



THE ARCHDIOCESE of BIRMINGHAM
OFFICE for MISSION
“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations...”



THE YEAR OF PRAYER: IN PREPARATION FOR THE JUBILEE YEAR

Dear Father, Dear Deacon,

In preparation for the 2025 Jubilee Year - entitled “Pilgrims of Hope” - 2024 has been designated as the Year of Prayer by Pope Francis. There will be a particular focus on the *Our Father*, which presents us with a great opportunity to go back to the basics of prayer.

- ACCOMPANYING OTHERS IN PRAYER -

Someone once said that “*prayer doesn't help our relationship with God, prayer is our relationship with God!*” This dialogue opens our eyes to recognise Jesus who accompanies us, as we see in the account of the Road to Emmaus. But we all need help to pray!



Jesus taught his disciples to pray in response to their request that we hear in Luke 11:1, and through His teaching we receive the *Lord's Prayer* or the *Our Father*. The *Lord's Prayer* is the model for all prayer – The Catechism brings this out very clearly in its fourth section on ‘Christian Prayer’ (see CCC 2766).

Prayer encourages others to open themselves to an encounter with God. Can we help or teach someone to pray in this Year of Prayer?

- EVANGELII GAUDIUM SUNDAY: 17TH SEPT 2023 -

To get ready for this, on *Evangelii Gaudium Sunday*, the Office for Mission wants to encourage every Catholic to begin reflecting on their life of prayer: *what we pray, how we pray & why we pray*. This is for two reasons:

1. *To encourage us to deepen our own prayer life and love of God;*
2. *To help someone else to pray during the Year of Prayer.*

The Office for Mission will be providing suggestions and resources to help you to do that, so that our Archdiocese can have as its focus, missionary prayer and accompaniment during 2024.

See the *Year of Prayer* web page (details overleaf) for more information and ideas, and I'd be interested to hear your thoughts too!

IDEAS FOR EVANGELII GAUDIUM SUNDAY 2023

Here are some ideas to start your thinking about the Year of Prayer - beginning on the first Sunday of Advent 2023. Visit the web page for more inspiration.

Think through the year ahead...

- Could you preach about prayer in homilies?
- Are there courses or talks that you could offer during Advent, Lent or other times, to help people pray?
- Could you offer a catechesis of prayer at times during the year? – thinking particularly of the *Our Father*. Are there people in your parish you could call on to help?
- How could you help young people especially to pray or to learn how to pray in different ways?
- Could you support families and couples to pray?
- Are there existing prayer groups that you could promote in your parish?
- Does *Lectio Divina* happen in your parish, nearby or online?
- Could people share or write a testimony about their prayer life, which might help others?
- Could you pray the Liturgy of the Hours as a parish?
- Could you pray for mission and for the poor in your area?

Help to review your parish prayer life can be found at:

www.vocations.org.uk/year-of-prayer-2024

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