

# Anglican Prayer Beads

## *A Form of Contemplative Prayer*

Anglican Prayer Beads are a relatively new form of prayer, blending the Orthodox Jesus Prayer Rope and the Roman Catholic Rosary.

The thirty-three bead design was created by the Rev. Lynn Bauman in the mid-1980s, through the prayerful exploration and discovery of a contemplative prayer group.

*Since the earliest of times, people have used pebbles or a string of knots or beads on a cord to keep track of prayers offered to God. Virtually every major religious tradition in the world uses some form of prayer beads.*

The use of the rosary or prayer beads helps to bring us into contemplative of meditative prayer—really thinking about and being mindful of praying, of being in the presence of God—by use of mind, body, and spirit. The touching of the fingers on each successive bead is an aid in keeping our mind from wandering, and the rhythm of the prayers leads us more readily into stillness.

### **Symbolism of the Beads**

The configuration of the Anglican Prayer Beads relate contemplative prayer using the Rosary to many levels of traditional Christian symbolism. Contemplative prayer is enriched by these symbols whose purpose is always to focus and concentrate attention, allowing the one who prays to move more swiftly into the Presence of God.

The prayer beads are made up of twenty-eight beads divided into four groups of seven called weeks. In the Judeo-Christian tradition the number seven represents spiritual perfection and completion. Between each week is a single bead, called a cruciform bead as the four beads form a cross. The invitational bead between the cross and the wheel of beads brings the total to thirty-three, the number of years in Jesus' earthly life.

### **Praying with the beads**

A diagram of Anglican Prayer Beads

To begin, hold the Cross and say the prayer you have assigned to it, then move to the Invitational Bead. Then enter the circle of the prayer with the first Cruciform Bead, moving to the right, go through the first set of seven beads to the next Cruciform bead, continuing around the circle, saying the prayers for each bead.

It is suggested that you pray around the circle of the beads three times (which signifies the Trinity) in an unhurried pace, allowing the repetition to become a sort of lullaby of love and praise that enables your mind to rest and your heart to become quiet and still.

Praying through the beads three times and adding the crucifix at the beginning or the end, brings the total to one hundred, which is the total of the Orthodox Rosary. A period of silence should follow the prayer, for a time of reflection and listening. Listening is an important part of all prayer.

Begin praying the Anglican Prayer Beads by selecting the prayers you wish to use for the cross and each bead. Practice them until it is clear which prayer goes with which bead, and as far as possible commit the prayers to memory.

Find a quiet spot and allow your body and mind to become restful and still. After a time of silence, begin praying the prayer beads at an unhurried, intentional pace. Complete the circle of the beads three times.

When you have completed the round of the prayer beads, you should end with a period of silence. This silence allows you to center your being in an extended period of silence. It also invites reflection and listening after you have invoked the Name and Presence of God.

The standard Anglican set consists of the following pattern, starting with the cross, followed by the Invitatory Bead, and subsequently, the first Cruciform bead, moving to the right, through the first set of seven beads to the next Cruciform bead, continuing around the circle. He or she may conclude by saying the Lord's Prayer on the invitatory bead or a final prayer on the cross as in the examples below. The entire circle may be done thrice, which signifies the Holy Trinity.

### The Cross

In the Name of God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen.

### The Invitatory

O God make speed to save me (us),

O Lord make haste to help me (us),

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: As it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

### The Cruciforms

Holy God,

Holy Almighty,

Holy Immortal One,

Have mercy upon me (us).

### The Weeks

Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God,

Have mercy on me, a sinner.

### The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven,

hallowed be thy Name,

thy kingdom come, thy will be done,  
on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread.

And forgive us our trespasses,

as we forgive those who trespass against

And lead us not into temptation,

but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom,

and the power, and the glory,

forever and ever. Amen.

### The Cross

I bless the Lord.

Let us bless the Lord

Thanks be to God.

