

LORD,  
TEACH US TO  
**PRAY** ✠

Regnum Christi Prayer Book  
for Lay Members



REGNUM  
CHRISTI

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teach us to  
PRAY

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**Prayer** Book for Lay  
Members

Thy Kingdom Come!

REGNUM CHRISTI

GENERAL DIRECTORATE  
Via Aurelia 677 – 00165 Rome, Italy

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To the members of Regnum Christi

Dear friends in Christ,

In Advent we prepare our home for the arrival of a very special guest: our King, who wants to awaken our desire to welcome him, presenting himself as a newborn. It is a time to clean out our homes and our hearts, a time of waiting and joy. It is a time to reminisce on the Incarnation, by which the Kingdom of Christ inaugurates its presence in this world. In addition, this year brings us another gift: a guide to seek God in every circumstance of our lives, and also to help us find each other, so as to open our hearts, to allow him to enter and to invite him to remain in us—forever.

Before the responsibility to renew the longstanding and beloved Regnum Christi Prayer Book, the only coherent response seemed to be to follow in the steps of the first disciples of the Master. We wanted to set our gaze on Jesus and on his prayer and ask him, “Lord, teach us to pray” (Lk 11:1). Thus the name of the new prayer book was born. If the heart is the engine of the person, prayer optimizes its output to encounter God. That is what it is about. Man, lost in the desert of life, is thirsting; and the Lord comes out to meet him at every well, offering him living water (cf. Jn 4:5-42).

## **What is *Lord Teach Us To Pray*?**

*Lord, Teach Us To Pray* gives continuity to the previous Regnum Christi Prayer Book. It is a guide and an aid to personal and communal prayer, as well as a tool of formation for the lay Regnum Christi member. It draws together a good part of our tradition of prayer, facilitating a prayer life in communion with the Church and the whole of Regnum Christi, from its foundation up to the present.

However, *Lord Teach Us to Pray* is more than that. In reality, it is the name we give to our response to the motion of the Holy Spirit, to contribute to the renewal of Regnum Christi through the prayer of the laity. For now, this response is expressed in this text, but it does not end here. We trust that this prayer book will be an occasion for all vocations of Regnum Christi to continue discovering how the Lord wants us to pray together.

The renewal of the lay members' prayer does not conclude with this writing, just as the renewal of the prayer of the consecrated branches has not concluded. The important renewal happens in real life. Prayer that is lived out enlightens this text and will demand its periodic renewal, at the pace of our life of prayer. We invite all Regnum Christi members and all communities of prayer to share their experiences of renewed prayer with each other. On the Regnum Christi webpage, there is an inbox to offer suggestions and share experiences aimed at improving eventual updates of *Lord Teach Us to Pray*.

## **Why is there a new prayer book?**

The reasons that compelled us to renew this beloved prayer book are many. First, we needed to adapt it to the renewal of our charism and the life of the lay members already expressed in the Statutes of the Regnum Christi Federation and in the Rule of Life of the Lay Faithful Associated to the Regnum Christi Federation. Furthermore, the publication of the new prayer book has been a constant request from many lay members and formators even before the approval of the Statutes. In this sense, *Lord Teach Us to Pray* reflects a path of renewal that began before 2019 and seeks to promote and give continuity to the renewal, incorporating new fruits. In addition, we hope that the next steps in the renewed prayer of the consecrated branches allow us to grow in some prayers and practices that are common to all vocations of Regnum Christi.

## **What process was used for the renewal of the prayer book?**

The renewal of the prayer book was tasked to the General Directorate's Area of Life and Mission. Under its direction, various work commissions were formed, coordinated by lay members and comprised of members of all vocations: one for the project design of the new prayer book, another for its redaction, and another for its revision.

The commission for project design carried out a survey with both quantitative and qualitative questions, to which 257 people from 19 countries of our different territories responded. They asked about the level of knowledge, use, and assessment of the prayer book; the possibility to add or remove some of its content; the prayer life of the lay members of Regnum Christi; and the type of tools and means lay members use today to pray. The analysis of the survey's results was taken into account for the design of *Lord Teach Us to Pray*, and to make some of the decisions in the process, which we comment on more below.

The different rough drafts of the prayer book were presented to the revision committee, which operated on three levels: editorial, content and the practice of prayer. The final version was developed by the redaction committee and presented to some Regnum Christi section directors, formators and young people, as well as the laypeople of the General Plenary Council, so that they could carry out a prayerful revision and offer their feedback. Finally, the final version was reviewed by three specialists in liturgy and prayer.

### **Some decisions**

The project design committee determined that the new prayer book needed to gather both the tradition of the previous one and, at the same time, the experience of the spiritual renewal begun in the last few years. The disposition of the prayers in *Lord Teach Us to Pray* is very similar to that of the

previous prayer book, though now it highlights the idea that prayer is not just something we do, but that our whole life and its rhythms are also the life and rhythms of prayer.

The current rubrics of *Lord Teach Us to Pray* focus less on the formal and external aspects of prayer and more on the interior disposition and meaning that some practices are aimed at, in the way of a *mystagogy* or pedagogy of mystery.

Some prayers and practices that have been in disuse for some years have been removed; others have been modified according to the renewed expression of the charism contained in the Statutes of the Regnum Christi Federation; and some have been added, such as the ones dedicated to the renewal of Regnum Christi.

At the request of some laypeople and according to the quantitative results obtained in the survey, instructions for the Encounter with Christ are included, as well as the Rite of Association to the Regnum Christi Federation, so that the lay members can meditate on it and spiritually renew their association in prayer.

*Lord, Teach Us To Pray* is already available at [www.rcprayerbook.org](http://www.rcprayerbook.org). We hope it will be a milestone on the path of the spiritual renewal of Regnum Christi, and we trust that it will contribute to optimize our search for God and our intimate encounter with him. Jesus, on his part, has come out to meet us.

The King who comes; the Lord who approaches—come, let us adore him!

Yours in Christ,

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# Introduction:

## “Lord, teach us to pray!”

Today, together with the first disciples, we address this petition to the Master: *Lord, teach us to pray* (Lk 11:1). Jesus answers by teaching us the Lord’s Prayer and tells us the parable of the persistent friend. He shows us what to pray for and invites us to pray insistently, in season and out of season: “Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks the door will be opened” (Lk 11:9-10). He has written in our hearts the desire to pray, to pray better, to make our life a prayer, a liturgy; to pray always (Lk 18:1-8), not in the sense of reciting prayers at every moment, but in the sense of always being attentive to the Holy Spirit, in the presence of God, so that all our activities become a response to his will, an offering to our Lord.

What you have in your hands, *Lord, Teach Us to Pray*, is a path of initiation. It is an introduction to the life of prayer, so that the lay members of Regnum Christi may learn to pray by praying, as part of the Mystical Body of Christ, the Church, in the style of Regnum Christi. When we pray, we unite ourselves to the prayer of Christ, to his Person and to his Body - the Church - to address the Father in communion with the Holy Spirit. Common prayers and guidelines help us experience communion with the Church and Regnum Christi even when we pray alone, and facilitate times of community prayer.

## What is a prayerful life?

Prayer is not a standalone activity disconnected from the rest of our life. By a *prayerful life* we want to express the vigor that springs from our personal encounter with Christ in the Liturgy and the sacraments, having it spill over to fill our whole world with the fragrance of Christ. Strengthening our heart through constant prayer, we listen to the Holy Spirit, who appeals to us through daily events and inspires us with the response of living daily life as Christ did.

The Liturgy is the privileged space of man's encounter with God and with his Son, which is manifested through signs - actions and words - the expression of the dialogue and encounter of each person with God in his Church. Here you will find suggestions for living some of the sacraments and for bringing their "living water" to prayer and daily life. In particular, you will find references to the liturgical seasons, the sacraments of the Eucharist and Reconciliation, and some instructions for the Encounter with Christ and the Rite of Association to Regnum Christi, so that you can continue to renew this milestone in your story of both love for God and your Regnum Christi vocation.

A prayerful life includes specific moments of prayer accompanied by external signs. These signs also help us to pray with the body, allowing prayer to reach our whole being and action, sanctifying it. The life of prayer, nourished by the sacraments, battles against our hardness of heart (Ps 95:8), so that it is no longer us, but Christ who reigns within (Gal 2:20). Here you will find many vocal prayers, such as the Lord's Prayer. Most of them are from the tradition of the Church, and some are particular to Regnum Christi.

Finally, a prayerful life prolongs the sacraments and prayer by making our lives a liturgy, expressed with certain signs which make the Kingdom of Christ present: compassion for those most in need, communion with our brothers and sisters, works of charity and mercy, witness and mission, new ways of living within marriage, family and work, a new culture.

It is this presence of the Kingdom that nourishes the spirituality of the Kingdom, through which we return to the Liturgy, the sacraments and prayer, seeking “to clothe ourselves with Christ in our hearts and in our works, so he reigns in our lives through a progressive configuration with him,” allowing ourselves “to be permeated by Christ’s love for humanity” so that “he reigns in the hearts of all people and society” (SRCF 13). It is a virtuous circle that culminates in adoration.

## How is “Lord, Teach Us to Pray” structured?

Nature and human life have a daily, weekly, and annual rhythm. The Liturgy accompanies this rhythm, teaching us to see the invisible presence of the Kingdom in the ordinary time of nature and life. There are prayers and signs that we express every day, others weekly, and others at certain times of the year. Through this, prayer becomes habit and our habits come to form a prayerful life.

A good part of *Lord, Teach Us to Pray* corresponds to this natural and liturgical structure: the day, the week, and the year unfold from the day on which we celebrate the historical event that transfigures all of time: the eighth day, Sunday, the Lord's Day. But life is also marked by singular occasions, unique moments of special relevance for us. At the end you will find prayers and suggestions for these events.

## How to benefit most from “Lord, Teach Us to Pray”?

Here are seven suggestions for growing in the life of prayer:

- Place yourself in the presence of God, be aware of what you are about to do, prepare your heart. Become attentive to the fact that it is God before whom you stand. Seek interior and exterior silence. Try to give your prayer meaning and pray with all your senses. Ask the Holy Spirit for help, so that he guides your mind and fills your heart.
- Go to the Word of God, Sacred Scripture, that constant dialogue between God and man. When we begin our life of prayer, it is best to learn from the one who prays best, the Lord himself. Try to pray with the same sentiments of Jesus, that it may be Christ who lives, works, and prays in you.
- Contemplate the words and signs of the Liturgy, the privileged place of encounter between God and his people, in which the action of God joins the action of man in perfect synergy.
- Meditate occasionally on the vocal prayers. They are an expression of faith, but they also nourish faith. Learn to savor and renew their meaning, recognizing how they relate to your life. Try to reflect on the spirit behind the words and how they speak to your heart. To remember is to return back through the heart.
- Let him lead you. It is not about what we do in prayer, but what he wants to do with us. You could feel nothing, fail to find answers, and nevertheless have prayed well. Even if “we do not know how to pray as we ought” (Rom 8:26), he knows and is with us.

