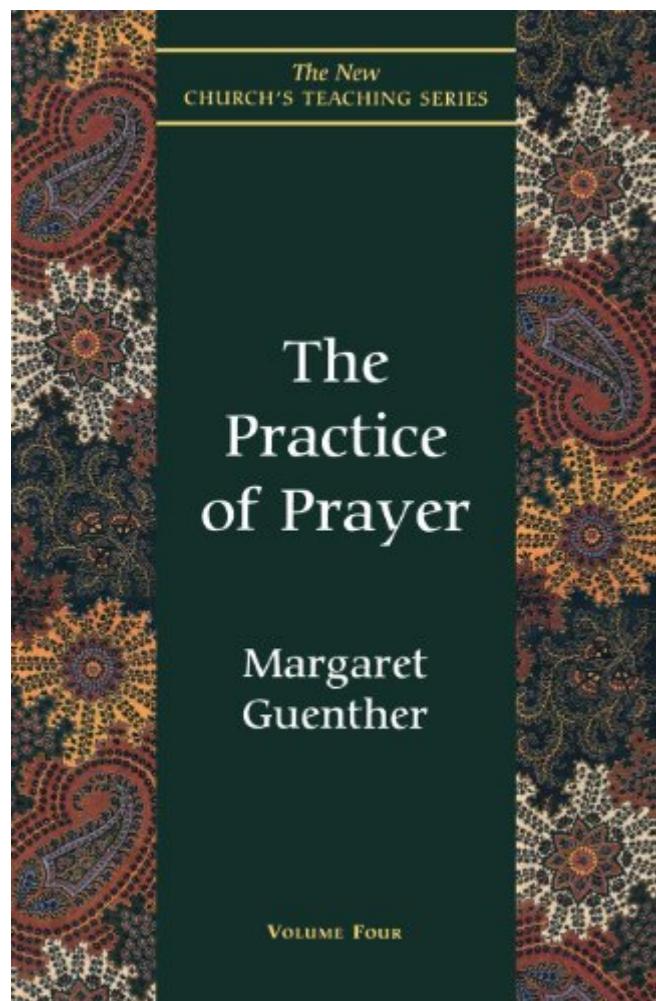


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# The Practice Of Prayer



## **Synopsis**

In this down-to-earth book on the essentials of prayer, Margaret Guenther answers many of the common questions of the spiritual life.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

The Episcopal church in the twentieth century took advantage of the general availability of publishing to good advantage, compiling through several auspices different collections and teaching series, the latest of which was only completed a few years ago. There have been 'unofficial' collections of teaching texts, such as the Anglican Studies Series by Morehouse press, put out in the 1980s, as well as an earlier teaching series. However, each generation approaches things anew; the New Church Teaching Series, published by Cowley Publications (a company operated as part of the ministry of the Society of St. John the Evangelist - SSJE - one of the religious/monastic communities in the Episcopal church, based in the Boston area) is the most recent series, and in its

thirteen volumes, explores in depth and breadth the theology, history, liturgy, ethics, mission and more of the modern Anglican vision in America. This fourth volume, 'The Practice of Prayer' by Margaret Guenther, takes a practical and spiritual look at the most basic of spiritual Christian practices, prayer. Many people, Christians and non-Christians, seek a deeper spiritual life. Many do not realise that this can be from the most basic of practices - mystics and spiritual masters of the past and present find spiritual growth in such simple practices as gardening, baking bread, singing and more. Prayer is a very basic practice, but there is a great, untapped depth to the practice. Of course, a basic question is, why do we pray? Is anyone listening? Looking at prayer as a form of conversation, Guenther explores the different ways in which the conversation partner, God, might respond to us.

This book on the practice of prayer comes from our sisters and brothers in the Episcopal Church, as part of their new Church Teaching Series. Prayer is one of the many aspects of Christian life that transcend all denominational boundaries. Professor Guenther discusses a wide variety of topics, some that we might expect, such as varieties of prayer and retreats, and yet, from some of the subtitles you may gain a sense of her approach. One chapter asks "Is Anyone Listening?" and another asks "Does what I learned in Sunday School really count?" she also tackles such subjects as finding God in the ordinary places and times of life, how prayer relates to parenting, simplicity, and those dry spells when we feel forsaken. This is a book to be read first for its sweep of content and then to be read repeatedly as a touchstone for our own prayer life. Not every chapter will meet us where we are today, but we will find ourselves at most of the places Professor Guenther discusses over a lifetime's prayer walk. Key to the book's theme is this passage: "I am writing about the practice of prayer, 'Practice' is a reassuringly down-to-earth word. We practice because we are not yet perfect, because we know that we have much to learn. To be fruitful, practice must be faithfully sustained over a long period." (Page 3). If you have ever asked yourself, "Can we really be on speaking terms with God?" this book is for you. I find this to be a beautifully written book. Professor Guenther writes conversationally, so it is as if one is having a quiet talk about prayer with one who has spent the better part of a lifetime exploring its wonders.

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