Spirit.
3. Step Three: Ask for a Grace.
 - a. "I will ask my Lord for what I want and desire" (Spiritual exercises, no. 48).
 - b. What do I desire in my relationship with God?
4. Step Four: Relational Prayer with Scripture – Conversation Starter
 - a. Lectio Divina/Imaginative Prayer
 - i. Recall my point of repetition – where did we leave off?
 - ii. Read Scripture passage – use your imagination and be in the scene.
 1. What stands out in the scene?
 2. Where am I drawn?
 3. What is it like to be in the scene?
 4. What thoughts, feelings, and desires move in me?
 5. What am I aware of as I read the passage slowly and simply?
 - a. Acknowledge, Relate, Receive, Respond
 - b. When the stirring of the heart subsides, return to the passage until the heart is moved again.
 - c. If nothing seems to be happening, tell God all about the nothing.

5. Step Five: Colloquy
 - a. A concluding conversation with the Father, Son, Holy Spirit, or Mary
 - b. Like leaving a home and recapping, saying goodbye
 6. Step Six: Review the hour and journal
 - a. After the period of prayer concludes
 - b. How did it go?
 - c. What did I receive from God?
 - d. What were the key movements: thoughts, feelings, and desires?
 - e. If it didn't go well: what might I change next time?
 - f. Point of repetition
 - i. What tangible grace will I return to throughout the day (and longer) where the Lord wants me to abide with him?
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Scripture Passages and Desired Graces

1. MONDAY: Scripture...Hosea 11:1-4

Grace: To experience anew the unconditional love God has for me even when I have strayed.

2. TUESDAY: Scripture...Luke 9:57-62

Grace: To be given a share in your resolve, Jesus, to be all for God the Father—today and into the future.

3. WEDNESDAY: Scripture...Mark 7:31-37

Grace: To be given a newfound sensitivity to the word you speak, that my resistances may give way.

4. THURSDAY: Scripture...2 Timothy 1:6-9

Grace: To have all that is dead within me be set free by the power of the Holy Spirit.