- It may take you a while to enter into prayer. That is all right. Remain in silence and listen to his Word. You may come out of prayer unexpectedly. It is not unusual. Don't worry about it. Try to reenter into prayer.
- Before ending, try to bring your prayer to day-to-day life. Come up with a small resolution that you can practice relatively quickly. Let it be simple, realistic, and firm.

All of this is learned through personal practice, the advice of people more experienced in prayer, and prayer shared with others. Ask your spiritual director for advice, seek out teachers and prayer partners, and try to make the team Encounter with Christ a school of prayer. You will find in the fourth part of the Catechism, "On Christian Prayer," a very simple and complete introduction to the life of prayer.

Often in the rubrics — the texts in red — you will find an invitation to take a step further, deepening in the elements we offer here. Prayer life has several stages - the later stages don't rule out the first ones. There may be many recommendations here that you will always find helpful, but life in the Spirit continues past these pages.

"Pray as you are," confident that you will become what you pray. We pray as we live and live as we pray. The way you pray will change as you change. Though the sounds of vocal prayers remain the same, the Spirit renews them and causes rivers of living water to flow from them. Let us ask for this gift that the Lord wants to give us.

# Sunday, the Eighth Day

Sunday is the center of the Church's life. It is the first day of the week, the memorial of the first day of creation. It is also the eighth day, when the Sabbath finds its fulfillment and culmination in Christ's Resurrection. Chronological time, in which death comes for all that are born, intersects with transfigured time, which participates in the eternal. Sunday marks the beginning of a new time and space: life in the Kingdom.

On Sunday we practice how to live each day of the year in a holy way. It is a day of celebration and rest; a family, cultural, and social day; a liturgical day and a day of prayer par excellence. The Church prescribes the obligatory participation of the faithful in the Sunday Liturgy, although she also strongly encourages participation in the Eucharist more frequently, even daily, as a privileged means for Christ to be all in all.

## The Eucharist

The Eucharist is the sacrament of sacraments, the source and summit of the whole Christian life. Within it are gathered together all the spiritual goods of the Church: on the one hand, Christ himself is brought to earth and by his incarnation, death, and resurrection the world is sanctified; on the other, our worship, prayer, and offerings in the Holy Spirit raise us to heaven and reach Christ and the Father. Our thoughts, feelings, words and actions are inspired, confirmed, and strengthened by the Eucharist.

The Eucharist is the memorial of Christ's sacrifice and of his Body, which is the Church. The one sacrifice of Christ is renewed and made efficaciously present in every Eucharist; the sacrifice of the faithful is united to him, thus acquiring a new value of intercession for all creation. The Eucharist renews the center of salvation history through Christ's action and the Church's response.

The Eucharist is called by various names, which underline different aspects of its inexhaustible richness. It is worth meditating on the meaning of each of them. Some of them are: Eucharist, because it is thanksgiving and praise; the Lord's Banquet, because it is Christ's last supper with his disciples and a foretaste of the wedding feast of the Lamb in the heavenly Jerusalem; the Memorial of the Lord's passion and resurrection; Holy and Divine Liturgy, because it is the center and richest expression of the holy life; Communion, because it brings about the union between Christ and his Church; Holy Mass, because the celebration of the mystery of salvation culminates in the sending or mission of the faithful to fulfill the will of God in ordinary life.

## Preparation for the Eucharist

The Eucharist is the great celebration. Like all festivities, it begins with the excitement of the preparations, continues with its rites, and lives on in us once it has been celebrated.

Before attending the Eucharist, it is good to prepare the mind and heart. Perhaps it is a good time to go to the sacrament of Reconciliation, as well as to make peace with our brothers and sisters, so that nothing will weigh down our hearts when Christ comes to meet us. We can also ask ourselves for whom or for what we are offering the Mass, and what our spiritual contribution to the Offertory will be, alongside the bread and wine, so that Christ may fill it with his life and make it holy. What do we want to ask of the Lord? What do we want to give the Lord for him to sanctify and incorporate into his Kingdom?

## Celebration of the Eucharist

The opening rites are part of the preparation: they transfigure space, time, and the heart, and they assemble the faithful together with Christ, the invisible head of the Church. The entrance; the priest's reverence of the altar and greeting to the people; the sign of the cross, by which we renew our baptism and our participation in the eternal family (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit); the penitential act and the singing of the Kyrie Eleison, by which we recognize ourselves judged and saved; the Gloria, in which heaven is opened and we hear the angels announcing the Incarnation; and the collect prayer, which highlights the meaning of the celebration.

The Liturgy of the Word reveals the Lord, who comes to meet us. It is the movement of love by which the Father gives us his Word to awaken our faith and asks us to accept it and bring it to life. The Reading of the Word makes us the Bride of the Lamb: by welcoming and listening to the Word, we become his body. He calls us; will we respond?

During the presentation of the gifts (the offertory), the priest, in the name of Christ, will offer the bread and wine to the Father, so that Christ may transform them into his Body and Blood. With the priest, we place our prayer, sufferings and works alongside the bread and wine, so that Christ may incorporate them into the Kingdom. He alone can bring to fulfillment all human attempts to offer sacrifices.

The Eucharistic Liturgy is the heart and summit of the celebration: the bread and wine will become the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ. By participating in Holy Communion, we receive Christ himself, who gave himself for the life of the world. The rite of Communion finishes with a moment of sacred silence and thanksgiving, followed by the closing prayer.

The Mass ends with a sending forth, a mission: to bring the new life transfigured by Christ to our personal life, family, work, society, and culture. “Go in peace, glorifying the Lord by your life!”, “Go and announce the Gospel of the Lord!”

## Prayers In the Presence of the Eucharist

The Liturgy of the Eucharist is full of actions, words, prayers, and songs that together express an inexhaustible richness for our intimate relationship with Christ, the Father, and the Holy Spirit. The times of silence are also signs: expectation, penitence, listening, praise, glory, adoration, thanksgiving. Silence helps us to ponder what has already occurred and prepare ourselves for what is about to happen. Tradition speaks of the great silence or sacred silence after Holy Communion, in which the Church recommends that there be no singing, so that the Word, the Liturgy, and the inspirations we have received can echo in our interior.

We have prayers that help prepare us in the presence of the Eucharist. Others help us intensify our Eucharistic sentiment. Others help us pray during certain moments of the celebration. Keeping in mind both the richness of the sacrament and the recommendations of the Church, together with the stage and state of our spiritual life, we can discern, with the help of our spiritual director, the usefulness of praying one or more of these prayers.

Many of the faithful remain in the church once Mass has ended to spend a moment in personal, spontaneous, or vocal prayer. Some Regnum Christi communities maintain the tradition of praying for the Pope and for vocations when the Celebration of the Eucharist has finished.

# A Prayerful Day

“Day unto day pours forth speech; night unto night whispers knowledge” (Ps 19:3). God always speaks to us and invites us to converse with him and offer him everything that we undergo. This makes the day – and the night – a constant prayer.

As we begin our day, we lift our eyes with a watchful heart (cf. Ps 57:9), attentive to the Lord who comes to meet us in daily life, in every circumstance, amid the cares of this life (cf. Mt 6:34). We thank him for the gift of a new day and offer our work to the Lord.

We dedicate a few minutes of prayer to remind ourselves that every minute of the day is prayer. Meditation, the Angelus, the Rosary, visits to the Eucharist and spiritual communion are occasions to recover and prolong the prayerful life in the midst of the world.

The evening is reminiscent of the sunset of life and marks the end of the day. It is time to review the day, to give thanks to God and to place in his merciful hands everything that has happened (cf. Ps 32). To this we dedicate our evening prayers.

Sleep and wakefulness, work and leisure, friends and family... everything belongs to God, an occasion to recognize his presence, to proclaim it and to live in the Kingdom.

## On Rising

Seeking God's presence in the morning when we get up helps to set the tone of the day and the meaning of our life. To rise is to be born again, to live with a new heart and a new spirit. It is a time to lift the mind and heart to the Lord and ask him to come down into our life, to touch and awaken it.

### **Invocation**

Christ our King!  
Thy Kingdom Come!

Then we pray an Our Father, a Hail Mary, and make the following petition.

### **Opening prayer**

O my Lord and my Father, inspire my thoughts, words, and actions, and accompany them with your grace, so that all my actions may begin and end according to your will and for love of you.  
Through Jesus Christ, our Lord.  
Amen.

## Morning Offering

Offering our works is a sign of offering our life. It is about becoming an offering ourselves. We propose here three vocal prayers to God and one to the Blessed Mother. We begin them with the sign of the cross to place ourselves in the presence of the Lord. You may find it helpful to incorporate a personal prayer. You can substitute the Lauds of the Liturgy of the Hours for the prayers of the morning offering. In any case, we encourage you to keep the Prayer to Jesus Christ, common to all members of Regnum Christi.

✠ In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.  
Amen.

### Prayer to the Father

I believe in you, my God, because you are truth itself. I hope in you because you are infinite mercy. I love you above all else because you are infinitely lovable, and because I must love you alone with all my heart, all my soul, and all my strength (cf. Dt 6:5). I thank you, Father, for granting me a new day to give you glory and make your Kingdom present.  
Amen.

### Prayer to Jesus Christ

Lord Jesus,  
I give you my hands to do your work.  
I give you my feet to follow your path.  
I give you my eyes to see as you see.  
I give you my tongue to speak your words.  
I give you my mind, so that you can think in me.  
I give you my spirit, so you can pray in me.

Above all, I give you my heart, so in me you can love your Father and all people.

I give you my whole self so you can grow in me; till it is you, Christ, who live and work and pray in me.

Amen.

### **Prayer to the Holy Spirit**

Holy Spirit, delightful guest and consoler of my soul, artisan of our transformation into Christ, enlighten my mind to know God's will for me. In flame my heart to love it passionately. Grant me the fortitude I need to accomplish it as perfectly as you ask of me. Lastly, Spirit of love, grant me the grace of responding faithfully to your holy inspirations.

