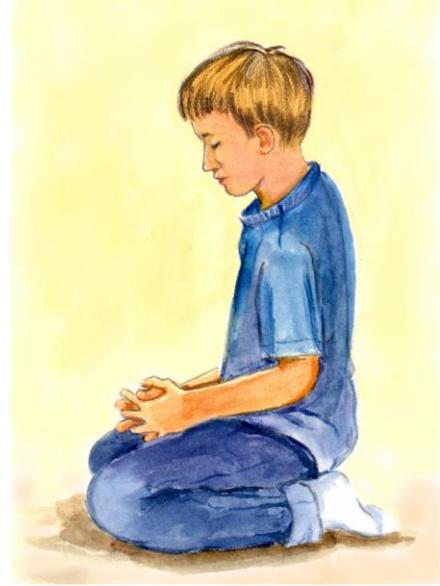


Why Do We Kneel When We Pray?

Why do we kneel, close our eyes, and fold our hands when we pray? How can these actions help open our hearts and minds to the Lord?

Kneeling While we may not be kneeling every time we pray, kneeling is linked with humility. It is an external way to remember that the Lord is the Source of all good and truth in our lives. "Humility of heart brings a person to his knees" (*Arcana Coelestia* 4215:2). When we exalt the Lord and humble ourselves, then we are more open to receiving the His gifts of truth and good (see *Arcana Coelestia* 1618).



Closing Our Eyes This helps us focus on spiritual things, shutting out the natural world around us. It's a good idea to try to picture the Lord in our minds. Think of Him as our Father in heaven, wanting to give us eternal happiness. (If our eyes are open, it is harder to focus on the Lord. And isn't it nice to have someone looking directly at you when you are talking together?) Why do we bow our heads in prayer? This is a symbol of reverence and humility.

Hands Together Putting our hands together when we pray reminds us that we should be trying to use our minds and hearts to follow the Lord. The right side of the body symbolizes acting from what is good, while the left side symbolizes acting from what is true. So folding our hands together pictures the goal of bringing good and truth together in our lives or taking what we know to be true and implementing it in our lives.

Note: There may be times when we pray to the Lord without kneeling and folding our hands. The Lord cares most about our spiritual attitude.