A People of Prayer

GRADE 8

CHAPTER 4 Study Guide

Keep these ideas in mind as you study ***Chapter 4****.*

Prayer is lifting up the mind and heart to God. We are able to speak and listen to God in prayer because he teaches us how to pray.

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Jesus told his followers a parable about the necessity for them to pray always without becoming weary. Above all, Jesus taught his followers to pray the Lord's Prayer.

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Jesus prayed often. He prayed all the traditional Jewish prayers, such as meal prayers, the psalms, and the Shema, the central Jewish prayer of faith in the one God. It is prayed at least twice each day. Jesus prayed at his baptism, before choosing the Apostles, and at the multiplication of the loaves. Jesus prayed when he was transfigured, when he raised Lazarus from the dead, and during his Agony in the Garden.

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Mary's prayerful response to the angel at the Annunciation expressed her openness to God—her willingness to listen. Mary was a woman of prayer. Scripture tells us that as the profound experiences of Jesus' life unfolded, she pondered the events in her heart. A pondering heart is a listening heart.

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The liturgy is the public worship of the Church. In its broad sense, it includes the celebration of the seven sacraments and the prayer called the Liturgy of the Hours. The Mass is the Church's great community prayer.

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The Liturgy of the Hours includes hymns, psalms, Scripture readings, petitions, the Lord's Prayer, and times of reflective silence. It includes the three major expressions of the life of prayer: vocal prayer, meditation, and contemplative prayer. This prayer of the Church can be prayed at seven "hours," or times, during the day.

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All the saints took time to pray. For example, Saint Francis of Assisi praised God as he hiked along country roads. Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton, the mother of five children, prayed as she rocked her babies to sleep. Saint Thérèse of Lisieux, a simple French sister who trusted deeply in God's care for us, once said, "I just tell our Lord all that I want, and he understands."

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