### **Prayer to the Blessed Virgin Mary**

Mother, I come before you on this new day to consecrate to you all my thoughts, words, and actions, and to ask your blessing for me, my loved ones, and all whom I encounter along my way. Grant me the heart of an apostle of the Kingdom, and enable me to imitate the life of prayer, obedience, humility, fidelity, sacrifice and simplicity that you shared with your Son, our brother and Lord. Mother, tell Jesus how much I want to serve him in Regnum Christi, and make his Kingdom present among all people.

### **Examen to prepare the day**

We take a few minutes of reflection in God's presence to review our day's agenda, offer him our activities, and renew our intention to live in Christ all day long.

## Meditation

Meditation or “mental prayer” facilitates an intimate and personal dialogue with God. Like Jesus, we need to pray, speaking freely and listening to our Father. We do so as sons and daughters in the Son, with the Holy Spirit who comes to the aid of our weakness, for we do not know how to pray as we ought (cf. Rom 8:26).

The Word of God must be present in our prayer, either as subject matter for meditation or as part of our conversations with the Lord. Let us recall how the disciples of Emmaus prayed and how their hearts burned within as they listened to the Lord: for Jesus led them to ponder their troubles and discover in the Scriptures the interpretive key for their life (Lk 24:13-35).

It is not enough to reflect and contemplate. Meditation is an attentive and loving dialogue with God. In order to share this intimacy, we must learn to listen to God in the silence of our soul, and to confide in him in colloquies and conversation full of faith and love. It is during these intimate conversations when, under the light and power of the Holy Spirit, our will conforms to the will of God and the decisions that guide our life emerge.

This prayer begins with the sign of the cross and an invocation to the Holy Spirit; it continues with preparatory acts to help us enter into communion with God, to share the same feelings as Jesus when he prayed. At the end of the prayer, we thank the Lord for having spent this time with him and for the fruits we have received, which are always greater than what we perceive. Finally, we ask for his grace to bring to others what he has given us.

✠ In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.  
Amen.

### Invocation of the Holy Spirit

Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful, and kindle in them the fire of your love.

Send forth your Spirit, and they shall be created. And you shall renew the face of the earth.

O God, who have taught the hearts of the faithful by the light of the Holy Spirit, grant that in the same Spirit we may be truly wise and ever rejoice in his consolation. Through Christ our Lord.  
Amen.

### Preparatory Acts of Faith, Hope, and Love

These acts are made in direct dialogue with God briefly and spontaneously, without having to resort to written formulas. They introduce us to prayer because they themselves are the essential content of prayer, which consists in believing, hoping, and loving. We offer some helpful words and images from the Gospel, although each person will gradually discover their own and adapt them to the changing rhythm of their own personal relationship with God and his Word.

**Faith:** be aware that you are in the presence of Almighty God, talking with him. “Our Father.” You might recall the moment when Jesus says to doubting Thomas: “Put your finger here and see my hands and bring your hand and put it into my side, and do not be unbelieving, but believe.” To which Thomas responds, in words that express his renewed faith: “My Lord and my God” (Jn 20:27-28).

**Hope:** trust in God as your supreme good, your Savior, the one from whom you confidently hope to receive grace and help in your weakness. “Thy Kingdom come.” You might recall the moment when the prodigal son returns to the house of his father, who receives him in a manner foreshadowing life in the Kingdom: “Quickly bring the finest robe and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. Take the fattened calf and slaughter it. Then let us celebrate with a feast, because this son of mine was dead, and has come to life again; he was lost and has been found.” (Lk 15:22-24).

**Love:** be aware that God is your Father, and you are his beloved child. Address him like a child to their father and listen to him. “Thy will be done. Give us this day our daily bread. Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us.”

You might recall the moments of fraternal sharing between Jesus and his disciples; or at the house of Lazarus in Bethany; or the supreme moment of his total self-giving, with Mary and John, at the foot of the Cross.

Ask Christ and Mary to help you make the most of the meditation.

At the end of the meditation give thanks to God. You can use the closing prayer.

## Greeting to the Blessed Virgin Mary

Mary accompanies us all day long with her quiet, motherly presence. We direct our prayer to her at certain times of the day, particularly by praying the Angelus or the Regina Cæli and the Rosary.

The Angelus and Regina Cæli are like a small liturgy of the hours that the Church recommends for those who do not have time to interrupt their activities. For a few minutes, usually at noon, we remember with Mary some mysteries of Christ's life.

### Angelus

The Angelus is prayed all year round, except during the Easter season.

The angel of the Lord declared unto Mary;  
And she conceived of the Holy Spirit.  
Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.  
Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen.  
Behold the handmaid of the Lord.  
Be it done unto me according to thy word.  
Hail Mary...  
And the Word was made flesh,  
And dwelt among us.  
Hail Mary...  
Pray for us, O holy Mother of God,  
That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.  
Let us pray:  
Pour forth, we beseech thee, O Lord, thy grace into our hearts,  
that we, to whom the incarnation of Christ thy Son was made

known by the message of an angel, may by his passion and cross be brought to the glory of his resurrection. Through the same Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen. (Glory be... three times)

### **Regina Cæli**

The Regina Cæli is prayed during the Easter Season (from Easter Sunday until noon on the Saturday following Pentecost).

Queen of heaven, rejoice, alleluia!

For the Son you were privileged to bear, alleluia,

Is risen as he said, alleluia.

Pray for us to God, alleluia.

Rejoice and be glad, O Virgin Mary, alleluia!

For the Lord is truly risen, alleluia.

Let us pray:

O God, who gave joy to the world by the resurrection of your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, grant, we beseech you, that through the intercession of the Virgin Mary, we may obtain the joys of everlasting life. Through the same Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen. (Glory be... three times)

### **Prayer to my Guardian Angel**

In Regnum Christi, we traditionally entrust ourselves to our Guardian Angel at the end of the Angelus or Regina Caeli.

Angel sent by God to guide me, be my light and walk beside me; be my guardian and protect me; on the paths of life direct me. Amen.

## Rosary

Reciting the Rosary is traditionally a meditative prayer. Begun by western Christianity, it corresponds in some way to the prayer of the heart or the Jesus Prayer, typical of eastern Christianity. Regnum Christi invites members to pray at least one mystery of the Rosary every day, either in a group or in private.

The Rosary is a time for Mary to step into our lives, gifting us her consolation, example and intercession. This prayer brings peace to the soul, instills faith, and renews trust.

Intertwined among the Our Fathers, the Hail Marys and the Glory Bes run the mysteries of Christ's life, death, passion and resurrection as seen through the eyes of the Virgin Mary. In this way we allow the Mother of God to be the one to form within us the very sentiments of the Heart of her Son. If while praying the Rosary we become distracted, simply return to the prayer confidently to recover our place and fervor, remembering the mysteries celebrated and the persons for whom we are praying.

## Praying the Rosary in a Group

When the Rosary is prayed as a group, the guide announces each mystery and the general intention; five of the participants announce the group's specific intention for each decade.

There are, at present, many legitimate ways of beginning the Rosary in different parts of the Church and following different customs. They should all appropriately prepare the mind for contemplation. It is common practice to recite the Apostles' Creed

**Guide:** ✝ In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

**Guide:** We will offer the Rosary for...

**Apostles' Creed:** I believe in God,  
 the Father almighty,  
 Creator of heaven and earth,  
 and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,  
 who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
 born of the Virgin Mary,  
 suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
 was crucified, died and was buried;  
 he descended into hell;  
 on the third day he rose again from the dead;  
 he ascended into heaven,  
 and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty;  
 from there he will come to judge the living and the dead.  
 I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
 the holy catholic Church,  
 the communion of saints,  
 the forgiveness of sins,

the resurrection of the body,  
and life everlasting.  
Amen.

Then, for an increase in the virtues of faith, hope, and charity, an Our Father, three Hail Marys and a Glory Be are prayed. After each biblical passage, one of the participants says the intention for that mystery.

### **The Joyful Mysteries (Monday and Saturday)**

**Guide:** Today we will contemplate the joyful mysteries.

**Guide:** The first mystery: The Annunciation.

**Reader:** Mary said, “Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word.” (Lk 1:38).

**Guide:** The second mystery: The Visitation

**Reader:** Mary entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. (Lk 1:40).

**Guide:** The third mystery: The Nativity.

**Lector:** And Mary gave birth to her firstborn son. She wrapped him in swaddling clothes and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn. (Lk 2:7).

**Guide:** The fourth mystery: The Presentation in the Temple.

**Reader:** Mary and Joseph took him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord (Lk 2:22).

**Guide:** The fifth mystery: The Finding in the Temple.

**Reader:** After three days they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions (Lk 2:46).

## The Luminous Mysteries (Thursday)

**Guide:** Today we will contemplate the luminous mysteries.

**Guide:** The first mystery: The Baptism of Christ in the Jordan.

**Reader:** And a voice came from the heavens, saying, “This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased.” (Mt 3:17).

**Guide:** The second mystery: The Wedding Feast at Cana.

**Reader:** Jesus did this as the beginning of his signs in Cana in Galilee and so revealed his glory, and his disciples began to believe in him. (Jn 2:11).

**Guide:** The third mystery: Jesus’ Proclamation of the Coming of the Kingdom of God.

**Reader:** Jesus came to Galilee proclaiming the gospel of God, “This is the time of fulfillment. The kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel.” (Mk 1:15).

**Guide:** The fourth mystery: The Transfiguration.

**Reader:** While he was praying, he was transfigured before them; his face shone like the sun and his clothes became white as light. (Lk 9:29; Mt 17:2)..

**Guide:** The fifth mystery: The Institution of the Eucharist.

**Reader:** I am the living bread that came down from heaven; whoever eats this bread will live forever (Jn 6:51).

## The Sorrowful Mysteries (Tuesday and Friday)

**Guide:** Today we will contemplate the sorrowful mysteries.

**Guide:** The first mystery: The Agony of in the Garden.

**Reader:** He was in such agony and he prayed so fervently that his sweat became like drops of blood falling on the ground. (Lk 22:44)

**Guide:** The second mystery: The Scourging at the Pillar.

**Reader:** Then Pilate took Jesus and had him scourged. (Jn 19:1).

**Guide:** The third mystery: The Crowning with Thorns.

**Reader:** And the soldiers wove a crown out of thorns and placed it on his head, and clothed him in a purple cloak. (Jn 19:2).

**Guide:** The fourth mystery: The Carrying of the Cross.

**Reader:** And carrying the cross himself, Jesus went out to what is called the Place of the Skull, in Hebrew, Golgotha. (Jn 19:17).

