

Chapter 15: Let Us Pray:

Can someone give me an example of how they pray. Do you pray alone, in bed, at school? Do you say grace together as a family before eating dinner together? Do you say your prayers before going to bed? The Apostles had the best person or teacher in the world to learn from, Jesus Christ. They asked Jesus how to pray, and Jesus taught them. We too can learn from what He taught.

Read paragraph 1: Now this is what is written in Matthew's gospel:

Be careful! When you do good things, don't do them in front of people to be seen by them. If you do that, then you will have no reward from your Father in heaven.

"When you give to the poor, don't be like the hypocrites. They blow trumpets before they give so that people will see them. They do that in the synagogues and on the streets. They want other people to honor them. I tell you the truth. Those hypocrites already have their full reward. So when you give to the poor, give very secretly. Don't let anyone know what you are doing. Your giving should be done in secret. Your Father can see what is done in secret, and he will reward you.

"When you pray, don't be like the hypocrites. They love to stand in the synagogues and on the street corners and pray loudly. They want people to see them pray. I tell you the truth. They already have their full reward. When you pray, you should go into your room and close the door. Then pray to your Father who cannot be seen. Your Father can see what is done in secret, and he will reward you.

And when you pray, don't be like those people who don't know God. They continue saying things that mean nothing. They think that God will hear them because of the many things they say. Don't be like them. Your Father knows the things you need before you ask him.

What did you learn from how Jesus wants us to pray? Beware of praying to be seen; do not seek praise (so be humble); be generous in prayer and in secret; say what you mean, and do not use empty words.

Now let's listen to what Luke wrote in his gospel:

One day there was a Pharisee and a tax collector. Both went to the Temple to pray. The Pharisee stood alone, away from the tax collector. When the Pharisee prayed, he said, 'God, I thank you that I am not as bad as other people. I am not like men who steal, cheat, or take part in adultery. I thank you that I am better than this tax collector. I give up eating[a] twice a week, and I give one-tenth of everything I earn!'

"The tax collector stood at a distance. When he prayed, he would not even look up to heaven. He beat on his chest because he was so sad. He said, 'God, have mercy on me. I am a sinner!' I tell you, when this man went home, he was right with God. But the Pharisee was not right with God. Everyone who makes himself great will be made humble. But everyone who makes himself humble will be made great."

Why do you think the tax collector's prayer was better? Who was humble? Who used empty words? Who wanted to be heard and seen? Who turned to God for help? Who was proud? What was the Pharisee saying? What did the tax collector say? What did Jesus say about this?

Remember that when Jesus was growing up with the Holy Family preparing for His Holy ministry, he prayed with His parents. They taught Him to pray, and they also learned from Jesus. We too can ask Saint Mary and Saint Joseph to help and teach us how to pray, and to pray with us.

Read paragraphs 2-6: Go through the prayer line by line:

Our Father, Who art in Heaven: we can call God our father because we are the children He loves. Remember we became His children in Baptism. We know that we're praying to God our father and we're not alone. God likes it when we call Him father and he wants us to talk to Him like we talk to our own father. God is our loving father and we are His special children. God is in Heaven and everywhere.

Hallowed be Thy Name: God's name is Holy- remember the 2nd Commandment- to honor God. Even though God wants us to call him our father, he is still God. It's sometimes really hard to understand who God is and what he's like. How did he

make us? How is He perfect and never makes mistakes? God just wants us to remember that we need to treat Him super special because He is God and when we pray to Him we need to be respectful.

Thy Kingdom come: when His Kingdom comes all the good people will be united to Him and His children.

Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven: God's will is what God wants of us. We want what God wants because He is all good and loving, and He always wants what is best for us. The Bible says that in heaven there will be no more crying, God will live with us, and there will be no hunger or hurt there. It also means we are praying that people would live in peace and love with one another the way it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread: here we ask for all the things that we really need- like food, a roof over our head, Holy Communion, love of our families and friends. Keep in mind that these are things that we can't live without. We don't need video games and princess dolls those are the things that we want, we need food, water and shelter. We also pray for the poor and the hungry. When we ask God for things that means we trust Him and we'll leave the decision to God.

Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us: we ask God to forgive our mistakes and sins. Forgiveness means that we are sorry for something we've done and we don't want to do it anymore. But we also need to forgive people who have done wrong to us. Sometimes others hurt us very badly, so we need to ask God to help us forgive them because it's really hard or we don't want to. If we forgive others, God will forgive us.

Lead us not into temptation: Is it sometimes tempting to do something you're not supposed to? This part of the prayer is really neat because it asks God to help us to know the right thing to do. To protect us against the evil that is in the world, and keep us away from it.

Deliver us from evil: We ask God to protect us from all evil

Amen: This means we believe this to be true

Now the priest usually ends by saying: For the kingdom, and the power, and the glory are yours forever and ever, Amen. It means that Heaven will last forever and will always be God's. God also has all the power and all the glory FOREVER! It makes me happy knowing that God will never die and he's the strongest and greatest. With God we will always win!

Anyone can read the Lord's Prayer, so it's important to think about what you're saying. When you pray "give us this day your daily bread" think about all the things you have to be thankful for and how God has given you everything you need, or things you need to ask for or pray for others. When you pray "forgive us our trespasses" ask forgiveness for those things you did wrong.

Read question 36 on page 78? Remember that God knows everything. He knows who we are, what we do, even what we are thinking. He is all knowing. So when we pray, we can pray out loud or in our hearts and mind. Prayer is lifting our hearts and minds to God. Again, we can pray out loud or silently- which is in your hearts and minds.

Read paragraph 5 on page 76: Last month we went over what types of prayers there were:

Adoration and Praise: We praise and Thank God for Who He is and tell Him how much we love Him. An example would be: I love you God and God you are so good

Thanksgiving: here we remember all of the gifts God has given us, like our families, food, love, special gifts and we take time to say thank you to God for His generosity. An example would be, Thank you God for my family and friends and for helping me on my test today.

Petition: This means to ask for. When we petition God, we ask for something. We can pray for things we need or want. God will give them to us if He sees that they are for our good. An example would be: Dear God, if it is Your will, please help me study for my test.

Intercession: this means to ask in the place of someone else. Here, we can pray for other people and their needs. The saints can intercede for us. An example of Intercession prayer would be: Dear God, please help my sick grandmother/father get better.

When we sing a prayer, it is like praying twice, once with the words in the prayer, and also with the music. When we go to mass it is the perfect prayer as it has all four types of prayer.

Read the rest of the chapter:

Now this is what Luke wrote about asking God for help:

Then Jesus said to them, "Suppose one of you went to your friend's house at midnight and said to him, 'A friend of mine has come into town to visit me. But I have nothing for him to eat. Please loan me three loaves of bread.' Your friend inside the house answers, 'Don't bother me! The door is already locked. My children and I are in bed. I cannot get up and give you the bread now.' I tell you, maybe friendship is not enough to make him get up to give you the bread. But he will surely get up to give you what you need if you continue to ask. So I tell you, continue to ask, and God will give to you. Continue to search, and you will find. Continue to knock, and the door will open for you.

Is God like the friend? Yes, if we knock, He will open the door for us. There is another story in the bible where it says if a child asks his father for a fish, would he give them a snake? Or if you asked your father for an egg, would he give you a scorpion? No...God is good, and even more loving than our own earthly fathers, so He will give us what we need with perfect generosity and love.

Does God hear all our prayers? Yes. Does He answer all our prayers? Yes. Do we always get the answers we like- not always. Sometimes the answers to prayers is no or not now. Sometimes it is yes, but God always answers according to His will and out of total love for us. God knows more than we do, and He knows what is best for us. Sometimes we ask for things that are not best for us, like we might ask to eat only ice cream for lunch, and although this would taste great, it would probably make us sick and not give us the nutrients we need for our bodies. The

best answer is to eat a good meal, and then maybe we can have ice cream for dessert!

What other prayers do we know?

Please practice praying the Our Father and Hail Mary.