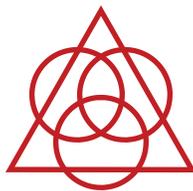


Pathway to Holiness



Holy Trinity Catholic Church

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Beaverton, OR 97005

www.h-t.org ~ 503-643-9528

Mass Times: Daily, 8:15am;

Saturday, 5:30pm; Sunday, 8:00am, 9:30am, 11:15am

Confessions: Saturday, 4:00-5:00pm

Pathway to Holiness

Each person is called to holiness! That is the premise of this booklet. Each of us is invited into a personal relationship with God through Jesus Christ, and in that relationship is given the necessary grace to live our lives fully in this world (to be the best version of ourselves) and to be prepared for our ultimate goal: Heaven. We have organized this booklet into four sections: Prayer, Sacraments, Study, and Service. Each is an essential part of growing in holiness. If any one of these four areas is weak or non-existent, our lives are like a stool missing one or more legs: wobbly! A recommendation for you: each of the suggestions contains a box. As you read through the sections of this booklet, mark the boxes that you feel prompted to work on to strengthen your own personal pathway to holiness. Then periodically review the booklet to hold yourself accountable. Come Holy Spirit, inspire us to greater faithfulness!

Suggestions for Personal Prayer

- Keep it simple and keep it “real”. Above all prayer is a *relationship*--a dialog with God. Don't turn it into a mechanical exercise. The purpose of prayer is to draw us ever deeper into this love relationship with God, and the one who initiates it is God.
- A healthy and balanced prayer life is not isolated from our daily life. Consider making it part of your morning offering to “pray your calendar” for the day, asking for God's blessing on everything you will be doing, and praying for openness to the unexpected opportunities that will arise. (Mother Teresa calls this “giving God *permission* to use you”.)
- Consider using the Rosary and/or Chaplet as a form of intercession, identifying one person or intention for each decade. Take time to meditate on each of the mysteries you are praying.
- Discover what form(s) of prayers seem most natural for you and allow that to evolve. Discipline is necessary so that prayer becomes a priority, but flexibility is necessary as we adapt to the conditions and stages of our life.
- Foster times of silence - to ponder more deeply how God is prompting you through daily events, and how God is revealing himself to you. Listen to God speaking these questions in your heart:
 - + Will you believe that I love you without any reservation?
 - + Will you invite me into those areas of greatest anxiety and fear?
 - + Will you say yes to the growth I offer you?
 - + Will you trust that I bring good out of everything in your life?
- Daily devotionals provide a wide variety of prayer starters and reflections. Browse online or in any bookstore for one that appeals to you.
- Consider doing any of the above in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament.
- Try using the “templates” on the back page as part of your morning and evening prayers.

Suggestions for Praying the Mass Well

- Make it a weekly commitment to participate in Mass and don't allow yourself easy excuses for missing.
- Understand the distinction between personal (private) prayer and liturgical prayer. Personal prayer includes devotions, daily prayers, the many forms of meditation and contemplation. Liturgical prayer is the prayer of all of us united with Christ praying for the salvation of the world.
- Expect distractions! Remember this is the gathering of the Body of Christ; it is not your personal, private time with the Lord. Gently call yourself back to prayer remembering you are a part of this community praying with Christ for the salvation of the world.
- Identify an intention for each Mass: a situation, person, or need. At the Offertory think of presenting that intention to the Lord.
- Read the Scripture readings ahead of time. (available online or in any number of resources). Ponder their meaning. Use the *lectio* model outlined in the "Study" section of this booklet.
- As you listen to the readings, prayers, and homily let the Holy Spirit prompt you to identify one message to hold onto for the week. Write it down if that helps.
- Put out the effort necessary to pray and sing from your heart, not just rattling off familiar words.
- As you receive Holy Communion, be mindful and attentive and welcoming of Jesus' presence in your life.
- Consider this analogy: Participating fully in the Mass is like going to a symphony concert. Consider the roles of musicians, conductor, and audience. Too often we think of ourselves as the audience at Mass, when the intended "audience" is none other than GOD! All in the congregation are the musicians; the presider's role is to coordinate everyone's efforts to give their best to God. God is the one who not only inspires what we do, but is the recipient of our praise and worship. No couch (pew) potatoes allowed!