**Guide:** The fifth mystery: The Crucifixion and Death.

**Reader:** There they crucified him, and with him two others, one on either side, with Jesus in the middle. (Jn 19:18).

### **The Glorious Mysteries (Wednesday and Sunday)**

**Guide:** Today we will contemplate the glorious mysteries.

**Guide:** The first mystery: The Resurrection.

**Reader:** Why do you seek the living one among the dead? He is not here, but he has been raised. (Lk 24:5-6).

**Guide:** The second mystery: The Ascension.

**Reader:** As he blessed them he parted from them and was taken up to heaven. (Lk 24:51).

**Guide:** The third mystery: The Descent of the Holy Spirit.

**Reader:** Then there appeared to them tongues as of fire, which parted and came to rest on each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit. (Acts 2:3-4).

**Guide:** The fourth mystery: The Assumption.

**Reader:** Blessed are you who believed that what was spoken to you by the Lord would be fulfilled. (Lk 1:45).

**Guide:** The fifth mystery: The Coronation of Mary.

**Reader:** A great sign appeared in the sky, a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars. (Rev 12:1).

After the fifth mystery, an Our Father, Hail Mary and Glory Be are prayed for the intentions of the Holy Father.

After these prayers the Hail Holy Queen and the Litany to the Blessed Virgin Mary are prayed.

### **Hail Holy Queen**

Hail, holy Queen, Mother of mercy, our life, our sweetness and our hope. To thee do we cry, poor banished children of Eve. To thee do we send up our sighs, mourning, and weeping in this valley of tears. Turn then, most gracious advocate, thine eyes of mercy toward us; and after this our exile, show unto us the blessed fruit of thy womb, Jesus. O clement, O loving, O sweet Virgin Mary!

### **Litany to the Blessed Virgin Mary**

Lord, have mercy.

**Lord, have mercy.**

Christ, have mercy.

**Christ, have mercy.**

Lord, have mercy.

**Lord, have mercy.**

God, our Father in heaven.

**Have mercy on us.**

God the Son, Redeemer of the world.

God the Holy Spirit.

Holy Trinity, one God

Holy Mary.

**Pray for us.**

Holy Mother of God.

Most honored of virgins.

Mother of Christ.

Mother of the Church.

Mother of mercy.

Mother of divine grace.

Mother of hope.

Mother most pure.

Mother of chaste love.

Mother and virgin.

Sinless Mother.

Dearest of mothers.

Model of motherhood.

Mother of good counsel.

Mother of our Creator.

Mother of our Savior.

Mother of Regnum Christi.

Virgin most wise.

Virgin rightly praised.

Virgin rightly renowned.

Virgin most powerful.

Virgin gentle in mercy.

Faithful virgin.

Mirror of justice.

Throne of wisdom.  
Cause of our joy.  
Shrine of the spirit.  
Glory of Israel.  
Vessel of selfless devotion.  
Mystical Rose.  
Tower of David.  
Tower of ivory.  
House of gold.  
Ark of the covenant.  
Gate of heaven.  
Morning Star.  
Health of the sick.  
Refuge of sinners.  
Comfort of migrants.  
Comfort of the afflicted.  
Help of Christians.  
Queen of angels.  
Queen of patriarchs and prophets.  
Queen of apostles and martyrs.  
Queen of confessors and virgins.  
Queen of all saints.  
Queen conceived without sin.  
Queen assumed into heaven.  
Queen of the Rosary.  
Queen of the family.  
Queen of peace  
Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world,  
**have mercy on us.**  
Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world,  
**have mercy on us.**  
Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world,

**have mercy on us.**

Pray for us, O holy Mother of God,

**that we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.**

Let us pray:

O God, whose Only-begotten Son, by his life, death, and resurrection, has purchased for us the rewards of eternal life, grant, we beseech thee, that meditating on these mysteries of the most holy Rosary of the Blessed Virgin Mary, we may imitate what they contain and obtain what they promise, through the same Christ our Lord. Amen.

**Rosary in Private**

✙ In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.  
Amen.

**Apostles' Creed**

I believe in God,  
the Father almighty,  
Creator of heaven and earth,  
and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,  
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
born of the Virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died and was buried;  
he descended into hell;  
on the third day he rose again from the dead;  
he ascended into heaven,  
and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty;  
from there he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic Church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and life everlasting.  
Amen.

An Our Father, three Hail Marys and a Glory Be are prayed for an increase in the virtues of faith, hope, and charity,

We then say the name of the mystery to be contemplated followed by a personal intention. Pray an Our Father, ten Hail Marys and a Glory Be at each mystery.

### **The Joyful Mysteries (Monday and Saturday)**

1. The Annunciation.
2. The Visitation.
3. The Nativity.
4. The Presentation in the Temple.
5. The Finding in the Temple.

### **The Sorrowful Mysteries (Tuesday and Friday)**

1. The Agony in the Garden.
2. The Scourging at the Pillar.
3. The Crowning with Thorns.
4. The Carrying of the Cross.
5. The Crucifixion and Death.

### **The Glorious Mysteries (Wednesday and Sunday)**

1. The Resurrection.
2. The Ascension.
3. The Descent of the Holy Spirit.
4. The Assumption.
5. The Coronation of Mary.

### **The Luminous Mysteries (Thursday)**

1. The Baptism of Christ in the Jordan.
2. The Wedding Feast at Cana.
3. Jesus' Proclamation of the Coming of the Kingdom of God.
4. The Transfiguration.
5. The Institution of the Eucharist.

After the fifth mystery pray an Our Father, Hail Mary and a Glory Be for the intentions of the Holy Father.

After these prayers the Hail Holy Queen and the Litany to the Blessed Virgin Mary are prayed.

### **Hail Holy Queen**

Hail, holy Queen, Mother of mercy, our life, our sweetness and our hope. To thee do we cry, poor banished children of Eve. To thee do we send up our sighs, mourning and weeping in this valley of tears. Turn then, most gracious advocate, thine eyes of mercy toward us; and after this our exile, show unto us the blessed fruit of thy womb, Jesus. O clement, O loving, O sweet Virgin Mary

## Visiting the Eucharist and Spiritual Communion

It is good to accompany Christ in the Eucharist and to converse spontaneously with him. In Regnum Christi we have the tradition of visiting the Eucharist upon arriving at a place where the Blessed Sacrament is present. When it is not possible to visit Jesus Christ present in the Eucharist, a spiritual communion can be made by reciting this or a similar formula:

### **Spiritual Communion**

My Jesus, I believe you are present in the Most Blessed Sacrament. I love you above all things, and I desire to receive you into my soul. Since I cannot at this moment receive you sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace you as if you were already there and unite myself wholly to you. Never permit me to be separated from you. Amen.

## Night Prayers

At the day's end, we have the opportunity to seek God's perspective on the day, recognizing his action in us and in the circumstances and events of the day. Where have we responded generously to him? Where have we failed to collaborate with him? Just as the day is an image of life, the night is an image of our final encounter with our merciful Lord.

You can use the prayers presented in this book or pray Compline, a part of the Liturgy of the Hours prayed at the end of the day.

### Examen

✚ In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

My Lord and my God, who are all goodness and infinite mercy, I thank you with all my heart for the countless gifts you have granted me, especially for creating and redeeming me, for calling me to the Catholic faith, for choosing me to make Christ's Kingdom present among my brothers and sisters, and for freeing me from so many dangers of soul and body. Enlighten my understanding to see where You were acting in my life today, where I drew closer to you and where I turned further away.

It is time to review the story of God's love for us: We contemplate the good we have done, to discover with faith and gratitude God's action. We interiorly reject the evil we have committed and embrace the Father's will. We ask him to keep us in his heart and bring us into his Kingdom. And we invoke his help to continue our journey, confident in his grace.

## Antiphon

Protect us, Lord, as we stay awake; watch over us as we sleep, that awake, we may keep watch with Christ, and asleep rest in his peace.

## Nunc Dimittis

Lord, now you let your servant go in peace;  
Your word has been fulfilled:  
Mine own eyes have seen the salvation  
Which you have prepared in the sight of every people:  
A light to reveal you to the nations  
And the glory of your people, Israel.

## Glory Be

Glory be to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit; as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen

## Conclusion

May the all-powerful Lord grant us a restful night and a peaceful death. Amen.

## Hail Holy Queen

Hail, holy Queen, mother of mercy,  
our life, our sweetness, and our hope.  
To you we cry, poor banished children of Eve;  
to you we send up our sighs,  
mourning and weeping in this valley of tears.  
Turn, then, most gracious advocate,  
your eyes of mercy toward us;  
and after this, our exile,  
show unto us the blessed fruit of your womb, Jesus.  
O clement, O loving, O sweet Virgin Mary

# A Prayerful Week

The Church suggests a specific practice or devotion for every day of the week to remind us that ordinary time is already filled with the supernatural life. Sunday is the first day of the week, the day dedicated to the Most Holy Trinity. Monday is dedicated to the Holy Spirit, to implore his help as we begin the labors of the week. On Monday we also pray for the holy souls in Purgatory. Tuesday turns our attention to the angels, and especially our Guardian Angel. Wednesday is devoted to St. Joseph, a holy death, and the martyrs. Thursday is traditionally reserved for special devotion to the Eucharist, both in the Body of Christ, exalted sacramentally on the altar, and in the Holy Hour, accompanying the Lord in Gethsemane. On Friday we remember the Passion of our Lord Jesus through penance and abstinence. Finally, on Saturday we turn our gaze and our hearts to our Blessed Mother..

In Regnum Christi, we have the following traditions: coming together as a team once a week for the Encounter with Christ; praying a Holy Hour or adoration before the Blessed Sacrament on Thursday evening; practicing penance every Friday, except on feast days (the Episcopal Conference of each country will give specific guidelines); and dedicating a special moment to the Blessed Virgin on the first Saturday of each month.

These liturgical and prayerful rhythms of each day of the week allow us to transfigure our weekly activities as we look forward in hope to the Kingdom. Ordinary joys become the joys of the Kingdom; ordinary life, life in the Kingdom.

## Encounter with Christ

“For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.” (Mt 18:20). In Regnum Christi, the Encounter with Christ is an activity where teams or communities prayerfully read the Word of God and discern the reality around them in order to pray together, obtain lights from the Holy Spirit, see life from the eyes of God, and respond to his call to love in a specific apostolic commitment. In this way, the team, gathered by the Lord, lives a life of communal prayer where Christ forms them and sends them out to the mission that they embrace together with God to make his Kingdom present in the hearts of all people and of society.

