

Anglican Prayer Beads: Symbolism and Explanation

First let's begin with a quick explanation of what these Christian prayer beads are and what denominations use them. In the 1980's a group of Episcopal parishioners were contemplating the use of an ancient practice of praying with beads and they developed the simplified Anglican prayer beads. Smaller in size than the Dominican Catholic rosary, the Anglican rosary is not associated with Marian devotion, rather it is adaptable to the seasons of the Church calendar or for your own personal spiritual journey.

Why Pray With Beads?

The simple act of using Anglican Prayer Beads can deepen and transform our devotions into a richer spiritual experience. Praying with beads provides a tactile way to slow down our busy lives, becoming more focused in the moment while meditating upon our prayers.

A rosary helps us take the time to notice what we are doing, feeling and thinking at the time we are actually doing, feeling and thinking it by slowing down these processes bead by bead, or one prayer at a time. God is part of our everyday lives, paying attention to God and focusing on God's kingdom is a fundamental practice of Christian mindfulness.

Selecting Prayers for the Anglican Rosary

Using Anglican prayer beads is fairly simple, and flexible, you may design a prayer routine of your own choosing with this type of rosary. There are no set or assigned prayers, the choice is yours. Many formulated Anglican rosary prayers are pieced together from the Bible scriptures, the Episcopal Book of Common Prayer, or the Jesus Prayer.

Symbolism of Anglican Prayer Beads

You may be wondering how many beads does an Anglican rosary have? **Anglican prayer beads are composed of a cross and 33 beads, 5 large and 28 small.** Thirty-two of the beads form a circle, with one large bead and the cross outside the circle. The thirty-three beads remind us of the number of years of Jesus' life on earth before his ascension to heaven. Starting at the bottom, the Cross " " is where we begin our prayers by holding it in one hand and welcoming God's presence.

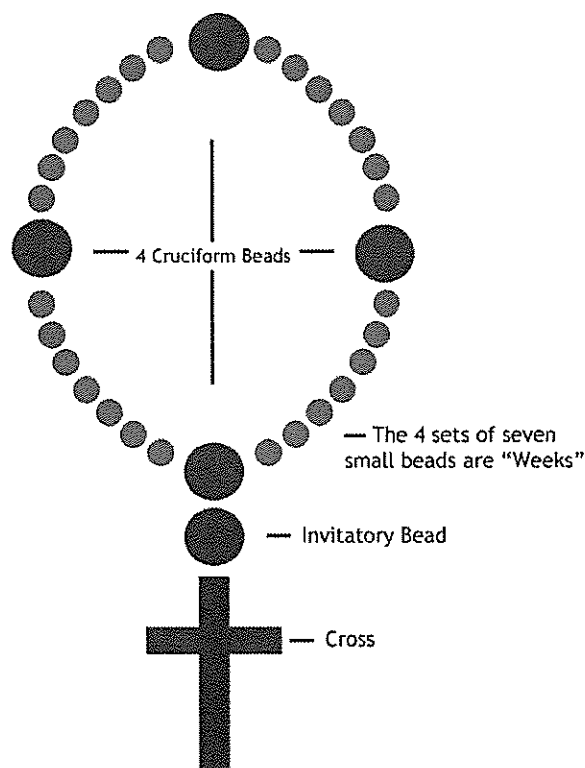
An Invitation: The large bead directly above the cross is referred to as the invitatory bead and acts as a call to worship the Lord inviting us into the circle of prayer.

Some prayer beads include an additional small bead just above the invitatory, this is often referred to as the Resurrection bead and signifies a reminder that Christ lives on.

The Invisible Cross: Inside the circle are four large beads evenly spaced between the twenty-eight smaller beads. These four are termed cruciform beads because they form an invisible cross within the loop.

Seven Days: The small beads divided into groups of seven by the cruciform are called "weeks" because they represent the seven days of the week and also recall the seven days of creation.

This diagram of Anglican Prayer Beads is a break down of the individual beads and what they correspond to.



How To Pray With Anglican Prayer Beads

Anglican prayer beads are rich with Christian symbolism, in this guide you will learn the meaning of the beads along with instructions on how to pray with the Anglican rosary including a few sample prayers to get you started.

[Unspoken Elements](#)

Step 1:

Select a favorite prayer or words that have a deep spiritual meaning for you. For this guide we have selected the Traditional Prayer. If you are just beginning to pray with beads try to keep things simple and choose something that is close to your heart or that you can easily remember.

Step 2:

Find a comfortable location to sit where you won't be disturbed for a few minutes. Allow yourself to relax and your mind to become more restful and calm, taking a few deep breaths will help clear your thoughts.

Step 3:

Begin by holding the beads in your hands. Hold the cross in one hand and acknowledge God's presence while saying your opening prayer.

✠: *O God, make speed to save us. O Lord, make haste to help us.*

Step 4:

Continuing on, allow your fingers to select the bead above the cross, commonly known as the Invitatory bead, while saying your next prayer.

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

Step 5:

Allow your hand to advance to the next large bead also known as a Cruciform bead, while meditating on your next prayer.

●: *Our Father, which 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 us. 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.*

Step 6:

Moving to the right select the first set of smaller beads while continuing with the next prayers you have chosen. Optional: When selecting the "weeks" or groups of 7 beads it is up to the user if they would like to pray through each individual bead or to pray on these 7 beads as one prayer.

•: *Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner.*

Step 7:

Continue with each bead and prayer around the circle of beads switching from the "weeks" to the "cruciforms." There are 4 larger Cruciform beads and 7 smaller beads between each Cruciform. Optional: You may choose to pray through the beads three times to signify the Trinity; Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Step 8:

Make sure you are feeling calm and going at a relaxed pace, allowing yourself to develop a comfortable rhythm as you are praying through the beads. As you arrive at the last Cruciform bead you may add a closing

prayer.

●: *The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you. The Lord lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace.*

Step 9:

As you are coming to a close at the Invitatory bead pray.

◆: *Let us bless the Lord. Thanks be to God.*

Step 10:

While holding the cross end your session.

†: *The almighty and merciful Lord, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, bless us and keep us. Amen*

When you have finished with your prayers and have advanced through the beads to your satisfaction, it would be beneficial to end with some quiet time of meditation and contemplation to fully absorb and reflect on what you have just experienced.