Suggestions for Making a Good Confession

- Sin can only be understood in the context of our relationship with God: His love for us and our love for Him. Sin is a deliberate doing of something we know is harmful to that relationship with God and others.
- Because we feel “guilty” about something does not make it sin. Missing Mass because of sickness or bad weather is not a sin, and should not be confessed. True guilt needs to lead to action - of repentance, change; false guilt needs to be acknowledged as false and then ignored.
- Examining our Conscience is the way we prepare for confession. A good question to ponder is: in what ways in my life have I not been the “best version of myself” - in my actions, inaction, and words. Consider that in regard to family, friends, job, self, God, and others.
- Avoid confessing a “list” of sins. With a bit more prayer and reflection it will quickly be evident the underlying causes of sin, and that is what needs to be confessed, usually not more than two or three things.
- Detail is not needed or helpful in confessing. Simply mention the sins you have prayerfully identified: no excuses or justification or explanation is needed.
- Be alert to scrupulosity or any kind of nitpicking. Confession is ultimately a focus on God’s mercy and forgiveness - more than on our shortcomings.
- Seldom is it fruitful to confess more than once a month. A daily Act of Contrition with regular examination of conscience is the “ordinary” way we seek God’s forgiveness. Confession is then what we do after deeper reflection. For many people 2 or 3 times a year works just fine.
- Don’t worry about forgetting to mention something and then later remembering it. Your intention is what counts: making a good confession.
- Finally, remember that receiving Holy Communion is meant to assist us in our journey of holiness--it is not a merit badge given to those who are “perfect”. Yes, you can receive Holy Communion without going to Confession! People who are faithful Catholics, desiring to live in a way pleasing to God, should receive communion *every* time they go to Mass - unless they get up in the morning and look in the mirror and see a halo over their head. If that ever happens, you do not *need* Holy Communion!

Suggestions for Study and Ongoing Growth

- Make regular use of inspirational reading, CDs, DVDs. Browse our kiosk in the entry of the church. Visit a Catholic (or Christian) bookstore or retreat center and look for something that captures your interest. Ask your church friends what they are finding inspirational - and share your “finds” too.
- Become familiar with the Bible. Fruitful reading of the Bible requires a different mindset than most of the other reading we do. Approach the Bible with the appropriate reverence it deserves as the *Word of God*. Begin with the four Gospels. A time proven way of learning to listen to the words of the Bible and personalize them is Lectio Divina:
 - + Read a short passage slowly and carefully.
 - + Ask yourself what stands out or catches your attention?
 - + Based on this passage, what is God inviting you to be *thankful* about?
 - + Based on this passage, in what ways do you feel called to *repent*?
 - + What comes to mind based on this passage that you can *pray* about?
- Participate in a Small Faith Community. Joining with a small group of other individuals similarly committed to growing in their faith is a huge support. Most parishes have numerous small groups meeting either seasonally (Lent especially) or year round.
- Participate in Adult Education opportunities. Watch the bulletin and website for offerings on Bible Study, Doctrine, Social Justice, Workshops, and retreats. Consider going to the RCIA classes (formation process for those preparing to become Catholic.)
- Discover a quality online source of teaching. Try Robert Barron’s wordonfire.org, Sr. Ann Shields renewalministries.net, Matthew Kelly’s dynamiccatholic.org, or TheSacred-Page.com.
- Read from the Lives of the Saints. Learning how others have lived their faith in exemplary ways is a huge inspiration in expanding our own vision and focus.

