

Chapter 8:

We Pray as Jesus Taught Us



Introduction

God wants what is best for all of us. Here on earth that does not always happen. People hurt one another. People sometimes lie and cheat. People are hungry and do not have homes. In Heaven, things are different. No one is hungry or sad. People do not hurt one another or lie or cheat. Heaven is where God's love rules over everyone and everything.

Both Heaven and earth are part of God's Kingdom. God wants our life on earth to be more like life in Heaven. Jesus gave us a prayer asking for God's help to make this happen!

Scripture Story: Jesus Teaches Us How to Pray

Prayer was very important to Jesus. He prayed every day, and he wanted his followers to pray every day too. One day he told them:

"This, then, is how you should pray:

'Our Father in heaven:

May your holy name be honored;
may your Kingdom come;

may your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us today the food we need.
Forgive us the wrongs we have done,
as we forgive the wrongs that others
have done to us.

Do not bring us to hard testing,
but keep us safe from the Evil One."

(Matthew 6:9-13)

Do you recognize this prayer? This prayer is called the Lord's Prayer or the Our Father. You will learn to pray it with slightly different words.

Look carefully at the words of the Our Father. First, we pray that God's name be holy. That means we are praying that everyone will believe in God and honor him. Then we pray that God's Kingdom come and his will be done. That means we are praying that all people will live as God wants us to live. Next, we pray for our daily bread, which means we are praying that everyone has enough food, and clothes, and a home. Then we ask for God's forgiveness and we promise to forgive other people. Finally, we ask God to keep

us from testing or temptation. This is asking for God's help to make good decisions and avoid sin. If you pray for these things every day, you will be praying very well!

The Our Father

The Our Father is a very important prayer because Jesus gave it to us. Christians pray it a lot. We know it by heart so that we can say it together. Here is the way we pray it today. Take time to memorize it if you need to.

Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed by thy name;
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread,
and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
Amen.

The Our Father is a good prayer to pray every day. You could pray it in the morning after you wake up, or at night before you go to bed. When will you pray it?

In the Our Father, we pray that God's Kingdom will come. God is like a loving king who wants the very best for all his people, both in Heaven and on earth. God's Kingdom is already perfect in Heaven. In Heaven there is no pain or sadness, and God's love fills everyone and everything.

God's Kingdom has begun here on earth with the coming of Jesus, but it is not complete. Jesus taught his followers how to live so that we might help God's Kingdom become real here on earth. We are like little seeds that God plants to help his Kingdom grow. The Eucharist strengthens us to do this.

God's Treasure of the Eucharist

The Our Father sums up everything that Jesus taught us. Because of this, it is the perfect prayer for the Church to pray together. We pray the Our Father at every Mass. After the Eucharistic Prayer, the priest invites the people to pray it together. Praying the Our Father prepares our hearts to receive Jesus in the Eucharist.

Things to Remember

- Jesus taught his followers to pray the Our Father. He also teaches it to us.
- Each part of the Our Father has special meaning.
- Because the Our Father is so important, Christians memorize it. This way we can pray it every day, and we can pray it together.
- We pray the Our Father at every Mass to prepare us to receive the Eucharist.