



The Lord's Prayer has been called a summary of the Gospel.

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# The Lord's Prayer

In many parishes, meetings begin or end with the Lord's Prayer. The words of this prayer are at the core of who we are as a people of faith.

Unfortunately, because the prayer is so familiar, there can be a temptation not to pay attention to the meaning of the words.

When prayed slowly and contemplatively, the placement of the Lord's Prayer at the beginning of the Communion Rite is obvious. The prayer teaches that God desires an intimacy with those he has created that enables them to call him "Father." Since the plural pronouns *us* and *our* are used throughout, the prayer shows that our lives are interdependent with the community of believers, that our words and actions have an effect on others. Ultimately, the prayer teaches that true peace can only occur through forgiveness, surrender to God's will, and accepting that the "daily bread" we seek will be more than enough.

Jesus teaches his followers the Lord's Prayer in both Matthew's (6:9–13) and Luke's (11:2–4) accounts of the Gospel. In Matthew, he shows the crowds how to pray and in Luke, he teaches the disciples. From the early Church, the prayer has been said both in private and in liturgical worship. The *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2761, notes that Tertullian, one of the Fathers of the Church, said that the Lord's Prayer "is truly the summary of the whole gospel." The prayer is presented to those preparing for the sacraments of initiation less than two weeks before they receive the sacraments at the Easter Vigil. The *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, 147, notes, "The Lord's Prayer fills them with a deeper realization of the new spirit of adoption by which they will call God their Father, especially in the midst of the eucharistic assembly."

With those preparing for the sacraments, may we pray the Lord's Prayer not only by heart but with heart.

