

## Ten After Ten Session 124: In the Age of the Church

2623 On the day of Pentecost, the Spirit of the Promise was poured out on the disciples... The Spirit who teaches the Church and recalls for her everything that Jesus said was also to form her in the life of prayer.

2624 In the first community of Jerusalem, believers “devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread, and the prayers.” This sequence is characteristic of the Church’s prayer: founded on the apostolic faith; authenticated by charity; nourished in the Eucharist.

2625 The Holy Spirit, who thus keeps the memory of Christ alive in his Church at prayer, also leads her toward the fullness of truth and inspires new formulations expressing the unfathomable mystery of Christ at work in his Church’s life, sacraments, and mission.

2626 Blessing expresses the basic movement of Christian prayer: it is an encounter between God and man. In blessing, God’s gift and man’s acceptance of it are united in dialogue with each other. The prayer of blessing is man’s response to God’s gifts: because God blesses, the human heart can in return bless the One who is the source of every blessing.

2627 Two fundamental forms express this movement: our prayer ascends in the Holy Spirit through Christ to the Father—we bless him for having blessed us; it implores the grace of the Holy Spirit that descends through Christ from the Father—he blesses us.

2628 Adoration is the first attitude of man acknowledging that he is a creature before his Creator. It exalts the greatness of the Lord who made us and the almighty power of the Savior who sets us free from evil.

2629 By prayer of petition we express awareness of our relationship with God. We are creatures who are not our own beginning, not the masters of adversity, not our own last end. We are sinners who as Christians know that we have turned away from our Father. Our petition is already a turning back to him.

2630 The New Testament contains scarcely any prayers of lamentation, so frequent in the Old Testament. In the risen Christ the Church’s petition is buoyed by hope, even if we still wait in a state of expectation and must be converted anew every day.

2631 The first movement of the prayer of petition is asking forgiveness, like the tax collector in the parable: “God, be merciful to me a sinner!” It is a prerequisite for righteous and pure prayer...for both the Eucharistic liturgy and personal prayer.

2632 Christian petition is centered on the desire and search for the Kingdom to come, in keeping with the teaching of Christ...By prayer every baptized person works for the coming of the Kingdom.

2633 When we share in God’s saving love, we understand that every need can become the object of petition. Christ, who assumed all things in order to redeem all things, is glorified by what we ask the Father in his name.

2634 Intercession is a prayer of petition which leads us to pray as Jesus did. He is the one intercessor with the Father on behalf of all men, especially sinners.

2635 Since Abraham, intercession—asking on behalf of another—has been characteristic of a heart attuned to God’s mercy. In the age of the Church, Christian intercession participates in Christ’s, as an expression of the communion of saints.

2636 The first Christian communities lived this form of fellowship intensely...The intercession of Christians recognizes no boundaries: “for all men, for kings and all who are in high positions,” for persecutors, for the salvation of those who reject the Gospel.

2637 Thanksgiving characterizes the prayer of the Church which, in celebrating the Eucharist, reveals and becomes more fully what she is. Indeed, in the work of salvation, Christ sets creation free from sin and death to consecrate it anew and make it return to the Father, for his glory.

2638 As in the prayer of petition, every event and need can become an offering of thanksgiving ...“Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.”

2639 Praise is the form of prayer which recognizes most immediately that God is God. It lauds God for his own sake and gives him glory, quite beyond what he does, but simply because HE IS. It shares in the blessed happiness of the pure of heart who love God in faith before seeing him in glory.

2641 The first Christian communities read the Book of Psalms in a new way, singing in it the mystery of Christ. In the newness of the Spirit, they also composed hymns and canticles in the light of the unheard-of event that God accomplished in his Son: his Incarnation, his death which conquered death, his Resurrection, and Ascension to the right hand of the Father.

2642 The Apocalypse is borne along by the songs of the heavenly but also by the intercession of the “witnesses” (martyrs). The prophets and the saints, all those who were slain on earth for their witness to Jesus, the vast throng of those who, having come through the great tribulation, have gone before us into the Kingdom, all sing the praise and glory of him who sits on the throne, and of the Lamb. In communion with them, the Church on earth also sings these songs with faith in the midst of trial.

2643 The Eucharist contains and expresses all forms of prayer: it is “the pure offering” of the whole Body of Christ to the glory of God’s name and, according to the traditions of East and West, it is the “sacrifice of praise.”