



A guide to the Year of Prayer

PREPARING FOR THE
YEAR OF JUBILEE 2025

In this time of preparation, I would greatly desire that we devote 2024, the year preceding the Jubilee event, to a great “symphony” of prayer. Prayer, above all else, to renew our desire to be in the presence of the Lord, to listen to him and to adore him.

POPE FRANCIS

On 24 December 2024, the Holy Door of St Peter’s Basilica in Rome will open, commencing the Jubilee Year. To prepare for this year of celebration, Pope Francis invites us into a Year of Prayer throughout 2024, reflecting on the Jubilee’s theme, ‘Pilgrims of Hope.’

This resource is a practical guide for parishes, communities, families, and individuals, taking up Pope Francis’ invitation to rediscover ‘the great value and absolute need for prayer in [our] personal life, in the life of the Church, and in the world.’ The year invites us to ‘intensify prayer as a personal dialogue with God’ and ‘foster a renewed ardour’ for evangelisation, that our hearts will be ready to welcome the gifts of grace and forgiveness that the Jubilee Year offers.

This guide draws from [Teach us to Pray](#), the resource aide prepared by the Vatican’s Dicastery for Evangelisation, which contains an abundance of practical ideas, prayers and reflections in sections devoted to parishes, communities, families, young people, shrines and monasteries.

Archbishop Peter A Comensoli has also offered reflections on how to rediscover prayer this year. In his [introduction to the Year of Prayer](#), he points us to the Jubilee theme, ‘Pilgrims of Hope’, as a ‘beautiful image for us to carry’ as we pray together as the local Church in Melbourne.

As we continue our local journey of missionary renewal with Take the Way of the Gospel, may this Year of Prayer be an opportunity to renew our hearts and minds towards the Lord and reach out to others in prayer and hope.

Praying with your Parish Community

Throughout the Year of Prayer, the following ideas might be used as a handout for parishioners or inserted into the parish or school bulletin.

JOIN (OR START) A PRAYER GROUP

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, Bible studies, communal rosaries, the Liturgy of the Hours, a retreat or a pilgrimage are great ways to pray together. If there are none available at your parish, consider getting together with others to start one.

PRAY WITH AND FOR YOUR SPIRITUAL NEIGHBOUR—THE PARISH ‘NEXT DOOR’

Pray for your neighbouring parishes as part of your daily prayer. You may even take the opportunity to walk around that particular neighbourhood and pray for their intentions.

PRAYERS BEFORE MEETINGS IN THE PARISH

Carefully prepare the beginning and ending prayers for your parish meetings. Consider using some time in these meetings to offer catechesis on different types of prayer (e.g. The ‘Pilgrims of Hope’ logo [has a beautiful description and analysis](#) worth knowing and sharing with a Senior Leadership, Parish Pastoral Council, Parish Staff, Liturgy or Finance team.)



PRACTICAL PRAYER EXPERIENCES

Prayer is a practice. Offering your community the opportunity to learn and grow in different ways of praying, so they have the practical tools to do it themselves, is important. Think about how you might offer catechesis for both children and adults (e.g. During Lent, [Archbishop Comensoli explored the Our Father](#), the prayer which Jesus taught us).



In focus: The Eucharist

Let’s use this time to enhance our ‘full, conscious and active participation’ in the Eucharist by:

Preparing for Mass well

To help enter the mystery of the Mass, take extra time before the liturgy to reflect on the readings for the day or pray quietly, settling your heart.

Making the Sign of the Cross thoughtfully

The words and gestures made throughout the Mass invite and enable our ‘full, conscious and active participation’ in the liturgy. Slow down and consider their meaning. What do they say to us that we might have missed?

Listening carefully to the Word of God

As you sign your forehead, lips and heart in preparation for the Gospel, pray: ‘May the words of the Gospel be on my mind as I think, my lips as I speak, and my heart as I live.’



Praying the Lord’s Prayer attentively

Meditate on each of the seven petitions as you pray with your community.

Welcoming the Eucharistic Jesus

As you process forward to receive the precious Body and Blood, offer a silent prayer of gratitude. (e.g. ‘Thank you for nourishing me, Lord Jesus. I welcome you now.’)

Giving thanks

Pause in personal prayer for a few minutes after Mass to express gratitude for the graces just received and for those now needed to go out in mission.



