

Content of Prayer

I. Blessing and Adoration

CCC 2626: Blessing expresses the basic movement of Christian prayer: it is an encounter between God and man. In blessing, God's gift and man's acceptance of it are united in dialogue with each other. The prayer of blessing is man's response to God's gifts: because God blesses, the human heart can in return bless the One who is the source of every blessing.

CCC 2628: Adoration is the first attitude of man acknowledging that he is a creature before his Creator... Adoration is homage of the spirit to the "King of Glory," respectful silence in the presence of the "ever greater" God.

II. Prayer of Petition

CCC 2631: The first movement of the prayer of petition is asking forgiveness, like the tax collector in the parable: "God, be merciful to me a sinner!" It is a prerequisite for righteous and pure prayer.

CCC 2632: There is a hierarchy in these petitions: we pray first for the Kingdom, then for what is necessary to welcome it and cooperate with its coming.

CCC 2633: When we share in God's saving love, we understand that every need can become the object of petition. Christ, who assumed all things in order to redeem all things, is glorified by what we ask the Father in his name. It is with this confidence that St. James and St. Paul exhort us to pray at all times.

III. Prayer of Intercession

CCC 2635: Since Abraham, intercession - asking on behalf of another has been characteristic of a heart attuned to God's mercy ... In intercession, he who prays looks "not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others," even to the point of praying for those who do him harm.

IV. Prayer of Thanksgiving

CCC 2638: *As in the prayer of petition, every event and need can become an offering of thanksgiving. The letters of St. Paul often begin and end with thanksgiving, and the Lord Jesus is always present in it: "Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you"; "Continue steadfastly in prayer, being watchful in it with thanksgiving."*

V. Prayer of Praise

CCC 2639: *Praise is the form of prayer which recognizes most immediately that God is God. It lauds God for his own sake and gives him glory, quite beyond what he does, but simply because HE IS. It shares in the blessed happiness of the pure of heart who love God in faith before seeing him in glory.*

Matthew 6:31-33: *So do not worry and say, 'What are we to eat?' or 'What are we to drink?' or 'What are we to wear?' All these things the pagans seek. Your heavenly Father knows that you need them all. But seek first the kingdom [of God] and his righteousness, and all these things will be given you besides*