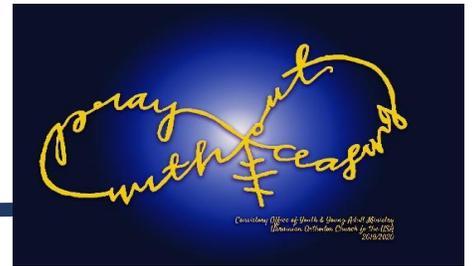


# HOW SHOULD WE PRAY? Part 1

## Session Four



Begin the Session with prayer to the Holy Trinity, *O Heavenly King*.

When we go to Church every week, we *worship* God with our parish family. This is a very, very important form of prayer that also allows us to receive Holy Communion. There are also times, like here and today, when we pray in a group outside of church services. We should try to find various times to pray as a family when we are home, as well.

Jesus taught us that we must also pray privately, which means to have our own personal time with God. Private prayer doesn't take the place of going to church or praying with others. It's an important addition...like a plant needs light **and** water, we need public and private prayer to grow.

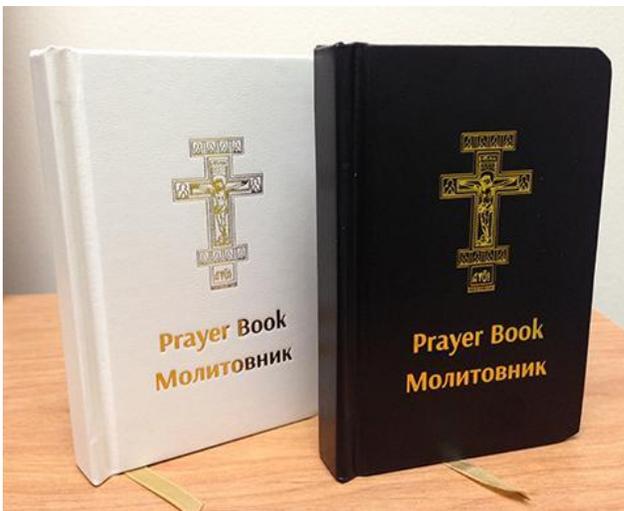
→ Read Matthew 6: 6. Where does Jesus tell you to pray?

That certainly doesn't sound like it would make it possible to pray without ceasing! But Jesus is telling us that our prayer should be between God and ourselves. We don't have to announce to the world that we are praying. Sometimes the room we go into can be a room in our hearts. Whether we are praying in words or through our actions and attitudes, we can trust that God is receiving our message...and that's what matters.

How we pray is very important. First, we must try very hard to clear our minds of everything else. This is very difficult at first because we have so much around us and so many things in our life to think about, but with practice it will get easier. Having a certain place to pray will help; maybe in your room or somewhere else in your house that is quiet. We should have at least one icon in our prayer corner to help us focus on what we are about to do. Maybe you can ask your parents to help you set up a family prayer corner that everyone can use. This can have a candle and incense or oil (*but these should only be used with your parents' permission and when they are at home with you!*)

Once we've cleared our minds we should think about what we want to say...for what do we need to ask forgiveness, do we have something for which we are especially thankful, do we know someone who needs extra help? Now we are ready to start.

You should have your own Orthodox prayer book. Many of the prayers may be difficult for you now, but you will "grow into" them. Your parents, priest, church schoolteachers, or godparents can all help if you have trouble with any of the words. When you are saying the words of the prayers in your prayer book, you are using words from our Holy Tradition. The Church has prayed these words for centuries so we can trust that they are true and proper and pleasing to God.



While we use prayers from a prayer book to guide us through Holy Tradition of the Church, this doesn't mean that you can *only* say prayers from a prayer book. You shouldn't skip prayer if you don't have your book. Perhaps you would like to add a prayer in your own words when you have finished the prayers of the Church. This is fine, and sometimes necessary for us. Just remember, who you are talking to! Even in our own words, prayer should be *reverent*.

One way to make your own words into a reverent prayer is to remember it can be G-R-E-A-T.

**Greeting**...the special way we call upon God

**Reason**...are you asking for help, or giving special thanks, or just saying, "I love you?"

**Emotion**...explain how you feel: sad, afraid, happy?

**Action**...ask God for what you want...help with a special problem, good health, etc., and remember that it will be according to His Will

**Thanks**...thank God for His blessings in the past and for accepting your prayer

Write a GREAT prayer here.

**Silent Contemplation Time:** Scripture Reading on Longsuffering - Psalm 11 (12)

*GREAT!*  
**GREAT!**