

## PRAYER DEFINED

**Prayer. Communication with God through thoughts, words, and gestures whereby we express what we believe about God and our relationship to God and to one another. God intends and initiates this relationship, and we accept it. In prayer we express God's activity in and presence with us. In faith we pray believing that God is concerned about and responsive to human need.**

**There are two basic kinds of prayer.**

- 1. In adoration and thanksgiving we respond in awe to God's abundant providence. Psalms of praise acknowledge God's goodness and greatness in creation (Ps. 6) and guiding the events of history (Ps. 30).**
- 2. In petition and intercession we respond to human weakness and need by asking for God's help (Ps. 33).**

**No one style of prayer suits all people. Because cultures, individual personality types, needs differ, prayers also differ. Even when we choose a certain method of prayer, we will often make it uniquely our own.**

**Prayer is life with a living God, life wholly attentive to the sober truth and reality of God. Our mind and heart open to God so that we may grow in holiness and so give God glory. It is face-to-face encounter with the God who loves us with the unflinching mercy and self-offering that is grace. We give ourselves to God in return. As our trust in and dependence on God as Father deepens and intensifies, we pray for growth in ourselves as sons and daughters of God and as brothers and sisters to one another. Prayer teaches us patience, compassion, awareness, and simplicity, leading us to an understanding of ourselves as a part of the greater community and connected to all of life.<sup>1</sup>**

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<sup>1</sup> The Upper Room Dictionary of Christian Spiritual Formation