“The Encounter with Christ is the center of team life. In it, the lay members, as a community of faith, by the light of God’s Word, examine their Christian life, discern what the Lord expects of them in evangelizing the reality of the world they live in, encourage each other in their following of Christ, and enkindle their apostolic zeal.” (RL 15).

## Opening Prayer

We begin this activity with a prayer, asking the Holy Spirit to enlighten our understanding, move our wills, and enkindle our hearts.

It is appropriate to add a Hail Mary or other prayer to invoke the Blessed Virgin, a Glory Be, and the invocations proper to Regnum Christi which seal our prayer by pointing to the goal of all our life and actions – the glory of God.

## Prayerful reading of the Gospel

We seek to encounter him in the Gospel in order to place ourselves in an attitude of listening, so that faith and charity will guide our reflections, order our values, and orient our discernment. A passage of the Gospel is chosen. It could be from the previous or next Sunday, or another passage that is appropriate to the needs of the team.

## Apostolic Discernment of Reality

After we have encountered Christ through his Word, we undertake a communal discernment of what he expects of us as a team or community in the circumstances of life in which we find ourselves. Consequently, we will observe the reality in which we are immersed with the desire to discover the best way to carry out our mission of evangelization within it.

## Choice of a case study

A true situation or event from real life that helps the team or community to discover the message of God for them in their current situation should be chosen.

The closer the case is to the lives of the members and the social reality in which they live, the better it will facilitate the apostolic discernment of the team.

## Analysis of the Case

Done in three elements: to see, to judge, and to act.

### TO SEE:

We want to see the case as God sees it, learning to observe life with objectivity and depth, with reason and faith, discovering how God is present in it.

- In relation to this case, what is happening around us? What do we see? What elements - positive or negative - most grab our attention and resonate most strongly in our hearts?
- How is God working in the hearts of the people involved and in their environment? Why did this happen? What are the causes?
- What are the consequences of what happened ?

Bridging into the time of “judging,” what signs of good and evil do we discover in this case? Are we involved in it? How? How do we react to it.

**TO JUDGE:**

After we have become more aware of the presence of the wheat and the weeds in the case we have chosen (see Matthew 13:24-30), we want to discern how Jesus judges or interprets our presence, participation, or attitudes before this case, and, consequently, understand what he hopes for from us.

- What values or anti-values do we see in this case?
- What Gospel passages does it remind us of? What do they tell us about this case? Considering the Gospel, what would Jesus do in our place? What is he asking of us?
- What requirements does this case bring to light for us if we are to follow Christ as missionary disciples?

**TO ACT & APOSTOLIC COMMITMENT:**

This is the moment to choose what actions of conversion and apostolate we are called to in light of what we have discerned that Christ is asking of us. We seek to respond to the invitation from the Lord that we received through the Gospel judgement with our own evangelizing initiative. In this way, we aspire to transform reality with the criteria of the Gospel.

The members suggest possible actions to carry out regarding themselves, with the goal of their own conversion, and regarding the reality affected by the case, with the goal of evangelization. In response to the call experienced in the “to judge” element:

- Considering our case analysis, how can we collaborate with God in his work of making the Kingdom grow?

- How can we support and foster God's action in hearts and in society, according to the changing reality of our environment?

### **Closing Prayer**

The Encounter with Christ concludes with a prayer of thanksgiving by one or several members.

The prayer closes with the two invocations to Christ the King and the Virgin Mary proper to Regnum Christi.

## Holy Hour

It is the tradition of the Church to dedicate at least one hour a week, on Thursday evenings, to a personal or communal encounter before Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament. Sometimes the context of this Holy Hour is the request of Jesus in Gethsemane: “My soul is sorrowful to the point of death; remain here and watch with me” (Mt 26:38). At other times, Eucharistic adoration celebrates the incarnation of the Word and his living presence among us today in the Eucharist .

Regnum Christi members seek to share weekly a face-to-face encounter with Jesus in the Eucharist in a Holy Hour. The priest exposes the Blessed Sacrament in order to dedicate at least an hour of adoration to him and thus become intimate with him in silence and listening, in an intimate and prolonged dialogue, without haste and without an agenda. It is a singular occasion to know Jesus better and to love him more intimately, to atone for our sins, to thank him for his witness, to offer him our life for the sake of his Kingdom and to ask him for the needs of the Church, of our family and for our own.

We should come to meet him with an open heart, ready to adore him and receive infinite graces from him. Some attitudes help us to live this encounter better:

1. Recognize that we are before Jesus, body, blood, soul, and divinity.
2. Thank him for the blessings he has given us.
3. Ask him for our intentions, especially for our conversion and the salvation of all people.

4. Make an act of reparation for sins committed, our own and those of others.

5. Make acts of faith, hope, and love.

In this personal dialogue with Christ, we can combine different means of prayer:

- Personal or guided meditation.
- Spiritual reading.
- Silent contemplation: “He looks at me and I look at him.”
- The Rosary or other vocal prayers.
- Take note of the lights we receive.
- Songs of adoration and praise.

# A Prayerful Life

The rhythms of the day and week gradually forge a prayerful life. The year repeats this cycle, with greater breadth and depth. Every year nature is reborn in the spring and reaches maturity in summer, but, like fallen nature, declines in autumn and dies in the winter. These are also the stages of human life on earth: birth and youth, maturity, old age and death.

Every liturgical cycle contains these same steps. The birth to new life is announced by Advent and Christmas; the weight of sin and death by Lent. The liturgical cycle breaks the chains of evil in the Paschal Triduum, which celebrates the Passion, Death, and Resurrection of Jesus, who breaks the chains of sin and death and introduces us to a new life. Between these two intense periods of celebration are the two moments of Ordinary Time. The liturgical year concludes with the Solemnity of Christ the King, which announces the definitive coming of Christ and his final victory over evil, sin, and death. When he comes, God will be all in all (cf. 1 Cor 15:25-28).

The living of the liturgical year allows us to mature in our encounter with the living Christ who walked among us. With him, year after year, we rediscover and relive Salvation history once again, step by step.

## Advent and Christmas

The Year of the Lord begins in Advent, the preparation for the triple coming of Jesus, for he has already come, born of Mary; he comes today, in the life of the Church; and he will come with glory at the end of history. This season combines penitential waiting and vigil with hope and joy for the coming of the Messiah. It has four Sundays, the third of which is known as Gaudete (Rejoice): "Rejoice in the Lord always; I tell you again, rejoice. And let everyone know your mercy. The Lord is near. Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God" (Phil 4:4-6).

In Advent there are different Christian traditions, depending on the country: posadas, the Advent wreath, the preparation of the manger and Christmas tree... They are a very good opportunity to live the faith as a family.

Midnight Mass, in many countries, is of special solemnity and tradition. Meditating on the readings of the Christmas vigil during these days helps us to live this powerful moment of the Spirit better. Christmas extends and joins with the feast of the Epiphany. The birth in Bethlehem and the adoration of the Magi are expressions of the manifestation of the Lord and of the participation in his grace, to all men of good will.

The Solemnity of the Baptism of the Lord begins Ordinary Time, an invitation to live the new life in Christ in the ordinary circumstances of life. This time is interrupted by Lent and resumes after Pentecost to close the liturgical year with Saturday before the Solemnity of Christ the King.

## Lent, Holy Week, and Easter

Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of Lent: forty days in which we join the Lord in his desert, in his ascent to Jerusalem to complete his self-giving for us. It is a propitious time for conversion: to turn our gaze and our steps towards the Father who comes to meet us with his mercy. Prayer, fasting and almsgiving, in imitation of Jesus, help our hearts to become freer from the temptations of the world and to surrender to God. Fridays in Lent are traditionally penitential: the Church asks us to abstain from meat. A prayer particularly suitable for these days is the recitation of the Way of the Cross, which recalls the last steps of Jesus on Good Friday.

The Paschal Triduum (Holy Thursday through Easter Sunday) is the most intense time of the liturgical year. Thursday is centered on the celebration of the Lord's Supper, and the Church recommends a time of adoration in the evening to accompany Christ in the Eucharist. On Friday we celebrate the Passion of the Lord which will give way, after the silence of Saturday, to the alleluia of the Resurrection, in the Easter Vigil, which lasts for fifty days until the Solemnity of Pentecost.

Every country has deeply rooted traditions that help us to live as a community the new life in Christ: processions, special preaching, a meditative reading of the Gospels of the Passion, etc. It is also an occasion to follow the preaching of the Holy Father closely and to receive his *Urbi et Orbi* blessing on Easter Day.

Easter is the time when the Risen Christ comes to meet us and strengthens our faith, as he did with the disciples. It is a time to remember that God is still at work in his Church, making all things new. Ascension and Pentecost are solemnities in which the Lord consoles us, for he continues to make himself present through the work of his Spirit, who dwells in us.

## Stations of the Cross

The Stations of the Cross, or Via Crucis, mark 14 moments of Jesus' road to Calvary. It is usually walked in groups, especially on Good Friday and on the other Fridays of Lent, although it can be done throughout the year. Meditating on it allows us to recreate in space and time, in our minds and hearts, the supreme moments of Christ's self-giving for our redemption, fostering intimate and cordial attitudes of heartfelt compunction, trust, gratitude, generosity and identification with Christ.

There are different prayers that can help us meditate on each one of these moments. Here we offer a biblical Stations of the Cross, proposed by John Paul II on Good Friday, 1991, but you can look for other popular ones by different saints and popes.

### Opening Prayer:

**Guide:** God of power and mercy, in love you sent your Son that we might be cleansed of sin and live with you forever. Bless us as we gather to reflect on his suffering and death that we may learn from his example the way we should go. We ask this through that same Christ, our Lord.

**Participant:** Amen.

### The First Station: Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane

**Guide:** We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you.

**Participant:** Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

**Reader:** Then they came to a place named Gethsemane, and he said to his disciples, "Sit here while I pray." He took with him Peter, James, and John, and began to be troubled and distressed. Then he said to them, "My soul is sorrowful even to death. Remain

here and keep watch.” He advanced a little and fell to the ground and prayed that if it were possible the hour might pass by him; he said, “Abba, Father, all things are possible to you. Take this cup away from me, but not what I will but what you will.” When he returned, he found them asleep. He said to Peter, “Simon, are you asleep? Could you not keep watch for one hour? Watch and pray that you may not undergo the test. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.” Withdrawing again, he prayed, saying the same thing. Then he returned once more and found them asleep, for they could not keep their eyes open and did not know what to answer him. He returned a third time and said to them, “Are you still sleeping and taking your rest? It is enough. The hour has come. Behold, the Son of Man is to be handed over to sinners. (Mk 14:32-41).

