



Mass Parts 37/52:

Lord's Prayer

In response to the disciple's plea of "Lord, teach us to pray" (Luke 11:1), Jesus responds with the great gift of the Lord's Prayer. St. Teresa of Avila spends 15 chapters in her book *The Way of Perfection* to reflect on each part of the Lord's Prayer. While it can stand as a model for all forms of prayer, she knew of different nuns that simply prayed these exact words of the Our Father over and over again and achieved sanctity. It is all about the intention of the heart. (For those interested, there is a copy of this book in the parish office library, along with many other spiritual and religious texts).

During Mass, the priest introduces the Lord's Prayer with:

At the Savior's command and formed by divine teaching, we dare to say:

Why is it so "daring" to use these words? Because the Aramaic word for "Father" can be better translated as "Daddy." We dare to call the God who created the universe and holds it in existence: daddy. This acknowledges the deeply caring and intimate relationship with God revealed to us by Jesus.

One of the most difficult phrases we pray is the qualification to our own forgiveness. We ask for forgiveness for what we have done, but only in the same way that we forgive others what they have done to us. Quite a tall order.

There was some confusion caused by the secular media recently around Pope Francis' call for a different understanding in the translation of the Lord's Prayer. He encouraged us to understand the line "lead us not into temptation" to mean "Do not let us fall into temptation." God does not directly lead us into temptation. While we should all understand this meaning, the actual change in translation only affected the recently approved Italian translation. When the English translation of the Mass was redone in 2010, the US bishops voted to keep the traditional translation of the Lord's Prayer. The word from the Worship Office of the Diocese is that there is no plan to change the English version.

There is no immediate "Amen" prayed at the end of the Lord's Prayer at the Mass. Instead, the priest prays an "embolism" or "drop-in" prayer. It builds off the final words:

*Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil,
graciously grant peace in our days,
that by the help of your mercy,
we may be always free from sin
and safe from all distress,
as we await the blessed hope
and the coming of our Savior, Jesus Christ.*

In response to this, the congregation then prays the Doxology:

*For the kingdom,
the power and the glory are yours
now and for ever.*

You may have heard this ending attached immediately to the words of the Lord's Prayer in Protestant communities, which strikes me as odd for those that claim a "Scripture alone" ideology. This doxology is not found in Scripture attached to the Lord's Prayer. It is found in an early Church writing called "The Didache." The writings in the Didache themselves come from the liturgical history and practices of the early Church.

-Fr. Kopp

Next Week: Holding Hands during the Our Father