

Ten After Ten Session 133: The Seven Petitions, continued

2816 The Kingdom of God lies ahead of us. It is brought near in the Word incarnate, it is proclaimed throughout the whole Gospel, and it has come in Christ's death and Resurrection. The Kingdom of God has been coming since the Last Supper and, in the Eucharist, it is in our midst. The kingdom will come in glory when Christ hands it over to his Father.

2817 This petition is "Marana tha," the cry of the Spirit and the Bride: "Come, Lord Jesus."

2818 In the Lord's Prayer, "thy kingdom come" refers primarily to the final coming of the reign of God through Christ's return. But, far from distracting the Church from her mission in this present world, this desire commits her to it all the more strongly.

2819 The kingdom of God [is] righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. The end-time in which we live is the age of the outpouring of the Spirit. Ever since Pentecost, a decisive battle has been joined between "the flesh" and the Spirit.

2820 By a discernment according to the Spirit, Christians have to distinguish between the growth of the Reign of God and the progress of the culture and society in which they are involved. This distinction is not a separation. Man's vocation to eternal life does not suppress, but actually reinforces, his duty to put into action in this world the energies and means received from the Creator to serve justice and peace.

2821 This petition is taken up and granted in the prayer of Jesus which is present and effective in the Eucharist; it bears its fruit in new life in keeping with the Beatitudes.

2822 Our Father desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth...His commandment is "that you love one another; even as I have loved you, that you also love one another." This commandment summarizes all the others and expresses his entire will.

2823 In Christ we have also obtained an inheritance, having been destined according to the purpose of him who accomplishes all things according to his counsel and will. We ask insistently for this loving plan to be fully realized on earth as it is already in heaven.

2824 In Christ, and through his human will, the will of the Father has been perfectly fulfilled once for all...For this reason Jesus "gave himself for our sins to deliver us from the present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father.

2825 "Although he was a Son, [Jesus] learned obedience through what he suffered."¹⁰⁴ How much more reason have we sinful creatures to learn obedience—we who in him have become children of adoption. We ask our Father to unite our will to his Son's, in order to fulfill his will, his plan of salvation for the life of the world.

2826 By prayer we can discern "what is the will of God" and obtain the endurance to do it. Jesus teaches us that one enters the kingdom of heaven not by speaking words, but by doing "the will of my Father in heaven."

2827 Such is the power of the Church's prayer in the name of her Lord, above all in the Eucharist. Her prayer is also a communion of intercession with the all-holy Mother of God and all the saints who have been pleasing to the Lord because they willed his will alone.

2828 "Give us": The trust of children who look to their Father for everything is beautiful. Jesus teaches us this petition, because it glorifies our Father by acknowledging how good he is, beyond all goodness.

2829 "Give us" also expresses the covenant. We are his and he is ours, for our sake. But this "us" also recognizes him as the Father of all men and we pray to him for them all, in solidarity with their needs and sufferings.

2830 "Our bread": The Father who gives us life cannot but give us the nourishment life requires—all appropriate goods and blessings, both material and spiritual.

2831 But the presence of those who hunger because they lack bread opens up another profound meaning of this petition. The drama of hunger in the world calls Christians who pray sincerely to exercise responsibility toward their brethren, both in their personal behavior and in their solidarity with the human family.

2832 As leaven in the dough, the newness of the kingdom should make the earth "rise" by the Spirit of Christ. This must be shown by the establishment of justice in personal and social, economic and international relations, without ever forgetting that there are no just structures without people who want to be just.

2833 In the Beatitudes "poverty" is the virtue of sharing: it calls us to communicate and share both material and spiritual goods, not by coercion but out of love, so that the abundance of some may remedy the needs of others.

2834 Even when we have done our work, the food we receive is still a gift from our Father; it is good to ask him for it and to thank him, as Christian families do when saying grace at meals.

2835 This petition...also applies to another hunger from which men are perishing...There is a famine on earth, "not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the LORD." For this reason the specifically Christian sense of this fourth petition concerns the Bread of Life: The Word of God accepted in faith, the Body of Christ received in the Eucharist.

2836 "This day" is also an expression of trust taught us by the Lord, which we would never have presumed to invent. Since it refers above all to his Word and to the Body of his Son, this "today" is not only that of our mortal time, but also the "today" of God.

2837 "Daily" (*epiousios*) occurs nowhere else in the New Testament...Taken literally, it refers directly to the Bread of Life, the Body of Christ, the "medicine of immortality," without which we have no life within us...For this reason it is fitting for the Eucharistic liturgy to be celebrated each day.