

## Ten After Ten Session 130: The Lord's Prayer

2759 Jesus “was praying at a certain place, and when he ceased, one of his disciples said to him, ‘Lord, teach us to pray, as John taught his disciples.’”<sup>1</sup> In response to this request the Lord entrusts to his disciples and to his Church the fundamental Christian prayer.

2761 The Lord's Prayer “is truly the summary of the whole gospel...[the Lord's Prayer] is said first, as the foundation of further desires.

2762 St. Augustine concludes: Run through all the words of the holy prayers [in Scripture], and I do not think that you will find anything in them that is not contained and included in the Lord's Prayer.

2763 The Gospel is this “Good News”...summarized in the Sermon on the Mount; the prayer to our Father is at the center of this proclamation. It is in this context that each petition bequeathed to us by the Lord is illuminated.

2764 The Sermon on the Mount is teaching for life, the Our Father is a prayer; but in both the one and the other the Spirit of the Lord gives new form to our desires, those inner movements that animate our lives. Jesus teaches us this new life by his words; he teaches us to ask for it by our prayer.

2765 The traditional expression “the Lord's Prayer” means that the prayer to our Father is taught and given to us by the Lord Jesus...On the one hand, in the words of this prayer the only Son gives us the words the Father gave him: he is the master of our prayer. On the other, as Word incarnate, he knows in his human heart the needs of his human brothers and sisters and reveals them to us: he is the model of our prayer.

2766 But Jesus does not give us a formula to repeat mechanically. As in every vocal prayer, it is through the Word of God that the Holy Spirit teaches the children of God to pray to their Father. Jesus not only gives us the words of our filial prayer; at the same time he gives us the Spirit by whom these words become in us “spirit and life.”

2767 This indivisible gift of the Lord's words and of the Holy Spirit who gives life to them in the hearts of believers has been received and lived by the Church from the beginning. The first communities prayed the Lord's Prayer three times a day.

2768 The Lord's Prayer is essentially rooted in liturgical prayer...for he did not say “my Father” who art in heaven, but “our” Father, offering petitions for the common Body.

2769 In Baptism and Confirmation, the handing on of the Lord's Prayer signifies new birth into the divine life. Since Christian prayer is our speaking to God with the very word of God, those who are “born anew... through the living and abiding word of God” learn to invoke their Father by the one Word he always hears.

2770 In the Eucharistic liturgy the Lord's Prayer appears as the prayer of the whole Church and there reveals its full meaning and efficacy...it sums up on the one hand all the petitions and

intercessions expressed in the movement of the epiclesis and, on the other, knocks at the door of the Banquet of the kingdom which sacramental communion anticipates.

2771 In the Eucharist, the Lord's Prayer also reveals the eschatological character of its petitions...as distinct from the prayers of the old covenant, rely on the mystery of salvation already accomplished, once for all, in Christ crucified and risen.

2772 The Eucharist and the Lord's Prayer look eagerly for the Lord's return, "until he comes."

2777 In the Roman liturgy, the Eucharistic assembly is invited to pray to our heavenly Father with filial boldness...When would a mortal dare call God 'Father,' if man's innermost being were not animated by power from on high?

2779 The expression God the Father had never been revealed to anyone. When Moses himself asked God who he was, he heard another name. The Father's name has been revealed to us in the Son, for the name "Son" implies the new name "Father."

2780 We can invoke God as "Father" because he is revealed to us by his Son become man and because his Spirit makes him known to us.

2781 The first phrase of the Our Father is a blessing of adoration before it is a supplication... We give him thanks for having revealed his name to us, for the gift of believing in it, and for the indwelling of his Presence in us.

2782 We can adore the Father because he has caused us to be reborn to his life by adopting us as his children in his only Son: by Baptism, he incorporates us into the Body of his Christ; through the anointing of his Spirit who flows from the head to the members, he makes us other "Christs."

2783 Thus the Lord's Prayer reveals us to ourselves at the same time that it reveals the Father to us.

2784 The free gift of adoption requires on our part continual conversion and new life. Praying to our Father should develop in us two fundamental dispositions: First, the desire to become like him: though created in his image, we are restored to his likeness by grace; and we must respond to this grace.

2785 Second, a humble and trusting heart that enables us "to turn and become like children": for it is to "little children" that the Father is revealed.