

3 Things You Can Do Right Now to Jumpstart Your Prayer Life



Hi there! I'm Rose Folsom. Great to "meet" you! This handy guide gives you a taste of how I help Catholic professionals who work closely with me to revive their prayer life with more consistency, focus, and clarity in their prayer. Because anyone can have a prayer life they love. *Congratulations on taking the first step!*

As author, speaker, spiritual director, and founder of VirtueConnection.com, I've helped thousands of people enjoy a closer relationship with God. I've been in the prayer doldrums too, and am excited to share with you three things to do to re-ignite your prayer life.

Ready? ... Let's go!



#3

Shake it up: stop praying boring prayers.

Our connection with God can get stale if we're praying the same prayers year after year. We realize one day that our prayer has become automatic. A break from our usual prayers can refresh our sense that, yes, this really is meant to be a friendly conversation with God.

Try a different way of praying, starting today.

You know you've found the right way when you feel a peaceful engagement with God – who's already engaged with you. Here are three things to try after asking God to guide you:

Pray the Rosary more slowly than you do now, imagining yourself as one of the people in the mystery you're praying. For example, try to *feel* the happiness Elizabeth felt when Mary, pregnant with Jesus, entered her home – how would you feel if the Mother of God walked through your front door today? The second Joyful Mystery is joyful indeed!

Open the New Testament at random and ponder what God wants to tell you in the first verses that you see. For example, just now I opened to Galatians 5:7: "You were running well; who hindered you from following the truth? That enticement does not come from the one who called you." I knew right away God was asking me why I sometimes let my work crowd out my connection with him. He reminded me that he wants me for myself, not for my accomplishments. That's how God can speak to us when we ponder scripture with a listening heart.

Slowly read your favorite go-to spiritual book for inspiration (if you don't have one, consider *He and I* by Gabrielle Bossis, *The Imitation of Christ* by Thomas à Kempis, or *Abandonment to Divine Providence* by Fr. Jean-Pierre de Caussade). Let the book lead you to ponder what God is saying through the author. Pause in your reading to listen to God for a few moments and hear what he may be whispering in your heart.

Listen to your favorite inspiring music, close your eyes, and slowly tell God 10 things you feel grateful for (not things you *should* be grateful for, but things that make you *feel* grateful right now).





#2

Don't let distractions distract you: even the saints had them!

It's not just you – everyone has distractions. They're only a problem if you let them stop your prayer. There's a better way: every time you realize you've drifted away from your prayer, bring yourself gently back. Let's face it: there are good prayer days and, well, days when you wonder why you bothered to try.

But did you know that your prayer draws down even more grace when it's a struggle? It's true! That's because you're showing that you love God for himself, not just for the warm fuzzies he sometimes gives you in prayer.

Here are 4 of the ways I offer to help you stop fighting distractions and start really praying again:

Distractions will come, but St. Teresa of Avila says to never *intentionally* think of something other than God when we're praying. We may be walking or driving, but if we put other thoughts ahead of God, we're just building a habit of letting things pull us away from prayer, which can make focusing that much harder next time you pray.

"The gifts of grace increase as the struggles increase." – St. Rose of Lima

Complaining to God is okay. Whatever you're feeling when you pray, tell God about it. Be yourself. He just wants your heart, whether it's joyful or broken today.

"If you are to give him yourself, you are never without the means of giving." – St. Peter Chrysologus

"Do not tire yourself over things that cause anxiety and worry. Only one thing is necessary: to lift up your spirit and love God." – St. Pio da Pietrelcina

Don't beat yourself up – that's just another distraction! We may waver or wonder where the thoughts are coming from that pop up during prayer, but God's infinite love is unchanging. Remember that your enemy wants you to give up – don't give him the satisfaction!

"If you have many distractions at prayer, that prayer of yours may well be upsetting the devil a great deal."
– Saint Alphonsus Liguori.

Start small. In his book *Saintly Solutions*, Fr. Joseph M. Esper reminds us that "a few minutes of genuine prayer are far more pleasing to God, and spiritually valuable to us, than several hours of merely going through the motions of praying."

"God ... can give us in a single instant exactly what we need. Then the rest of the day can take its course, under the same effort and strain, perhaps, but in peace. And when night comes, and you look back over the day and see how fragmentary everything has been, and how much you planned that has gone undone, and all the reasons you have to be embarrassed and ashamed: just take everything exactly as it is, put it in God's hands and leave it with Him ... and start the next day as a new life." – St. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross (Edith Stein)

With guidance and support, you **can** stay focused!





#1

Don't go it alone – be accountable!

When we try to do things (like exercise) on our own, many of us start to get creative in finding excuses why we can't do it today – maybe tomorrow can you relate? 😊

It's the same with prayer. Most of us need something or someone to keep us on track toward our goal of a rich and satisfying prayer life. Left to ourselves, we often get discouraged or give up entirely.

But it doesn't have to be that way. People who work with me find their **SAINTLY Connection** with ways to grow in their relationship with God in prayer.

S – Seek God: why scripture and the saints say prayer is “the one thing necessary” to connect with God and become the saint he created you to be.

A – Attain consistency: simple, practical ways to set yourself up for success.

I – Incinerate obstacles and distractions: ways to stay focused no matter what.

N – Ninja tips to stay inspired.

T – Take it to the next level: 3 tips for sustaining a lifetime of vibrant prayer.

L – Love your new feeling of deep engagement with God.

Y – Yes! to the peace and confidence of a closer personal relationship with Jesus.

Below are three powerful things you can do to get support and encouragement:

Write down the names of three friends or parish members who might be willing to be your partner in spiritual growth. Call each one until you find a willing “accountability buddy” who wants to set goals and be accountable for them as much as you do. I've had an accountability buddy for six years and love it.

Engage a spiritual director. A spiritual director is a reliable sounding board with whom to discuss your spiritual journey. So where do you find a spiritual director? Ask your pastor if he knows someone trained to do this. You can schedule a free consultation with a priest at <https://www.nonnatus.org/speak-with-a-priest.html> or ask to be matched with a Catholic spiritual director at <https://www.seekdirection.app/>.

Finally, I'd love to help you keep you growing in the right direction with another free gift, worth \$197. It's free to you because you've invested the time to download this guide. *Woo-hoo!*

CLICK HERE to learn more and claim your gift.

Happy praying!

Rose