**Participant:** Lord Jesus, help us walk in your steps.

### **The Second Station: Jesus, betrayed by Judas, is arrested**

**Guide:** We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you.

**Participant:** Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

**Reader:** Then, while [Jesus] was still speaking, Judas, one of the Twelve, arrived, accompanied by a crowd with swords and clubs, who had come from the chief priests, the scribes, and the elders. His betrayer had arranged a signal with them, saying, “the man I shall kiss is the one; arrest him and lead him away securely.” He came and immediately went over to him and said, “Rabbi.” And he kissed him. At this they laid hands on him and arrested him. (Mk 14:42-46).

**Participant:** Lord Jesus, help us walk in your steps.

### The Third Station: Jesus is Condemned by the Sanhedrin

**Guide:** We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you.

**Participant:** Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

**Reader:** The chief priests and the entire Sanhedrin kept trying to obtain testimony against Jesus in order to put him to death, but they found none. Many gave false witness against him, but their testimony did not agree. Some took the stand and testified falsely against him, alleging, "We heard him say, 'I will destroy this temple made with hands and within three days I will build another not made with hands.'" Even so their testimony did not agree. The high priest rose before the assembly and questioned Jesus, saying, "Have you no answer? What are these men testifying against you?" But he was silent and answered nothing. Again the high priest asked him and said to him, "Are you the Messiah, the son of the Blessed One?" Then Jesus answered, "I am; and 'you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of the Power and coming with the clouds of heaven.'" At that the high priest tore his garments and said, "What further need have we of witnesses? You have heard the blasphemy. What do you think?" They all condemned him as deserving to die. (Mk 14:55-64).

**Participant:** Lord Jesus, help us walk in your steps.

### The Fourth Station: Jesus is Denied by Peter

**Guide:** We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you.

**Participant:** Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

**Reader:** While Peter was below in the courtyard, one of the high priest's maids came along. Seeing Peter warming himself, she looked

intently at him and said, “You too were with the Nazarene, Jesus.” But he denied it saying, “I neither know nor understand what you are talking about.” So he went out into the outer court. [Then the cock crowed.] The maid saw him and began again to say to the bystanders, “This man is one of them.” Once again he denied it. A little later the bystanders said to Peter once more, “Surely you are one of them; for you too are a Galilean.” He began to curse and to swear, “I do not know this man about whom you are talking.” And immediately a cock crowed a second time. Then Peter remembered the word that Jesus had said to him, “Before the cock crows twice you will deny me three times.” He broke down and wept. (Mk 14:66-72).

**Participant:** Lord Jesus, help us walk in your steps.

### **The Fifth Station: Jesus is Judged by Pilate**

**Guide:** We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you.

**Participant:** Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

**Reader:** As soon as morning came, the chief priests with the elders and the scribes, that is, the whole Sanhedrin, held a council. They bound Jesus, led him away, and handed him over to Pilate. Pilate questioned him, “Are you the king of the Jews?” He said to him in reply, “You say so.” The chief priests accused him of many things. Again Pilate questioned him, “Have you no answer? See how many things they accuse you of.” Jesus gave him no further answer, so that Pilate was amazed. Now on the occasion of the feast he used to release to them one prisoner whom they requested. A man called Barabbas was then in prison along with the rebels who had committed murder in a rebellion. The crowd came forward and began to ask him to do for them as he was

accustomed. Pilate answered, "Do you want me to release to you the king of the Jews?" For he knew that it was out of envy that the chief priests had handed him over. But the chief priests stirred up the crowd to have him release Barabbas for them instead. Pilate again said to them in reply, "Then what [do you want] me to do with [the man you call] the king of the Jews?" They shouted again, "Crucify him." Pilate said to them, "Why? What evil has he done?" They only shouted the louder, "Crucify him." So Pilate, wishing to satisfy the crowd, released Barabbas to them and, after he had Jesus scourged, handed him over to be crucified. (Mk 15:1-15).

**Participant:** Lord Jesus, help us walk in your steps.

### **The Sixth Station: Jesus is Scourged and Crowned with Thorns**

**Guide:** We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you.

**Participant:** Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

**Reader:** After Pilate had Jesus scourged, he handed him over to be crucified. The soldiers led him away inside the palace, that is, the praetorium, and assembled the whole cohort. They clothed him in purple and, weaving a crown of thorns, placed it on him. They began to salute him with, "Hail, King of the Jews!" and kept striking his head with a reed and spitting upon him. They knelt before him in homage. And when they had mocked him, they stripped him of the purple cloak, dressed him in his own clothes, and led him out to crucify him. (Mk 15:15-20).

**Participant:** Lord Jesus, help us walk in your steps.

### **The Seventh Station: Jesus Bears the Cross**

**Guide:** We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you.

**Participant:** Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

**Reader:** And carrying the cross himself, Jesus went out to what is called the Place of the Skull, in Hebrew, Golgotha. (Jn 19:17).

**Participant:** Lord Jesus, help us walk in your steps.

### **The Eighth Station: Jesus is Helped by Simon the Cyrenian to Carry the Cross**

**Guide:** We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you.

**Participant:** Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

**Reader:** They pressed into service a passer-by, Simon, a Cyrenian, who was coming in from the country, the father of Alexander and Rufus, to carry his cross. (Mk 15:21).

**Participant:** Lord Jesus, help us walk in your steps.

### **The Ninth Station: Jesus Meets the Women of Jerusalem**

**Guide:** We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you.

**Participant:** Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

**Reader:** A large crowd of people followed Jesus, including many women who mourned and lamented him. Jesus turned to them and said, "Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me; weep instead for yourselves and for your children, for indeed, the days are coming when people will say, 'Blessed are the barren, the wombs that

never bore and the breasts that never nursed.’ At that time, people will say to the mountains, ‘Fall upon us!’ and to the hills, ‘Cover us!’ for if these things are done when the wood is green what will happen when it is dry?” (Lk 23:27-31).

**Participant:** Lord Jesus, help us walk in your steps.

### The Tenth Station: Jesus is Crucified

**Guide:** We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you.

**Participant:** Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

**Reader:** When they came to the place called the Skull, they crucified him and the criminals there, one on his right, the other on his left. [Then Jesus said, “Father, forgive them, they know not what they do.”] They divided his garments by casting lots. The people stood by and watched; the rulers, meanwhile, sneered at him and said, “He saved others, let him save himself if he is the chosen one, the Messiah of God.” Even the soldiers jeered at him. As they approached to offer him wine they called out, “If you are King of the Jews, save yourself.” Above him there was an inscription that read, “This is the King of the Jews.” (Lk 23:33-38).

**Participant:** Lord Jesus, help us walk in your steps.

### The Eleventh Station: Jesus Promises His Kingdom to the Good Thief

**Guide:** We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you.

**Participant:** Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

**Reader:** Now one of the criminals hanging there reviled Jesus, saying, “Are you not the Messiah? Save yourself and us.” The other, however, rebuking him, said in reply, “Have you no fear of God, for you are subject to the same condemnation? And indeed, we have been condemned justly, for the sentence we received corresponds to our crimes, but this man has done nothing criminal.” Then he said, “Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.” He replied to him, “Amen, I say to you, today you will be with me in Paradise.” (Lk 23:39-43).

**Participant:** Lord Jesus, help us walk in your steps.

### **The Twelfth Station: Jesus Speaks to His Mother and the Disciple**

**Guide:** We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you.

**Participant:** Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

**Reader:** Standing by the cross of Jesus were his mother and his mother’s sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary of Magdala. When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple there whom he loved, he said to his mother, “Woman, behold, your son.” Then he said to the disciple, “Behold, your mother.” And from that hour the disciple took her into his home. (Jn 19:25-27).

**Participant:** Lord Jesus, help us walk in your steps.

### The Thirteenth Station: Jesus Dies on the Cross

**Guide:** We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you.

**Participant:** Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

**Reader:** It was now about noon and darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon because of an eclipse of the sun. Then the veil of the temple was torn down the middle. Jesus cried out in a loud voice, “Father, into your hands I commend my spirit”; and when he had said this he breathed his last. The centurion who witnessed what had happened glorified God and said, “This man was innocent beyond doubt.” When all the people who had gathered for this spectacle saw what had happened, they returned home beating their breasts; but all his acquaintances stood at a distance, including the women who had followed him from Galilee and saw these events. (Lk 23:44-49).

**Participant:** Lord Jesus, help us walk in your steps.

### The Fourteenth Station: Jesus is Placed in the Tomb

**Guide:** We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you.

**Participant:** Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

**Reader:** Now there was a virtuous and righteous man named Joseph who, though he was a member of the council, had not consented to their plan of action. He came from the Jewish town of Arimathea and was awaiting the kingdom of God. He went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. After he had taken the body down, he wrapped it in a linen cloth and laid him in a rock-hewn tomb in which no one had yet been buried. It was the day of preparation, and the sabbath was about to begin. The women

who had come from Galilee with him followed behind, and when they had seen the tomb and the way in which his body was laid in it, they returned and prepared spices and perfumed oils. Then they rested on the sabbath according to the commandment. (Lk 23:50-56).

**Participant:** Lord Jesus, help us walk in your steps.

### **Final Blessing**

**Guide:** May abundant blessing, O Lord, we pray, descend upon your people, who have honored the death of your Son in the hope of their resurrection. May pardon come, comfort be given, holy faith increase and everlasting redemption be made secure. Through Christ our Lord.

**Participant:** Amen.

## Sacred Heart of Jesus and Christ the King

Regnum Christi celebrates with special devotion the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Solemnity of Christ the King. Jesus is both “Friend and Lord,” “Our King” and close and affectionate companion, with whom we are united by a “personal, real, passionate and faithful love” (cf. SRCF 12, 14, 58). Jesus is “a man of interior life, a lover of prayer”, and at the same time he is dedicated to the task of “proclaiming the Kingdom and bringing the light of the Gospel to the whole world”, “going out to meet the material and spiritual needs” of each person. Christ “takes up the spiritual combat, the persevering and trusting struggle (in his Father) in the face of the reality of evil and sin”, “undertakes his mission with a magnanimous heart, enthusiasm and creativity”, is interested in “the most pressing needs of the world”, “faces with strength and courage the challenges” and difficulties, “boldly seizes every opportunity to proclaim love” and always “gives the best of himself” (cf. SRCF 10, 13, 17, 20).

Jesus’ longing for the Kingdom and his love for mankind are two sides of the same coin, for Christ is the Kingdom in person. He, who desires to reign in our hearts and in society, invites us to a continuous and progressive transformation in him. Feeling his love for us and loving as he loves us, “to the end,” transfigures our attitude and impels us toward “universal and thoughtful self-giving to our neighbor, creative and selfless service, treating people with kindness and simplicity, being merciful with people’s weaknesses; speaking well of others; forgiveness and reconciliation” (cf. SRCF 13, 14, 17, 20, 23).

