

Prayer Beads

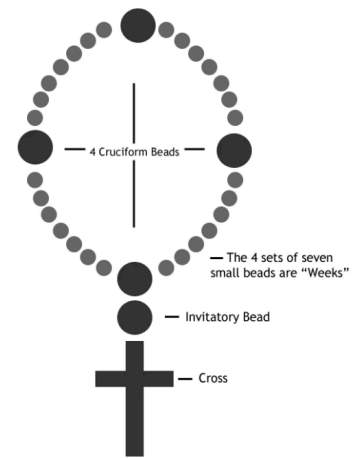
WHY PRAY WITH BEADS?

Praying with beads offers many benefits. They help us focus, offer a tactile way to slow down and be still, and serve as a sign of God's presence. The use of tactile reminders of God's presence dates to the Hebrew Scriptures in Numbers 15 when God offered the Israelites the fringe of their garments as a tool.

"The Lord said to Moses: Speak to the Israelites and say to them: Make fringes on the edges of your clothing for all time. Have them put blue cords on the fringe on the edges. This will be your fringe. You will see it and remember all the Lord's commands and do them." -Numbers 15:37-39

SYMBOLISM OF PRAYER BEADS

The prayer beads are (traditionally) divided into 4 sections. The traditional arrangement of prayer beads in Methodism and Anglicanism is as follows: One big bead next to the cross that is called the "Invitatory Bead." This bead invites us to a journey of prayer. In the circle, there are four big beads, with seven smaller beads in between. The four big beads create a cruciform shape to remind us of the four points of the cross. Four also reminds us of the four gospels, the four seasons of the year, and the four directions. The smaller set of 7 beads is also significant. Because a week has 7 days, these are called the week beads. Seven, of course, is a significant number for Christians. The church calendar has 7 seasons (Advent, Christmas, Epiphany, Lent, Easter, Pentecost, and Ordinary Time). There were seven days of creation, and in the book of Revelation, John writes letters to seven churches. Both Jews and Christians believe that the number 7 symbolizes spiritual perfection.



SHUMC PRAYER BEADS

Our prayer beads have a cross and 22 beads. The beads are all the same size. These were chosen for convenience. During Lent, and beyond, we can use them as bracelets and be reminded to pray often.

SELECTING PRAYERS

Using prayer beads is fairly simple and flexible. You may select a prayer routine of your own choosing. There are no set or assigned prayers, the choice is yours. Here are some examples as to how to pray with beads and different prayers you can use.

A GUIDE TO PRAYING WITH BEADS

(The prayers in this section are just examples. Use any prayer that feels comfortable to you.)

Step 1: Select a favorite prayer or words that have deep spiritual meaning for you. If you are just beginning to pray with beads, try to keep things simple and choose something that is close to your heart or that you can easily remember.

Step 2: Find a comfortable location to sit where you won't be disturbed for a few minutes. Allow yourself to relax and your mind to become more quiet and calm. Taking a few deep breaths will clear your thoughts.

Step 3: Begin by holding the beads in your hands. Hold the cross in one hand and acknowledge God's presence while saying your opening prayer. ***"Oh Lord, make haste to help us."***

Step 4: Continuing on, allow your fingers to select the bead next to the cross, commonly known as the invitatory bead, while saying your next prayer. ***"Glory to the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit: As it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen."***

Step 5: Allow your hand to advance through the beads while praying your selected prayer(s). *“Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner.”*

Step 6: Make sure you are feeling calm and going at a relaxed pace, allowing yourself to develop a comfortable rhythm as you are praying through the beads. As you arrive back to the cross you may add a closing prayer. *“The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you. The Lord lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace.”*

When you have finished with your prayers and advanced through the beads to your satisfaction, it would be beneficial to end with a time of meditation and contemplation to fully absorb and reflect on what you just experienced.

<p>Serenity Prayer The Serenity Prayer is a powerful prayer to help you find guidance, peace, and strength during tough times.</p> <p>USING THE SERENITY PRAYER</p> <p>THE CROSS: “God take and receive my liberty, my memory, my understanding and my will.”</p> <p>THE BEADS: “God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, courage to change the things I can, and wisdom to know the difference.”</p> <p>LAST BEAD: “Let me live one day at a time and enjoy one moment at a time. Let me accept hardships as the pathway to peace taking this world as it is, not as I would have it.”</p> <p>THE CROSS: “Let me trust that you will make all things right if I surrender to your will. Amen.”</p>	<p>Lenten Prayer During the season of Lent, many Christians give up certain luxuries or engage in acts of self-discipline, such as fasting or prayer, as a way of drawing closer to God.</p> <p>USING THE LENTEN PRAYER</p> <p>THE CROSS: “Heavenly Father, during this Lenten season, I come before you with a humble heart, seeking your grace and mercy.”</p> <p>THE BEADS: “As I journey through these 40 days, help me to reflect on Jesus’s sacrifice on the cross and the love that led Him there. May I use this time to examine my life and identify the areas where I need to grow and change.”</p> <p>LAST BEAD: “Most of all, I pray for your grace and love to guide me throughout this Lenten journey and beyond. May I continue to grow in faith, hope, and love, and may I always seek to follow your will in all that I do.”</p> <p>THE CROSS: “I ask all these things in the name of Jesus Christ, my Lord and Savior. Amen.”</p>
<p>A Morning Prayer</p> <p>THE CROSS: “In the Name of the Holy-Three-in-One. Amen.”</p> <p>THE BEADS: “If the grace of seeing were mine this day, I would glimpse you in all that lives.”</p> <p>LAST BEAD: The Lord’s Prayer</p> <p>THE CROSS: “May the light of God illumine the heart of my soul. May the flame of Christ kindle me to love. May the fire of the Spirit free me to live this day, tonight, and forever. Amen.”</p>	<p>General Prayer</p> <p>THE CROSS: “Blessed be the one, holy, and living God. Glory to God for ever and ever. Amen.”</p> <p>THE BEADS: “I lift up my eyes to the hills; from where is my help to come? My help comes from the Lord, the maker of heaven and earth.” (Psalm 121)</p> <p>LAST BEAD: “O God make speed to save me, O Lord make haste to help me.”</p> <p>THE CROSS: “Blessed be the one, holy, and living God. Glory to God for ever and ever. Amen.”</p>

Resources:

<https://www.unspokenelements.com/blogs/hope/lenten-prayer-anglican-rosary>

<https://www.greatplainsumc.org/prayerbeads>

<https://st-andrews-longmeadow.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/A-Guide-to-Praying-with-Prayer-Beads.pdf>

<https://upperroombooks.com/how-prayer-beads-benefit-prayer>