

# **SHOULD WE PRAY TO MARY AND SAINTS?**

## ***A Biblical Study of The Catechism of the Catholic Church:***

*Bible Answers to the Most Frequently Asked Questions about Catholic Beliefs and Practices*

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### **Merriam-Webster's Definitions:**

Necromancy - the practice of talking to the spirits of dead people

Medium - a person through whom other persons try to communicate with the spirits of the dead

### **Passages of *The Catechism of the Catholic Church* to Consider:**

- **“We can pray with and to her.** The prayer of the Church is sustained by the prayer of Mary” (CCC 2679)
- “prayer unites us in the Church with the Mother of Jesus” (CCC 2673)
- “the Churches developed their prayers to the holy Mother of God” (CCC 2675)
- “in countless hymns and antiphons expressing this prayer...entrusts the supplications and praises of the children of God to the Mother of Jesus” (CCC 2675)
- “we can entrust all our cares and petitions to her: she prays for us” (CCCC 2677)
- “by entrusting ourselves to her prayer we abandon ourselves to the will of God together with her” (CCC 2677)
- “Medieval piety in the West developed the prayer of the rosary” (CCC 2678)
- “Mary is the perfect Orans (pray-er)” (CCC 2679)
- “The witnesses...especially those whom the Church recognizes as saints...constantly care for those whom have left on the earth. Their intercession is their most exalted service to God’s plan. **We can and should ask them to intercede for us and for the whole world.**” (CCC 2683)
- “it is a holy and wholesome thought **to pray for the dead** that they may be loosed from their sins’ she offers suffrages for them” (CCC 958)
- “prayer is the raising of one’s mind and heart to God or the requesting of good things from God” (CCC 2559)
- Where is confessing to God?
- “In prayer, the pilgrim Church is associated with that of **the saints, whose intercession she asks**” (CCC 2692)
- **“it is a holy and wholesome thought to pray for the dead that they may be loosed from their sins’ she offers suffrages for them” (CCC 958)**
- “The Church encourages us to prepare ourselves for the house of death. ... **to ask the Mother of God to intercede for us** ‘at the hour of our death’ in the *Hail Mary*; and **to entrust ourselves to St. Joseph**, the patron of a happy death” (CCC 1014)
- “This teaching is also based on the practice of prayer for the dead, already mentioned in Sacred Scripture: “Therefore [Judas Maccabeus] made atonement for the dead, that they might be delivered from sin.” (CCC 1032)
- “The Christian funeral...aims at expressing efficacious communion with the deceased” (CCC 1684)
- “The Church...asks [to the Father] to purify his child of his sins and their consequences and to admit him to the Paschal fullness of the table of the Kingdom. ... by communicating the Body of Christ...by praying for him and with him.” (CCC)
- “saints...constantly care for those whom they have left on earth...their intercession is their most exalted service to God’s plan. We can and should ask them to intercede for us and for the whole world.” (CCC 2683)

- “the Church...sustains the hope of believers by proposing the saints to them as models and **intercessors**” (CCC 828)