The Mass of Christ the King is an occasion for all the vocations of a locality or territory to gather. It is usually preceded or followed by the rite of association of the lay faithful and is an opportunity for members of all vocations to renew their commitment to Regnum Christi. Ideally, the whole day is a time of community celebration to give thanks to God and respond to his call.

## Renewal of Association to Regnum Christi

Lay members of Regnum Christi ordinarily renew our association once a year, at the conclusion of the Eucharistic celebration of the Solemnity of Christ the King, accompanied by members of all vocations. However, the Rite of Renewal can be used frequently, individually, or in teams, to ask God for the grace to identify ourselves more with the way of holiness that he proposes to us in Regnum Christi. Here we follow the instructions in the Devotional Renewal of the Commitments of Association to the Regnum Christi Federation.

### Rite of Renewal

Lord, you have called me  
 to consciously live my baptismal vocation  
 to holiness and to apostolate  
 according to the charism of Regnum Christi,  
 to give myself to Christ  
 in my state and condition of life  
 so he may reign in my heart and in society.  
 That is why I wish to renew my belonging to Regnum Christi  
 as a member of this spiritual family.  
 To achieve this,  
 I commit to the following:

- To grow in friendship with Christ, developing the life of grace through prayer and the sacraments.
- To live the evangelical virtues of poverty, filial obedience, and purity in thought and action.

- To fulfill the duties of my state in life with love and honesty, as a service to God and to others.
- To apply myself to my integral formation and forge my Christian leadership.
- To initiate and participate in apostolic initiatives.
- To profess a faithful and active love for the Holy Church, the Pope, and the other bishops.
- To generously offer my prayer, talents, time, and material goods to collaborate in the mission of Regnum Christi at the service of the Church.

I accept your invitation and so it is my responsibility:

- To see that your words are not lost and that your message of salvation reaches others;
- To live your word in such a way that those who see me will recognize you and give you glory, that they will be moved by your grace to participate in the faith of the Church and bear living witness to it; and
- To embody the charism of Regnum Christi to fulfill this mission in the Church and in the world.

## Spiritual Exercises

The spiritual exercises are an annual opportunity Regnum Christi offers us to leave the world for three or eight days and give ourselves fully to the company of the Lord. They represent a stop on the journey to attend to the One Who walks with us, to listen to him, to discern his will, to be reconciled in his sight and to revive the fire of his love that impels us to give ourselves to others.

## Sacrament of Reconciliation

“For even if we sin, we are yours, and know your might” (Wis 15:2). Recognizing our own sin or guilt is to trust in the merciful love of God, to open ourselves to receive his forgiveness, to be free to the end. Frequent confession increases our self-knowledge, fosters humility, helps to uproot bad habits, increases delicacy of conscience, combats tepidity and laziness, strengthens the will, renews the grace of baptism, and leads us to a more intimate identification with Jesus Christ. The sacrament of Reconciliation is a vital and renewing encounter with Christ and the Church.

Approach the sacrament and activate your faith in the sanctifying presence and action of Jesus Christ. Try to present your faults with order, brevity, propriety, clarity, and integrity. Accept the guidance of the confessor with a supernatural spirit, and try to complete the penance with a true spirit of reparation as soon as possible. Offer your daily work and jobs as satisfaction for your sins. Thank God for the gift of his forgiveness and his friendship with a life of greater fidelity to the mission entrusted to you.

## Conscience Examen

This prayer helps us to place ourselves before God and ask for his help to prepare our confession:

My Lord and my God, you know each person's heart. Give me the grace to examine mine sincerely and to know it truly so I can discover all my sins, confess them well, and avoid them from now on. Thus I hope to merit your pardon and grace on earth and eternal life in heaven. Grant this through Christ our Lord.  
Amen.

You can use different resources to prepare your confession: the Ten Commandments, the Beatitudes, the points for examen contained in the rite of penance, or others adjusted to your personal needs.

## Rite of Penance

### Reception of the penitent

The priest and penitent say together:

✠ In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.  
Amen.

The priest invites the penitent to have trust in the mercy of God.

**Priest:** May God, who has enlightened every heart, help you to know your sins and trust in his mercy.

**Penitent:** Amen.

Then the penitent makes his or her confession, followed by some recommendations from the priest and the imposition of the penance. The penitent prays the act of contrition (he or she can use this formula or another similar one):

### Act of Contrition

**Penitent:** My God, I am sorry with all my heart for all the wrong I have done and the good I have failed to do. By sinning, I have offended you, who are my supreme good and worthy of being loved above all things. I firmly resolve, with the help of your grace, to do penance, to sin no more, and avoid whatever leads me to sin. Lord, by the merits of the Passion of our Savior Jesus Christ, have mercy on me. Amen.

## Absolution

**Priest:** God the Father of mercies, through the death and resurrection of his Son has reconciled the world to himself and sent the Holy Spirit among us for the forgiveness of sins; through the ministry of the Church may God give you pardon and peace. And I absolve you from your sins in the name of the Father, and of the Son, + and of the Holy Spirit.

**Penitent:** Amen.

## Dismissal

**Priest:** Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good.

**Penitent:** His mercy endures forever.

**Priest:** The Lord has freed you from your sins, Go in peace.

## Prayers for Different Moments of Life

### Prayer to the Holy Spirit

**Guide:** Come, Holy Spirit!

**Participant:** Fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in them the fire of your love.

**Guide:** Send forth your Spirit and they shall be created,

**Participant:** And you shall renew the face of the earth.

**Guide:** Let us pray:

O God, who have taught the hearts of the faithful by the light of the Holy Spirit, grant that in the same Spirit we may be truly wise and ever rejoice in his consolation.

**Guide:** Through Christ, our Lord.

**Participant:** Amen.

## Prayer for the Grace of a Happy Death

O God, who created us in your image and gave your Son to die for us, grant us the grace to live vigilantly in prayer, so that we may leave this world without sin and rest with joy in the bosom of your mercy. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

## Prayers of Thanksgiving

### I

O God, Father of all gifts, from whom comes all that we are and have, teach us to recognize the benefits of your love and to love you with all the strength of our hearts. We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

### II

O God, source of all good, principle of our existence and of our actions; receive our humble thanksgiving for all your benefits, and grant that to the gift of your benevolence may correspond the generous commitment of our life to the service of your Kingdom. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

## Before Meals

**Guide:** In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

**Participant:** Amen.

**Guide:** Bless us, O Lord, ✠ and these thy gifts, which we are about to receive from thy bounty, through Christ our Lord.

**Participant:** Amen.

## After Meals

**Guide:** We give you thanks, almighty God, for these and all thy benefits, you who live and reign forever and ever.

**Participant:** Amen.

## Prayer for the Renewal of Regnum Christi

Lord Jesus Christ, we are gathered here today as a spiritual family, and we put ourselves in your loving presence.

You have revealed to us the mystery of the love that burns in your Heart for all people, and your desire to reign in our souls and in society.

We feel called to deepen our understanding of the gift of Regnum Christi so that it bears fruit in our lives.

We ask that you send the Holy Spirit, so that through his light we can understand and love our charism and so that we may be always diligent to help our Church and the world around us as disciples of your Kingdom.

Through the example of Mary, we want to live this period of our lives, discovering and embracing the action of your Spirit by accepting your will with faith and praise for the great works that you have done and continue doing within us.

Lord, you are the center of our lives. With renewed love, we say: "Christ our King, Thy Kingdom Come!"

## Prayer for the Communion of Regnum Christi

Lord Jesus, through the gift of baptism, we are children of God, united in the Trinity and in the communion of the Church. You have called us to Regnum Christi, a spiritual family that wants to bring your love to all people. Enlighten my eyes to see the gift that each person is. Open my ears to listen to others' needs. Put your Word in my mouth to encounter my brothers and sisters. Live in my heart to unite us in ideals, purposes and efforts, so that we may work together to make your Kingdom present. Make me aware that communion is missionary and that the mission is for communion. Remind me, every time that I forget: we are one Body in Christ, and the highest calling is to love one another as you have loved us so that the world may know your love.

## Prayer to St. Michael the Archangel

St. Michael the Archangel,  
defend us in battle.  
Be our defense against the wickedness and snares of the Devil.  
May God rebuke him, we humbly pray,  
and do thou,  
O Prince of the heavenly hosts,  
by the power of God,  
thrust into hell Satan,  
and all the evil spirits,  
who prowl about the world  
seeking the ruin of souls. Amen

## Apostle's Prayer

Lord, you have given us the grace to belong to your Church and to participate in her in your mission to save mankind. Help us to know you better, to follow you more closely and to make you known to all people. Inspire us with courage and enthusiasm, so that we may befriend all those whom we meet and bring them closer to you. Never allow us to offend you in words or actions.

Keep us always close to you and make us strong members of your Church. Strengthen and increase your life in us, so that whatever we do may be done with you and for you.

## Lay Person's Prayer

Lord our God, you have placed the power of the Gospel as leaven in the world. Grant to us who are called to live in the midst of temporal cares that, enkindled by the fire of your Spirit, we may give ourselves passionately to the mission of making the Kingdom of Christ present in the world, so that he may be all in all. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

## An Engaged Couple's Prayer

In my heart, Lord, love has been kindled for a creature whom you know and love. You yourself have brought us together and presented us to each other. I thank you for this gift which fills me with deep joy, makes me like you, who are love, and makes me understand the value of the life you have given me. Teach me that love is a gift and that it cannot be mixed with any selfishness; that love is pure and that it cannot abide in any baseness; that love is fruitful and that from today on it must produce a new way of living in both of us. I pray to you, Lord, for the one who waits for me and thinks of me; for the one who has placed all their trust in me for their future; for the one who walks beside me; make us worthy of each other; may we be a help and a model for one another. Help us in our preparation for marriage, its greatness, its responsibility, so that from now on our souls may rule our bodies and lead them in love.

## Spouses' Prayer

Lord, holy Father, almighty and eternal God, we give you thanks and we bless your holy Name. You have created man and woman so that they may be a help and support for one another. Remember us today. Protect us and grant that our love may be a selfless gift, in the likeness of Christ and the Church. Enlighten and strengthen us in the task of forming our children, so that they may be authentic Christians and hard-working builders of the earthly city. May we live long together in joy and peace, so that our hearts can always raise praise and thanksgiving to you, through your Son, in the Holy Spirit. Amen.