Further ideas for prayer in the parish community, including proposed formats for communal Liturgy of the Hours and Adoration, can be found in chapter 3, 6, and 7 of *Teach Us to Pray*.

Praying with Young People



During this Year of Prayer, let every community seek ways to encourage young people in their friendship with God.

A CATECHESIS ON PRAYER

Support youth leaders to explore the lives of the saints, or unpack Chapter 4 of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* on Christian Prayer.



VOCATIONAL DISCERNMENT

Provide intentional prayer opportunities for reflection and discussion about where the Lord might be calling them. Invite the parish community to pray for vocations.



APPS AND PODCASTS

Many apps and podcasts that are now available that offer formative content on prayer as well as brief daily commentaries on the Gospel of the day (e.g: Hallow).

SMALL GROUPS

Invite small groups of young people to lead some regular community activities such as those held on the first Friday of the month, the Stations of the Cross, praise and worship evenings, rosary or vespers.

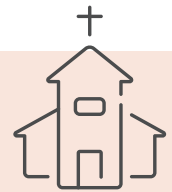


SIX30 HOLY HOUR

Grab some friends and come along to the St Patrick's Cathedral on a Thursday evening to join other young people from across the archdiocese for an evening of Adoration and prayer.



Further ideas for prayers for young people, including further suggestions for them to gather, can be found in chapter 5 of *Teach Us to Pray*.



In focus:
The Year of Prayer
at Keysborough &
Noble Park

The partnered parishes of Keysborough and Noble Park have begun an hour of prayer on Thursday evenings. Parishioners are invited to gather in the chapel at Resurrection Church. During the month of February, parishioners explored Taizé and in March, they meditated on the Sunday Gospel. They hope to offer different styles of prayer for their local community to experience together.

'It is the silence and intimacy of prayer that can offer the setting in which to tell the Lord about the turmoil in one's heart and receive encouraging words from Him ... It is also inevitable that vocational questions will arise during a prayer experience with young people. The time of youth is the best time to look at and begin to plan one's future, including being at the service of others ...'

TEACH US TO PRAY



'What can we do in prayer? Here's a few very simple things: Our Father who art in Heaven ... Hail Mary, full of grace ... Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit ... Three simple prayers that can open up our lives.'

ARCHBISHOP PETER A COMENSOLI

Praying with the Family

May this year be a time to nourish our families as home 'schools of prayer'.

BEGIN AND END THE DAY WITH PRAYER

Encourage spontaneous, heartfelt prayer in your children to nurture a genuine friendship with Jesus. This natural conversation lays the foundation for a lifelong relationship of comfortably 'being with' our God. Help them to express their hopes, desires, fears, and concerns.



PRAY FOR YOUR NEIGHBOURS

This can be done during family prayer, daily walks or at the beginning or end of the day. Perhaps reach out when the time is right to tell them you are praying for them, and ask them to pray for you. Invite them to join you at Mass or another prayer opportunity in your parish.

BASIC CHRISTIAN PRAYERS

Witness your own faith in spontaneous prayer and pray together the core prayers of the Church, such as the Our Father, Hail Mary, or grace before meals. (As you pray grace before meals, pray for those who are homeless, hungry and in need in your local neighbourhood.)



VALUING THE WORD OF GOD

Find a suitable time to read Gospel passages together, allowing time for the children to put themselves in the story. Whether through imaginative contemplation, Lectio Divina, or whatever might work for your family, connect your children to the adventure of the Bible and its relevance.

Further ideas for prayer in the family, including texts of suggested prayers, can be found in chapter 4 of *Teach us to Pray*.



Fiat: A Weekend of Prayer

FRIDAY 31 MAY – SUNDAY 2 JUNE 2024

Parishes are invited to register for a special prayer event to be held from the Feast of the Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary to the Solemnity of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ.

Over this weekend, the Archdiocese will unite in prayer, following the example of Mary, who prayerfully heard and responded to God's call. Parishes can register their community to host an hour of prayer. This is an opportunity to highlight the diversity of prayer in your community. Further information and registration details: <https://melbournecatholic.org/fiat>

RESOURCES

Teach us to Pray guide
<https://tinyurl.com/yeymtznc>

Jubilee Year Vatican website
<https://www.iubilaeum2025.va/en.html>

Archbishop Peter A Comensoli's introduction to the Year of Prayer
<https://youtu.be/hJb56F5YfA>