### Scriptures to Consider:

- Deuteronomy 18:10–12 “There shall not be found among you...a medium or a necromancer or one who inquires of the dead, for whoever does these things is an abomination to the LORD. And because of these abominations the LORD your God is driving them out before you.” (ESV)
- Leviticus 19:31 “Do not turn to mediums or necromancers; do not seek them out, and so make yourselves unclean by them: I am the LORD your God.” (ESV)
- Isaiah 8:19 “And when they say to you, ‘Inquire of the mediums and the necromancers who chirp and mutter,’ **should not a people inquire of their God? Should they inquire of the dead on behalf of the living?**” (ESV)
- 1 Samuel 28:15 “Then Samuel said to Saul, “**Why have you disturbed me** by bringing me up?” Saul answered, “I am in great distress, for the Philistines are warring against me, and God has turned away from me and answers me no more, either by prophets or by dreams. Therefore I have summoned you to tell me what I shall do.” (ESV)
- 1 Chronicles 10:13–14 “So Saul died for his breach of faith. He broke faith with the LORD in that he did not keep the command of the LORD, and also [14] **He did not seek guidance from the LORD.** Therefore the LORD put him to death and turned the kingdom over to David the son of Jesse.” (ESV)
- Isaiah 45:20 “Assemble yourselves and come; draw near together, you survivors of the nations! They have no knowledge who carry about their wooden idols, and keep on praying to a god that cannot save.” (ESV)
- Hebrews 7:27 “He has no need, like those high priests, to offer sacrifices daily, first for his own sins and then for those of the people, since he did this once for all when he offered up himself.” (ESV)
- James 1:5 “If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him.” (ESV)
- Romans 8:26–27 “Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the **Spirit himself intercedes for us** with groanings too deep for words. [27] And he who searches hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.” (ESV)
- Romans 8:34 “Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us.” (ESV)

## IS IT OK TO PRAY TO ANGELS?

### Passages of *The Catechism of the Catholic Church* to Consider:

- “the Church...invokes their [the angels] assistance in the funeral...’May the angels lead you into Paradise...she celebrates the memory of certain angels more particularly ? (St. Michael, St. Gabriel, St. Raphael, and the guardian angels” (CCC 335)
- “Beside each believer stands an angel as protector and shepherd leading him to life” (CCC 336)
- “**The Church venerates the angels** who help her on her earthly pilgrimage and protect every human being.” (CCC 352)

### Scriptures to Consider:

- NOTE: The Bible does not mention Raphael or particular “guardian” angels assigned to each believe nor does it support praying to them for assistance as prayer is an act of worship and angels refuse worship.

- Why does the book of Tobit give so much attention to angels compared with every other book of the Bible? Does that concern you about its trustworthiness? Should it?
- Revelation 22:8–9 “I, John, am the one who heard and saw these things. And when I heard and saw them, I fell down to worship at the feet of the angel who showed them to me, [9] but he said to me, “You must not do that! I am a fellow servant with you and your brothers the prophets, and with those who keep the words of this book. Worship God.” (ESV)
- Colossians 2:16–19 “Therefore let no one pass judgment on you in questions of food and drink, or with regard to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath. [17] These are a shadow of the things to come, but the substance belongs to Christ. [18] Let no one disqualify you, **insisting on asceticism and worship of angels**, going on in detail about visions, puffed up without reason by his sensuous mind, [19] and not holding fast to the Head, from whom the whole body, nourished and knit together through its joints and ligaments, grows with a growth that is from God.” (ESV)
- Hebrews 13:5 “he has said, ‘I will never leave you nor forsake you.’” (ESV)
- Romans 1:22–25 “Claiming to be wise, they became fools, [23] and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creeping things. [24] Therefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, to the dishonoring of their bodies among themselves, [25] because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and **worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator**, who is blessed forever! Amen.” (ESV)

### Questions to Consider:

- Where does the Bible describe or prescribe praying to Mary, Saints, or Angels?
- Why would we talk to angels when we have the Spirit of God within us, to whom we can speak at anytime? Is not the God the Holy Spirit more powerful than angels?
- **Is it not insulting to ignore the Holy Spirit (whose job is to intercede for us) and instead speak to created beings rather than the Creator?**
- Where does the Bible say that every believer have an individual angel assigned to them?
- How is praying to unseen spiritual beings not a form of worship?
- Where does the Bible describe the dead as praying for the living?
- Is talking to the dead (Mary and Saints) in prayer any different than necromancy? Why or why not?
- **Why does God give so many warnings about necromancy and mediums like in Isaiah 8:19?**
- **Why was Saul’s sin “that he did not seek guidance from the Lord” directly so serious? (1 Chronicles 10:13–14)**
- **When was prayer to Mary, the saints, and angels invented by the Catholic Church? Why?**