



Daily Reflections

July 24, 2016

Scripture

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 the visitor 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?"

Our Scripture Reflection

After being asked by His disciples to "teach us how to pray...", Our Lord instructs them on the most important prayer of our tradition: The Our Father. Please note, Jesus teaches them to ask Our Loving Abba (Daddy) to give them their DAILY, not weekly or monthly or annual bread. Why? Because Our Father wants us to constantly remember that we NEED Him, we are dependent on Him.

Jesus then instructs them on the need for trust and persistence in prayer. God is not a disinterested stranger. He is like a "close neighbor" or good father who wants only the best for us. Bottom line, God listens and is faithful to us, but are we always faithful to Him?

Food for your Journey

A little boy was standing on the banks of the Mississippi River waving and shouting at a steamboat that was going by. He was beckoning the steamboat to come to shore. A stranger came by and said, "That's foolish young man. The boat will never come ashore because of your request. The captain is too busy to notice your waving and shouting." Just then the boat turned and headed for shore. The little boy grinned and said to the stranger, "The captain is my daddy." The captain of the universe is our Abba. He pays attention to our petitions because he loves us. The first words in the Lord's Prayer encourage us to believe in the affectionate intimacy of the Lord of the universe, but that doesn't mean we should take God for granted.

Years ago in Illinois, a young man with six months schooling and self-education competed in the state and national elections nine times and got defeated six times. First he ran for an office in the legislature when he was 23 and was beaten. Next he entered business with a partner but failed in that too, and spent the next seventeen years paying the debts of his worthless partner. He fell in love with a charming lady and they became engaged, but she died. The next year he had a nervous breakdown. Relying on the power of prayer, he ran for the post of Speaker (at 29), of Elector (at 31) and for a seat in Congress (at 34). He was defeated each time. He then tried to obtain an appointment to the U.S. Land Office as commissioner, but didn't succeed. He became a candidate for the Vice-Presidency and lost. Two years later he was defeated in an election to the Senate (at 46). He ran for office once more and was elected the sixteenth President of the United States in 1860 when he was 51. That man was Abraham Lincoln who put his trust in the power of persistent prayer coupled with never-fading Faith in God's goodness. It took Winston Churchill three years to get through the eighth grade, because he couldn't pass English! Ironically, he was asked many years later to give the commencement address at Oxford University. His famous speech consisted of only three words: "Never give up!"

Prayer from the Heart

Dear Jesus, as Saint Augustine once said, "You are closer to me than I am to myself." Lord, take away my doubts when You seem so distant to me. May I always remember that You are my loving Father who gave Your only Son for me. Amen.