

17th Sunday in Ordinary Time

July 24/25th 2010

Jesus is asked by His disciples to teach them how to pray
Are we paying attention? How do we pray? Like Jesus?
Let's look and see....

The Our Father is the prayer PAR EXCELLENCE
St. Teresa of Avila was once asked about how does one enter into contemplation?
She responded, "say the Our Father slowly, very slowly and devoutly.."

It is the key to the heart of Jesus' prayer, His relationship with the Father
This week as I meditated on the Gospel I found myself doing a sort of examination of
conscience – let me share it with you

"Hallowed by thy name"

In other words, by the way we live and speak to others and give our daily witness of our
lives

We either say to the world: I worship a Holy God
Or we offer a contradiction and lead people to think God is fake
Do we hold God's name as holy? On our lips? By our lives?
Or do we gossip and destroy other people's reputations?

Dag Hammarskjold wrote: "Hallowed be thy name, not mine."

"Your kingdom come"

Are we concerned at all about bringing God's Kingdom
Using our resources, our time, our gifts, serving others, serving the Church?
Helping others experience God's love?
We hear people say: "I don't have time" Or is it really, "I can't be bothered?"
How much time do we spend in front of the TV? And yet don't have time to pray, time
to serve? Maybe we're fooling ourselves?

"Give us this day our daily bread"

What does this line mean? Does it mean, provide for my needs?
Yes, but not primarily. Pope Benedict reminds us that our daily bread is Jesus
In other words, am I longing for more of the Lord in my life?
Am I asking to grow in trust? "Seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness and
everything else will be granted onto you..."

"Forgive us our sins.... As we forgive those who have sinned against us."

Jesus is telling us here that if we don't forgive others, then Our Heavenly Father will not
forgive us. Why does He say this? Because God Himself DIED FOR OUR SINS
And we are expected to show mercy, because God has shown us mercy. I always find it
interesting that many people who do not attend Church, do not live according to God's
laws and yet PRESUME His mercy. Like everyone's going to heaven...

There is a lack of humility I find disturbing among today's Christians
Not that God wants us to go around cowering in fear, but **DO WE RECOGNIZE WHAT A PRICE HAS BEEN PAID FOR OUR SALVATION.** The suffering and death of Jesus? The **MERCY** of God that has been shown to us?!!

I pray every day: "Lord, don't let my pride, my stubbornness, some attitude settle in me where I become resistant to Your grace... and never let me forget what Jesus did for me!"

"And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil"

The final petition brings us to our final hour on earth. This petition basically is asking the Father for the grace to guard against the power of Satan. Whether it's "temptation" or as our final hour – that we would be found in a state of grace.

Jesus really means it when He instructs us to pray: **"Deliver us from evil"**

That on our last moments, we would not fall under the spell of selfishness and or be filled with anger or unforgiveness of stubborn resistance to His grace in those last hours. That we would die with the consolation of the Sacraments.

We pray

So that we may be strong enough and free enough to forgive others

That's what we see in Jesus at His last hour – forgiving His enemies. Dying having done the Father's will. Jesus faced His hour, the hour of the cross. He was tempted too to reject it but He prayed with conviction and surrendered His will to the Father's plan "Not my will but yours Father.."

In this Prayer, we have been invited into the heart of Jesus. Only at His heart can we learn who God really is. So many settle for false gods. He has so much to give us
Will we dare to enter into His sacred heart?

Jesus finally admonishes us to be persistent. Don't give up!!! Ever!!!

People need our prayers. We need prayer. The salvation of others may well depend on whether we care enough to spend time and pray

We are reminded in the First Reading from the Book of Genesis.

Abraham intercedes with the Lord... why? Because his nephew Lot was in Sodom... and he was bound and determined to do everything he could to save those he loved.

Abraham in this almost comic moment, where he, imagine! bargains with God...

The sad truth was there were not even 10 just men in Sodom and Gomorrah! Wow!

Kind of scary if you ask me

This is a reminder to us..... Pray! Pray! Pray!!!!

There is so much in our world today that is drawing people away from God

We need to pray – pray the rosary, pray as a family, pray for our children

We all know someone in our family, at work, neighbors... who do not know the Lord

Who do not care... who are lost in sin and separated from God's mercy
We need to get on our knees and pray for them

That they too may know His mercy and love

God bless,
Fr. Dennis