

Journey OF Faith

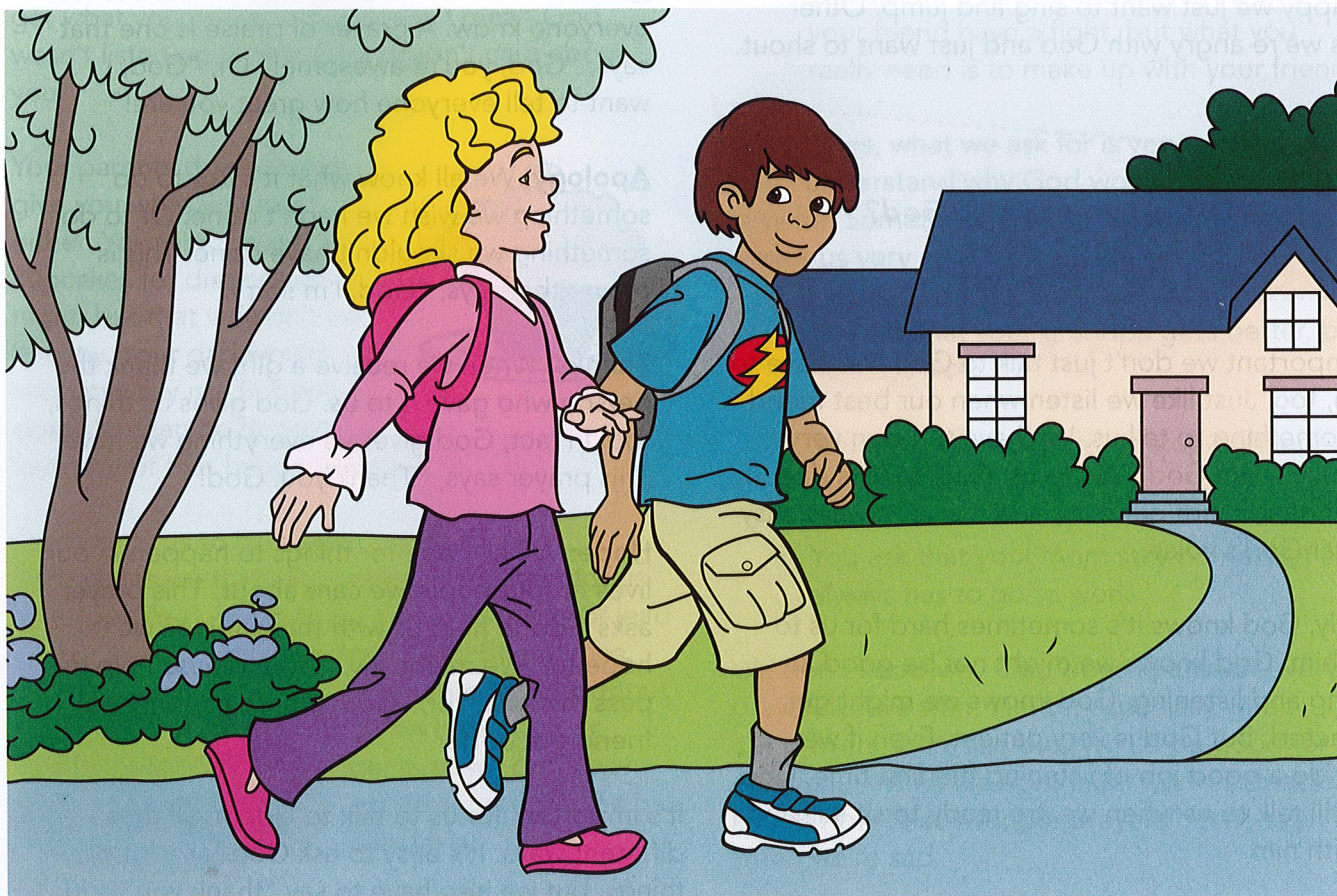
Your Prayer Life

"Do you talk to God?" Tanya asked Tomás as they walked home from school.

"What do you mean?"

"Mrs. Evans is always saying we should be praying outside of class, but I don't know how to talk to God like that."

"I think you can talk to God however you want. I always pray with my grandma. Sometimes we just tell God about our days. Other times we pray the same prayers together. My grandma says the important thing is to make God part of your life."



Talking With God

Prayer is talking with God. When we talk to someone, most of the time we use words. We ask for something. We say thank you. We share secrets. But we don't always use words to tell things to our closest friends. Have you ever just looked at your best friend and known what he or she was thinking? You didn't need words to say, "Can you believe that?" Or, "Wasn't that funny?"



God knows you better than your closest friend. So you don't always need words to talk to God. We can talk with God by being in nature, visiting a holy place, or speaking with him in the Eucharist. We can talk to God by doing something nice for someone. We can talk to God by reading his word in the Bible or by drawing God a picture.

Sometimes we laugh with God. Sometimes we cry with God. Sometimes when we talk to God we're so happy we just want to sing and jump. Other times we're angry with God and just want to shout.



