

PRAYERS IN THE PEW™ MONTHLY

FAITH IN ACTION CALENDAR / HIGHLIGHTS

TUE FEB 6	St. Paul Miki and Companions, Japanese Martyrs
WED FEB 14	ASH WEDNESDAY
THU FEB 22	Feast of the Chair of St. Peter, Apostle

Faith Formation Companion to Prayers in the Pew™

→ MONTHLY SYNOPSIS ←

February 2024 – February is a month of contrasts. We barely finish the Christmas season when we are thrown into the penitential season of Lent. It is a good time to remember and help those around us who are suffering. It is also an important time to pray for the peace of mind and heart that can only come from the Spirit of Christ.

THE MORNING OFFERING

It has been a pious tradition throughout Church history for the faithful to make an offering of themselves and their activities to the Lord at the beginning of each day. Catholics consecrate every aspect of our lives (works, prayers, joys and sufferings) to Christ at the first waking moment of the day with the intention of living our Christian vocation to the fullest.

The great monastic religious orders developed a system of prayer throughout the day, which is called the *Liturgy of the Hours*, but the laity are not deprived of this beautiful prayer tradition either! A French Jesuit, Fr. Francois Xavier Gautrelet, composed a Morning Offering (also called the Daily Offering) in 1844, which has become well-known for its simplicity and beauty. He established a ministry called the Apostleship of Prayer, which even today propagates the Morning Offering.

BIBLE BASICS



The Bible contains an amazing amount of references to morning prayer: **Abraham** (Gen 19:27), **Jacob** (Gen 28:16), **Moses** (Gen 34:4), **Joshua** (Josh 6:15), the Prophet **Samuel's parents** (1 Sam 1:19), among others. The **Psalms** are also full of references to prayer in the early hours (Psalms 5, 57, 90, 119, 143).

Above all, **Jesus Himself** “rose early in the morning” to pray to His Father (Mt 28:1; Mk 51:35) giving us our best example of the Daily Offering of self to the mission of the Father.

As you pray this Offering, keep in mind that you are united with the entire Church at prayer, from the most pious nuns and monks in their monasteries to the simplest believers on all five continents:

THE MORNING OFFERING

O Jesus, through the Immaculate Heart of Mary, I offer you my works, prayers, joys and sufferings of this day for all the intentions of your Sacred Heart. I offer them in union with the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass throughout the world, in reparation for my sins, for the intentions of all my relatives and friends, and in particular for the intentions of the Holy Father. Amen.

Pope Benedict XVI reminded us that this practice of “offering up” the sacrifices of the day is a way of participating in Christ’s ongoing redemption of the world. Allow this beautiful prayer—through daily recitation—to transform your faith practice into a continual offering of yourself to God from the first moment of every day.

THE SCHOOL OF SAINTS



Ponder the fact that God has made you a gardener of your soul, to root out vice and plant virtue. ~ *St. Catherine of Siena*

“All of us can attain to Christian virtue and holiness, no matter in what condition of life we live and no matter what our life work may be.” ~ *St Francis de Sales*

SPIRITUAL CHALLENGE

During the Lenten Season let us challenge ourselves to make the Daily Offering a habit in our lives, if it is not already. We can challenge ourselves to memorize this short prayer too! By increasing our habit of offering our words, actions, prayers and sufferings to the Lord on a daily basis, we become His instruments and grow in holiness.



FAITH FUNDAMENTALS



The Cardinal Virtues

Cardinal in Latin means “hinge”. Simply put, all other human virtues hang on them like a door hangs on its hinges. The Cardinal Virtues help us manage the complexities of the world, and we acquire them by education and by deliberate practice (CCC, 1810).

Prudence is a virtue of the mind. It trains us think about the world, its qualities and its pitfalls. It helps us assess the possible consequences of our own actions and urges us to evaluate decisions ahead of time so that we can “do the right thing” in all circumstances.

Justice means that we “give to each person what is due to him.” It is the virtue that regulates our interactions with others. Justice assures that *rights* go together with *responsibilities*. The essence of Justice is the Golden Rule: “Do unto others as you would have them do unto you” (Matthew 7:12).

Fortitude helps us to persevere through difficult things in order to reap the rewards of long-term sacrifice. It can mean pushing ourselves to achieve something difficult or standing strong in the face of adversity. In a spiritual sense, it means resisting temptation and making efforts to overcome our own personal faults that are obstacles to God’s grace.

The final Cardinal Virtue—**Temperance**—regulates our appetites. It helps us develop some valuable human habits like self-control, boundary-setting, moderation and modesty.

CALENDAR OF FAITH | February

FEB 2 <i>Fri</i>		Presentation of Jesus in the Temple
FEB 3 <i>Sat</i>		St. Blase, Bishop and Martyr (Blessing of Throats)
FEB 5 <i>Mon</i>		St. Agatha, Virgin and Martyr
FEB 6 <i>Tue</i>		St. Paul Miki and Companions, Japanese Martyrs
FEB 8 <i>Thu</i>		St. Josephine Bakhita, Virgin
FEB 10 <i>Sat</i>		St. Scholastica, Virgin
FEB 11 <i>Sun</i>		Our Lady of Lourdes
FEB 14 <i>Wed</i>		ASH WEDNESDAY (NOTE: This is not a holy day of obligation; the Season of Lent begins).
FEB 14 <i>Wed</i>		Saints Cyril and Methodius, Bishops and Doctors of the Church
FEB 17 <i>Sat</i>		Seven Holy Founders of the Servite Order
FEB 21 <i>Wed</i>		St. Peter Damien, Bishop and Doctor of the Church
FEB 22 <i>Thu</i>		FEAST OF THE CHAIR OF ST. PETER, APOSTLE
FEB 23 <i>Fri</i>		St. Polycarp, Bishop and Martyr

CATECHISM CONNECTION



1804 Human virtues are firm attitudes, stable dispositions, habitual perfections of intellect and will that govern our actions, order our passions, and guide our conduct according to reason and faith. They make possible ease, self-mastery, and joy in leading a morally good life. The virtuous man is he who freely practices the good.

Praying with the National Eucharistic Revival

[All monthly prayers in this section can be found on the Official Prayers in the Pew Eucharistic Revival Prayer Card and are dedicated to the Eucharist.]

Act of Adoration

We adore You, most holy Lord, Jesus Christ, here and in all Your churches of the whole world, and we bless You, because by Your cross You have redeemed the world. Have mercy on us.

~Prayer of St. Francis of Assisi (1181-1226)