

□ Reading time: 2 min.

We sometimes hear the question, what is the most powerful prayer?

The wording is certainly wrong, because it leads us to think of a magical formula which has power over God, forcing him to respond positively to our request.

The more correct question would be: what is the prayer most pleasing to God?

Surely it is the one made with our whole heart, not just with our lips.

But just as so often we do not know how to pray, just as Jesus taught the apostles the "Our Father", the Church also suggests prayers. And they are not chosen at random but have their origin in salvation history, whether biblical or in the lives of the saints. And because of their high doctrinal value, some have been enriched with indulgences.

But what is an indulgence?

We read this explanation in the *Enchiridion indulgentiarum* (Handbook of Indulgences):

"An indulgence is the remission before God of the temporal penalty for sins, already remitted with regard to the sin, which the faithful, duly disposed and under certain conditions, acquire through the intervention of the Church which, as the minister of redemption, authoritatively dispenses and applies the treasure of the satisfactions of Christ and the saints."

More explicitly: it is not enough to have obtained forgiveness of sin in the Sacrament of Reconciliation, since reparation must be made for the damage done (because there is damage, even if it is not immediately visible), a reparation that is not always achieved through the penance imposed by the confessor.

This also occurs in human relationships. For example, if a journalist has written falsities regarding someone, it is not enough to acknowledge the mistake, he must make reparation, i.e. retract his error. Or if someone has physically destroyed something it is not enough to acknowledge the fault, he must repair the damage. Or if a thief has acknowledged his crime and received his sentence, it is not enough for him to repair the damage, that is, to return the stolen property. It is an act of justice which we understand very well when we are the victims.

Prayers that attract an indulgence, if they are done with faith, obtain the remission due to sins partially or even fully (they free us in part or in full from temporal punishment). St John Bosco held them in high esteem, and did not miss an opportunity to propose not only prayers but also works that gained an indulgence.

Below we offer a list of prayers that attract an indulgence, presenting their use, origin, where they are found in the *Enchiridion indulgentiarum* (Manual of Indulgences) and the source of the text. May the Lord grant that these prayers help us progress in our spiritual life.

Access the list of prayers and invocations by clicking [HERE](#).