

**SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME
JULY 24, 2016**

ENCOUNTERING CHRIST'S WORD



Holy Gospel of Jesus Christ according to Saint Luke 11:1-13

Jesus was praying in a certain place, and when he had finished, one of his disciples said to him, "Lord, teach us to pray just as John taught his disciples."

He said to them, "When you pray, say: Father, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come.

Give us each day our daily bread
and forgive us our sins for we ourselves forgive everyone in debt to us,
and do not subject us to the final test."

And he said to them, "Suppose one of you has a friend to whom he goes at midnight and says, 'Friend, lend me three loaves of bread, for a friend of mine has arrived at my house from a journey and I have nothing to offer him,'

and he says in reply from within, 'Do not bother me; the door has already been locked and my children and I are already in bed.

I cannot get up to give you anything.'

I tell you, if he does not get up to give him the loaves because of their friendship, he will get up to give him whatever he needs because of his persistence.

And I tell you, ask and you will receive; seek and you will find;
knock and the door will be opened to you.

For everyone who asks, receives; and the one who seeks, finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened.

What father among you
would hand his son a snake
when he asks for a fish?
Or hand him a scorpion when
he asks for an egg?
If you then, who are wicked,
know how to give good gifts to
your children,
how much more will the
Father in heaven give the
Holy Spirit to those who ask
him?"



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COMMENTARY OF THE DAY

Luke gives more attention to Jesus' teachings on prayer than any other Gospel writer. He also mentions Jesus at prayer more than the others. In this reading, from the beginning of Chapter 11 of his Gospel, Luke presents the core of Jesus' teaching on prayer. It consists of Jesus teaching a prayer to his disciples, a parable on the persistent neighbor, and assurances that God hears our prayers.

The disciples notice Jesus praying “in a certain place.” They ask him to teach them to pray just as John the Baptist had taught his disciples. Jesus teaches them a simple version of the most famous Christian prayer, the Our Father, or the Lord's Prayer. Matthew's version shows signs of being shaped by public prayer. Luke's version is probably closer to the original form that Jesus taught. Stripped of much of the language we are used to, Luke's version seems simple and direct. We pray that God's name will be



recognized as holy and that his rule over all will be established. This is followed by petitions for our needs for bread, for forgiveness, and for deliverance. Luke uses the more theological language of “sins” rather than “debts,” which is used in Matthew's version.

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Having taught his disciples a simple, daily prayer, Jesus goes on to reassure them that God answers prayers. First he tells a parable about a persistent neighbor who asks a friend for bread at midnight. The friend is already in bed and has no desire to disturb his family by opening the door. But because the neighbor is persistent, the sleeping man gets up and gives him all that he needs. *If a neighbor is willing to help us if we are persistent enough, how could God not respond to our requests?*

This teaching concludes with the reminder that if we seek, we will get a response. If a human father, with all his faults, knows how to give good gifts to his children, how much more will our heavenly Father give us? Instead of good gifts, however, Luke substitutes the word *Holy Spirit*. This foreshadows the gift of the Holy Spirit, who is central to Luke's theology and who will play an important role in the growth of the early Church after Pentecost.

The parable and the concluding teaching in this section should not lead us to think of prayer as a series of requests presented to God. Rather, as Jesus teaches in his model prayer, *prayer consists in recognizing God's holiness and his rule over all things.*

Lasallian Value in Action:
Nourish your faith...Develop a culture of prayer!



MASS SCHEDULE AT THE OUR LADY OF THE STAR CHAPEL
Monday, Wednesday, Thursday = 8:10 AM (Grade 9 Class Mass)
Tuesday = 8:15 AM (Grade 8 Batch Mass)

Sources:
dailygospel.org
www.loyolapress.com