## Wedding Anniversary Prayer

O God, Lord of the universe, who in the beginning created man and woman and instituted the conjugal bond; bless and confirm our love, that we may always express in our lives the sacrament we celebrate in faith. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

## Prayer for the Vocations of Children

Lord, I pray to you for the vocations of my children, that whatever vocation you have determined for each one of them, they may obtain the grace to discover it and accept it according to your will, and give themselves to it with docility and generosity, faithfully fulfilling the duties that it imposes on them.

And if in your infinite goodness you wish to call them to your service, form in me, Lord, a generous and willing heart that appreciates the greatness of the incomparable gift of the priestly vocation and the consecrated life.

Give me, Lord, the joy and humility to recognize and be grateful for such a rich blessing. Amen.

## Prayer While Waiting for a Child

O Lord, our Father, we thank you for the marvelous gift by which you make us sharers in your divine fatherhood. In this time of waiting, we ask you: protect this child of ours, still full of mystery, so that he/she may be born healthy to the light of the world and to the new birth of baptism. Mother of God, to your maternal heart we entrust our child. Amen.

## Prayer for our Children

Lord, enlighten the minds of our children so that they may know the way you have willed for them, so that they may give glory to you and attain salvation. Sustain them with your strength, so that they may foster in their lives the ideals of your Kingdom. Enlighten us too, their parents, so that we may help them to recognize their Christian vocation and to fulfill it generously, collaborating with your interior inspirations. Amen.

## Children's Prayer

O God, who has commanded us to honor our father and mother, graciously hear the prayer we address to you for them. Grant them long days of life on earth and preserve them in health of body and spirit. Bless their labors and their endeavors. Reward them for all they have done for me. Inspire them to love and practice your holy law. Help me to do all that I can for them. And grant that after having enjoyed their affection on earth, I may have the joy of living eternally with them in heaven. Amen.

## Prayer for the Sick

You willed, O Lord, that your only-begotten Son should bear our infirmities, in order to show the value of illness and patience; now hear the prayers we address to you for our sick brothers and sisters, and grant to all who are subject to pain, affliction or sickness, the grace to feel themselves chosen to be among those whom your Son has called blessed, and to know that they are united to the passion of Christ for the redemption of the world. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

## Prayer for Those who Suffer

O God, provident refuge of those who suffer; hear the prayer we address to you for them. Calm and comfort the sick, the aged and the dying. Give to those who care for them wisdom and patience, tact and compassion. Inspire them with gestures that bring relief, words that enlighten and love those comforts. We commend to you the discouraged hearts, those in rebellion, torn by temptation, tormented by passion, wounded or profaned by the wickedness of men. Put within us, Lord, your Spirit of love, of understanding, of sacrifice, so that we may bring effective help to all those in suffering whom we meet on our way. Help us to respond to their call, for it is yours. Amen.

## Prayer During the Difficulties of Life

Lord, help us to face the difficulties, obligations and responsibilities that we have with a strong and serene spirit, and, consoled by you, may we know how to comfort our brothers and sisters. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

## Prayer Before Travelling

Lord, who fill every place with your presence, accompany me on this journey, so that I may arrive at my destination and return home safe and sound. May my travels bring joy to all those I meet, a message of hope, and a witness of Christian life. Amen. May the divine help remain always with us. Amen.

## Prayer for the Deceased

Lord, remember **N**, whom you called from this world into your presence; grant that, just as he/she has already shared the death of Jesus Christ, he/she may also share with him the glory of the resurrection, when Christ will raise the dead from the earth and transform our frail body into a glorious body like his. Through the same Christ our Lord. Amen.

# Common Prayers of the Church

## Prayer to Jesus Crucified

My good and dear Jesus, I kneel before you, asking you most earnestly to engrave upon my heart a deep and lively faith, hope, and charity, with true repentance for my sins, and a firm resolve to make amends.

As I reflect upon your five wounds, and dwell upon them with deep compassion and grief, I recall, good Jesus, the words the prophet David spoke long ago concerning yourself: “They have pierced my hands and my feet, they have counted all my bones!”

## Soul of Christ

Soul of Christ, be my sanctification.  
Body of Christ, be my salvation.  
Blood of Christ, fill all my veins.  
Water of Christ's side, wash out my stains.  
Passion of Christ, my comfort be.  
O good Jesus, listen to me.  
In thy wounds I fain would hide,  
Ne'er to be parted from thy side,  
Guard me, should the foe assail me.  
Call me when my life shall fail me.  
Bid me come to thee above,  
With thy saints to sing thy love,  
World without end. Amen.

## Prayer of Pope Clement XI

Lord, by your grace make my weak faith firm, my wavering hope secure, set my cold love on fire, grant me passionate repentance for my sins.

I adore you, the very source of all, I long for you, to whom all return, I praise you for your constant gifts, I call on you as my gracious protector.

Guide me by your wisdom, restrain me with your justice, comfort me by your mercy, protect me with your power.

Lord, I offer you: my thoughts to be centered on you, my words to speak of you, my actions to do your will, my sufferings for your sake.

I want whatever you want, because you want it, the way you want it, as long as you want it. Lord, enlighten my mind, inflame my will, purify my heart, sanctify my soul.

Enable me to regret past offenses, to resist future temptations, to correct wayward tendencies, to cultivate needed virtues.

Lord, in your goodness, grant me the grace to love you, disregard myself, seek my neighbor's good, and hold this world as nothing.

Teach me to obey those in authority, serve those under my care, look after my friends, forgive my enemies.

Lord, help me to overcome sensuality by austerity, greed by generosity, anger by gentleness, lukewarmness by fervor.

Make me prudent in planning, unwavering in danger, patient in adversity, unassuming in success.

Keep me, Lord, attentive at prayer, moderate in food and drink, diligent in my duties, firm in my commitments.

Make me concerned to keep an innocent heart, a modest demeanor, exemplary dealings, and order in my life.

Lord, let me be alert to tame my natural instincts, foster the life of grace, keep your law, and win salvation.

Teach me how shallow this world is, how magnificent the Kingdom, how fleeting temporal concerns are, how lasting is life eternal.

Lord, help me to prepare for death, fear judgment, escape hell, and reach paradise.

Grant this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

## **Self-Dedication (Suscipe Prayer of St. Ignatius of Loyola)**

Take, Lord, and receive all my liberty, my memory, my understanding, my whole will, all I have, and all I possess. You gave it all to me; to you, Lord, I return it all. It is all yours: Do with me entirely as you will. Give me your love and your grace: This is enough for me.

## Prayer to Christ the King

Christ Jesus, I acknowledge you as King of the universe: Everything that exists was created by you. Exercise over me all your rights. I renew my baptismal promises, rejecting Satan and all his works and all the glamour of evil, and I promise to live as befits a Christian. I specially pledge myself to do all in my power to further the rights of God and of your Church. Christ Jesus, I offer you my poor efforts to bring every heart to accept and live your message of peace, justice, and love. Amen.

## Prayers for the Pope

Christ Jesus, King and Lord of the Church, in your presence I renew my unconditional loyalty to the Pope, the visible source and foundation of unity in the Church. I firmly believe that through him you govern, teach and sanctify us. Watch over his life, enlighten his mind, strengthen his spirit. Grant us that, around him, your Church will remain united, firm in her belief and action, and so be the faithful instrument of your redemption. Amen.

## Prayer for Vocations

Lord Jesus, eternal Shepherd, in your kindness look with mercy on your beloved flock. We cry out to you as orphans: Lord, grant us vocations! Call many of our young people to be holy priests and consecrated men and women. We ask you this through the intercession of Mary, your tender, holy Mother. Lord Jesus, grant us priests and consecrated persons after your own heart! Amen.

## Sign of the Cross

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.  
Amen.

(Latin)

*In nómine Patris, et Fílii, et Spíritus Sancti.  
Amen.*

## Our Father

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen.

(Latin)

*Pater noster, qui es in cælis, sanctificétur nomen tuum; advéniat regnum tuum; fiat volúntas tua, sicut in cælo, et in terra. Panem nostrum cotidiánum da nobis hódie; et dímítte nobis débíta nostra, sicut et nos dimíttimus debitóribus nostris; et ne nos indúcas in tentatiónem, sed líbera nos a malo. Amen.*

## Hail Mary

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

(Latin)

*Ave, María, grátia plena, Dóminus tecum. Benedícta tu in muliéri-bus, et benedíctus fructus ventris tui, Iesus. Sancta María, Mater Dei, ora pro nobis peccatóribus, nunc et in hora mortis nostræ. Amen.*

## Hail Holy Queen

Hail, Holy Queen, Mother of Mercy,  
 our life, our sweetness and our hope.  
 To you do we cry,  
 poor banished children of Eve.  
 To you do we send up our sighs,  
 mourning and weeping in this valley of tears  
 Turn then, most gracious advocate,  
 your eyes of mercy toward us,  
 and after this exile  
 show unto us the blessed fruit of thy womb,  
 Jesus.  
 O clement, O loving,  
 O sweet Virgin Mary.

(Latin)

*Salve, Regina, mater misericordiae;  
 vita, dulcedo et spes nostra, salve.  
 Ad te clamamus exsules filii Hevae.*

*Ad te suspiramus gementes et flentes  
in hac lacrimarum valle.  
Eia ergo, advocata nostra,  
illos tuos misericordes oculos ad nos converte.  
Et Iesum, benedictum fructum ventris tui,  
nobis post hoc exsilium ostende.  
O clemens, o pia, o dulcis Virgo Maria.*

### **Glory Be**

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

(Latin)

*Glória Patri, et Filio, et Spiritui Sancto. Sicut erat in principio, et nunc et semper, et in sæcula sæculórum. Amen.*

### **Thanksgiving**

We give you thanks for all your gifts, Almighty God, for these and all thy benefits, you who live and reign forever and ever. Amen.

(Latin)

*Agimus tibi grátias, omnípotens Deus, pro univérsis beneficiis tuis, qui vivis et regnas in sæcula sæculórum. Amen.*

## Conclusion of Prayers

**Guide:** Christ our King,

**Participant:** Thy Kingdom Come!

**Guide:** Virgin most prudent, Mary, Mother of the Church (or Mother of Sorrows, or Queen of Apostles),  
Pray for us.

(Latin)

**Guide:** Christe, rex noster!

**Participant:** Advéniat regnum tuum!

**Guide:** Virgo prudentíssima, María Mater Ecclesiæ (vel: Mater dolorósa; vel: Regina Apostolorum),

**Participant:** Ora pro nobis.

