



SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME – JULY 27, 2025

Genesis 18:20-32 Colossians 2:12-14 Luke 11:1-13

OUR FATHER: DIALOGUE WITH GOD

Our Father, who art in heaven.

Yes

That's not you, is it?

It is.

Oh my God!

You sound surprised.

I'm very surprised. I didn't really expect you to answer.

Oh, so that's all the faith you have in me. Anyhow, now that we've made contact, what's on your mind?

To be quite honest, I haven't given it much thought. I say the Our Father every now and then. It makes me feel good.

Oh, so that's what prayer is for – to make you feel good.

I see. Go on.

Hallowed be thy name.

Hold it! What do you mean by "hallowed?"

Good heavens, I don't know what it means.

Do you normally use words you don't understand when you're talking to people?

No

Well then, why do you do so when you are talking to me? After all, that's what prayer is – a conversation between me and you.

Good point, Lord. By the way what does the word mean?

It means "honored" or 'holy'

So, what I'm really praying for is that your name might be honored by everybody.

That's the general idea.

May I go on now?

By all means.

Thy kingdom come.

What kind of kingdom have you in mind?

I'm not sure. All I know is the world is in a mess.

What kind of world would you like to see?

I'd like to see everyone living in peace.

Do you live in peace with everyone?

Nearly everyone. However, there are a few people I'd like to strangle. There is one I would like to send to the North Pole.

But what about the trouble you cause? You are no angel, you know.

This is starting to hurt, Lord. Aren't we taking it a bit too seriously?

But you did pray for my kingdom to come. So why not begin with yourself? You do want to belong to my kingdom, don't you?

I do, but I'm not sure what it involves.

Ordinary people help to spread my kingdom by being kind, truthful, honest, just and so on. In a nutshell, by doing my will.

Your will – that's the next part of the prayer. May I go on then?

Certainly.

Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven.

"On earth" presumably means in your life too?

Of course.

Well then, what are you going to do about it?

How do you mean what am I going to do about it? Haven't I just prayed about it?

So, you have. But I repeat: What are you going to do about it?

Actually, I wasn't planning on doing anything.

Oh, so that's how it is. You pray for my will to be done. Then you sit back, fold your arms, and do sweet nothing about it. Let's be practical for a moment. When last did you put yourself out to help another person? And what about that tongue of yours?

Stop, Lord! I'm no worse than anyone else. Still, I would like to be a better person.

Good! Things are beginning to look up. Praying can be dangerous you know.

What do you mean?

If you took it seriously you could end up a changed person. Continue please.

(Looking at his watch) This is taking a lot longer than I expected. Normally I'm finished my prayers in two minutes flat.

Finished in two minutes flat! Sounds like a rushed job to me.

I'm supposed to meet someone at Lambeau Field in five minutes. Couldn't we finish another time?

So, you can't wait. A minute ago, you were praying for my will to be done. Now it's your will that must be done.

Oh well, I suppose I might as well go on. Give us this day our daily bread.

What are you praying for now?

For bread – at least that's what the prayer says, isn't it?

Yes, but bread for whom?

For myself, of course.

For yourself? You don't look undernourished to me. So, what more do you want?

Don't get me wrong, Lord. I am not complaining. I'm grateful for the many good things I have in my life. But I feel there is something missing. At times I feel very empty.

What you're experiencing is a spiritual hunger.

A spiritual hunger? I am not sure I know what you mean.

A human being has a soul as well as a body. The soul too needs food.

I see.

Let us go on with the rest of the prayer. I am very interested in the next part of it (pause) Well, aren't you going on?

I am afraid of what you will say.

Why don't you try me and see?

Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us.

What about that neighbor of yours?

What neighbor?

The one you wanted to send to the North Pole.

I knew you'd bring him up. I wish he'd mind his own business.

But what about your prayer? 'As we forgive those who trespass against us.'

Ah, Lord, be reasonable. Forgive him? I can't even bear the sight of him. Boy, have I got plans for him. When I'm finished with him, he will be sorry he ever crossed my path.

Oh, so it's back to the old business of 'an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth.' It's a good thing everyone doesn't think like you, or half the world would be going around blind and toothless.

I take it you are not going to forgive him.

Honestly, Lord, I couldn't promise you that.

And yet you expect me to forgive you. You are not going to forgive him...is that final?

That's final.

Well then, for goodness sake go off to Lambeau Field and don't be wasting my time.

Don't cut me off, Lord. Wait a minute. Are you still there, Lord?
(Pause) Look's as if I have been cut off. I wouldn't mind but I was going to say that maybe I can forgive him after all...I can...I will...Are you there, Lord?

I am.

Oh good! You had me scared for a minute. I thought you'd cut me off.

I take it that you don't like to be cut off.

You bet I don't.

Well that's exactly what you do when you don't forgive. You cut the other person off from you, and you cut yourself off from me. So, are you willing to forgive him?

I've already forgiven him.

Good. Let's go on with the prayer.

Lead us not into temptation.

You know, that one always makes me smile.

Why do you say that, Lord?

Tell me something. When did you need me, or anyone else for that matter, to take you by the hand and lead you into temptation? Do you not walk into it of your own accord and with both eyes open?

I suppose I do.

What do you mean, "I suppose I do?"

I get your point, Lord. Yes, there are times when I bring temptation on myself. But then there are times when it comes to be unbidden.

True. Temptation isn't necessarily a bad thing. It's a chance for you to prove your loyalty.

So, what should I pray for?

Pray for the strength to avoid temptations you can avoid, and to resist the ones you can't.

Sounds like good advice.

You may go on now.

Deliver us from evil.

What have you in mind?

I had a friend who was killed in a car accident. And another who died of cancer while still young.

You're not blaming me, are you?

No, of course not.

I don't want those kind of things to happen.

Yet when they happen, you hear people say, "It's the will of God."

It's not my will that tragedies should happen.

But could you not prevent them?

Let me just say this. I made the things of nature to follow the law of nature. I've got to respect that law. To people I gave the gift of free will. I've got to respect their freedom.

Then you can't guarantee me a life free of pain and struggle?

No. I couldn't do that even for my own Son. However, there is something I will do.

What is that?

I'll help you to cope with whatever evil comes.

Lord, even if I have to walk through the valley of darkness, I will fear no evil as long as you are with me.

Oh, I'll be with you alright. You can count on that.

I will. Thank you, Lord, I've finished. That's the end of my prayer.

We've had quite chat.

We certainly had.

Many people say prayers rather than pray. If in the course of our chat I've pointed out some of your faults, it's because I care about you. I want you to be a better and a happier person.

Can I go now?

You can. But just remember that where you go I go.

You're not watching me, are you?

No, silly. I'm not watching you. I'm watching over you.

Stay in touch.

I will. Well then, let's say 'Amen'.

Amen (Together)

Taken from *New Sunday & Holy Day Liturgies: Year C* by Flor McCarthy
p. 272-276

Bringing Home the Word Prayer