How do you talk to God?

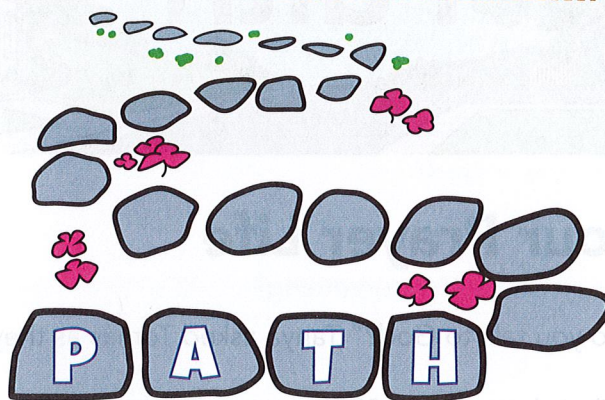
It's important we don't just talk to God. We have to listen, too. Just like we listen when our best friend has something to tell us. We have to listen very carefully when God talks to us. God speaks directly to our hearts, not our ears, and it's not always easy to hear God's voice.

Luckily, God knows it's sometimes hard for us to hear him. God knows we might not be good at waiting and listening. God knows we might get distracted. But God is very patient. Even if we don't do a good job of listening the first time, God will still talk to us when we are ready to sit still and be with him.



Is it sometimes hard for you to listen?

How can you be a good listener for God?



Prayers Using Words

There are lots of ways you can pray using your words. We can group these word prayers into four types. You can remember these types by thinking of the abbreviation "P.A.T.H."

Praise: God is so amazing that we want to let everyone know. A prayer of praise is one that says, "God, you're awesome!" Or, "God, I want to tell everyone how great you are!"

Apology: We all know what it's like to do something we wish we hadn't done. Or to do something we shouldn't have done. This is prayer that says, "God, I'm sorry."

Thanks: When we receive a gift, we thank the person who gave it to us. God gives us things, too. In fact, God gives us everything we have. This prayer says, "Thank you, God!"

Hope: We all hope for things to happen in our lives or for people we care about. This prayer asks God to help us with those things we hope for. We might say, "God, please help me pass this test," or, "God, please help my sick friend get better."

It's important for us to talk to God in all these different ways. It's easy to ask God for a lot of things, but we also have to say "thank you" and "I'm sorry," too.

ACTIVITY

What makes it hard to:

- praise God?
- tell God you're sorry?
- thank God?
- ask God for something?

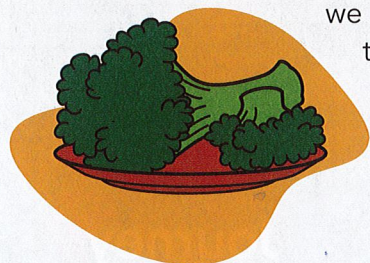
When We Don't Get What We Pray for

Jesus said, "Ask and you will receive" (Luke 11:9). Sometimes people think that means God will get them exactly what they want as soon as they ask for it. That doesn't always happen. When you don't get what you pray for that doesn't mean God wasn't listening or that God doesn't care about you.

Your parents don't always give you what you want either. You might want cupcakes for dinner every night, but that wouldn't be healthy. Your dad would probably say no. But that doesn't mean he doesn't love you or that he ignored you.



God wants us to have what's best for us. Sometimes we think something is the best for us (like cupcakes), but it could actually hurt us or lead us away from God. Sometimes, we ask for something without thinking it through or because we don't want to do something the hard way:



- You ask for a dog, but you can't take care of one.
- You ask for an "A" on a test, but you didn't study for it.
- You ask for a new friend after you and your friend have a fight, but what you really need is to make up with your friend.

Sometimes, what we ask for is very serious and we don't understand why God won't give us what we pray for. Sometimes God's response to our prayer makes us very sad:

- You ask that your grandpa gets better, but he stays sick.
- You ask that your parents stop fighting, but they don't.
- You ask that your mom stay home, but she always has to go to work.

We don't know why God doesn't answer every prayer like we want him to, especially when our prayers seem like they would be good for everyone. When we have faith, we trust that God knows how to answer our prayers best—even when we're sad.



IN YOUR OWN WORDS

In the space below, write or draw your own prayer to God.

In Short

- Prayer is talking with God.
- Prayer can be personal or done with a group.
- Prayer can be done in a lot of ways.



Journey of Faith for Children, Inquiry, Q7 (826351)

The process by which adults are initiated into the Catholic faith throughout the United States is now called the OCIA—the Order of Christian Initiation of Adults. “Order” is a clearer translation of the Latin term for the process formerly known as the RCIA—the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults. People preparing for baptism and reception into the Church celebrate several rites as part of the order to which those rites belong—an order whose mission is to journey in the faith. The US Conference of Catholic Bishops adopted the name change in 2021, with American dioceses introducing the name thereafter. For more information, please contact your local diocese.

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