

ACTS: A Way to Pray Every Day

A Tool for Growth in our Relationship with God

Catholic tradition teaches that four topics should be part of our daily prayer. These draw us out of our self-centered concerns, put us in right relationship to God and others, and order our mind to the reality of God.

You can pray each of the four separately in the day. For example, sing a song of praise on your walk to school (A). Before you go to sleep think about ways you failed (C). Give simple thanks to God for your meals and the good things that happened in the day (T). Ask for your needs and God's grace in the morning (S).

One of the simplest ways to grow in prayer is to spend two minutes on each letter of ACTS at some time every day, ideally the morning. If praising God with words is unfamiliar or strange, copy some songs you like out of the hymnal and sing those, or sing the "Gloria" or the "Holy, Holy, Holy" (*Sanctus*) from Mass. The psalms of praise are particularly useful to help us learn the language of giving God glory because God IS good.

Adoration (praising God): *"My soul makes its boast in the LORD; let the afflicted hear and be glad. O magnify the LORD with me, and let us exalt his name together!" Psalm 34:2-3*

Contrition (asking God to enlighten your heart in the areas that need to grow): *"A broken and contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise." Psalm 51:17*

Thanksgiving (the practice of gratitude fends off resentment and other poisonous states of mind): *"It is good to give thanks to the LORD... to declare thy steadfast love in the morning, and thy faithfulness by night." Psalm 92:1-2*

Supplication (petition; asking God for help): *"Ask, and it will be given you...For ever one who asks receives." Matthew 7:7-8*