Suggestions for Service

- Service must begin in own homes, our families, and our relationships. Of primary importance is growth in kindness, patience, understanding, self-control. “Dying to self” is a huge part of any genuine Christian faith. In practical terms that refers to overcoming selfishness, narcissism, the need to get our own way. Often it is much easier to be absorbed in other more “spectacular” forms of service and neglect what is happening in our homes and closest relationships!
- Faithfulness in our daily commitments flows from this: working with integrity (putting in an honest day’s work), striving to be honest in our words and actions, being on time and respectful of others, being the kind of person others can rely upon and trust to follow through on commitments.
- Service opportunities in the parish abound with the many different ministries and outreach possibilities. Consider prayerfully the ways you could get involved and make the necessary contact.
- Service opportunities outside the parish also abound - in our schools, neighborhoods, sports teams, and many non profits/charities. Think of the things you are passionate about and have skill in and consider ways you can put that to service for others.
- Grow in alertness to the unexpected/unplanned situations that arise where we are invited (called!) to assist - with financial help, time, or attentive listening .
- Evangelizing at its best requires relationships to be built with our colleagues, neighbors, circle of contacts. Make it part of your morning prayer to be intentional about fostering these relationships and being open and ready to share your own story of faith and encourage others in theirs.

Morning Prayer

Loving Father, thank you for the gift of this new day. Thank you for the world you have created, the wonders of nature, and the unique person you have made me. Thank you for loving me, just as I am; for calling me by name and knowing me through and through - and for liking me! I thank you for sending Jesus to be our Savior and as I begin this day I once again acknowledge my need for him. I can't save myself. Apart from Jesus my life has no purpose and no hope of eternal life. Therefore, I surrender myself to you totally: my thoughts, feelings, dreams, willpower, concerns, joys, abilities and weaknesses. And I offer you everything this day will hold. (Pause and confide your plans and activities of this day to the Lord.)

I commit myself to following your ways, to seeking your will and to being a witness of you. Pour forth your Holy Spirit to transform me and deepen your image in me. I especially pray for the grace to overcome the following weaknesses: (confide the special areas you're working on to the Lord - bad habits, character defects, recurrent sins.)

Father, I thank you for the people you've placed in my life to help me, love me and nurture me. As I begin this day I pray for each of them, asking your blessing and protection for them. (Include by name family members, friends, those you're committed to praying for.)

I ask for help in dealing well with any trials and temptations that arise today. Give me the grace to be loving, sensitive and tolerant and to readily forgive those who anger or hurt me. May I be a source of encouragement and inspiration to all you bring to me today. (Pray especially about any specific challenges you know you'll face today.)

My God, most importantly, help me to remain close to you today - to think of you often, to talk with you frequently, and to always trust that you are with me, protecting me, loving me and bringing good out of everything that happens. All of this I pray in Jesus' name. Amen. (Close with an Our Father, Hail Mary and Glory Be.)

Evening Prayer

Loving Father, I thank you for the day that has passed. Thank you that you have been with me throughout the day; that not a moment passed without your loving gaze upon me. Thank you for protecting me from harm and for providing this day what I truly needed. Thank you for being so powerful that even the effects of sin and evil in our world do not limit your ability to bring good out of everything. (Pause and prayerfully reflect on the events of the day, thanking God for his faithfulness and being filled with his peace.)

Lord, I began this day committed to doing your will. I'm sorry for the times I was not attentive to you, for the times I failed to respond sensitively to the needs of those around me, for the times I did not resist temptation. Forgive my sins. (Offer to God any specific areas of sin or weakness that you fell into this day and consciously forgive those who angered or hurt you today.)

Thank you, Lord, for always being eager to forgive me. Without you my life can only be unmanageable. With you I have strength to meet any challenges that arise. Because you are my Shepherd, there is nothing I need to be afraid of. (Place your concerns and anxieties in God's loving care and let go of them.)

Finally, Father, I wish to pray for all those I have spoken to and worked with today. Lead all of your people closer to you. May those in the greatest difficulty find encouragement and hope and may those who do not have adequate shelter or food be taken care of. (Add specific prayer requests at this time, including family members, those who are ill, those struggling and not turning to God.)

Dear Father, bless me this night. May I be kept safe from all evil and awaken refreshed and eager to serve you once again. (Close with an Act of Contrition, Our Father, Hail Mary and Glory Be.)