

# CULTURE OF UNCEASING PRAYER DEVELOPMENT GUIDE

## STEP 1: Rank Your Current Culture of Unceasing Prayer

Reflect on your parish's current state in each area of unceasing prayer and assign a color to each area.

- **Green:** Thriving, consistently practiced, deeply integrated.
- **Yellow:** Developing, some practices in place, in need of attention.
- **Red:** Uncommon, minimal practices, significant need for development.

### Personal Prayer

Parish leaders regularly nurture their personal prayer lives through practices such as Eucharistic Adoration, days of retreat, prayer groups, and private devotions.

- Green
- Yellow
- Red

### Communal Prayer

Parish leaders are committed to a regular, shared pattern of prayer, especially in the parish office.

- Green
- Yellow
- Red

### Spontaneous Prayer

Parish leaders are comfortable offering vocal prayer for others in the moment.

- Green
- Yellow
- Red

Review your ratings, especially any yellow or red areas. What factors may be contributing to lower ratings in these categories? As you move in to step 2, focus on how you will work to boost these areas in particular.

## STEP 2: Build Habits for Each Type

### Building a Personal Prayer Life

**Challenge to Daily Gospel Reflection:** Encourage all parish leaders to commit to 15 minutes a day reading and reflecting on the daily Gospel. Provide simple prompts for reflection if needed.

**Promote Weekly Holy Hours:** Invite leaders to commit to a weekly holy hour. Offer guidance and resources on how to pray a holy hour meaningfully (e.g., Lectio Divina, Rosary, silent adoration).

**Challenge to Daily Gospel Reflection:** As a leader, openly share about your own personal prayer life (e.g., during staff meetings or informal conversations) to inspire and normalize the practice for others.



## STEP 2: Build Habits for Each Type (cont.)

### Developing a Communal Prayer Rythm

**Start Meetings with Intentional Prayer:** Move beyond a quick "Our Father." Begin all staff and leadership meetings with a more intentional prayer practice, such as a short Scripture reading, a Litany, or shared intercessions.

**Punctuate the Day with Prayer:** Establish specific times for communal prayer in the parish office, such as praying the Angelus at noon, a Chaplet of Divine Mercy in the afternoon, or a morning prayer to begin the workday.

**Incorporate Prayer Into Decision-Making:** When facing important decisions or challenges, intentionally pause as a group to pray for discernment and wisdom, demonstrating reliance on God's guidance.

### Forming Leaders for Spontaneous Prayer

**Practice "Can I pray for you right now?":** Facilitate small group conversations among parish leaders. Ask, "What's going on in your life that I can pray for?" Model sharing personal intentions and then having someone immediately pray for that intention. Encourage them to replicate these types of conversations with parishioners.

**Model it Daily:** Behaviors become habits when you practice them consistently. Make yourself a goal to pray with someone every day for a month. People will follow your example, so offer to pray for others often, and encourage your staff and parish leaders to do the same.

**Affirm and Share Success Stories:** In your staff meetings, make it a habit to ask people to share stories where they offered spontaneous prayer and witnessed positive outcomes. Affirm and celebrate these moments to encourage wider adoption.

## STEP 3: Commit to an Action Plan

Decide which of the above practices you will commit to with your parish leaders. Note each habit, when you will introduce it to your leaders, and when you will practice it regularly.