

Prayer

I. John Paul II & NMI

- A. This training in holiness calls for a Christian life distinguished above all in the art of prayer.
 1. We well know that prayer cannot be taken for granted.
 2. We have to learn to pray: as it were learning this art ever anew from the lips of the Divine Master himself, like the first disciples: "Lord, teach us to pray!" (Lk 11:1).
 3. Prayer develops that conversation with Christ which makes us his intimate friends: "Abide in me and I in you" (Jn 15:4).
 - a. This reciprocity is the very substance and soul of the Christian life, and the condition of all true pastoral life.
 - b. Wrought in us by the Holy Spirit, this reciprocity opens us, through Christ and in Christ, to contemplation of the Father's face.
 - c. Learning this Trinitarian shape of Christian prayer and living it fully, above all in the liturgy, the summit and source of the Church's life, (17)
 - d. but also in personal experience, is the secret of a truly vital Christianity.
- B. There has been a widespread demand for spirituality, which expressed itself in large part as a renewed need for prayer?
 1. We who have received the grace of believing in Christ, the revealer of the Father and the Saviour of the world, have a duty to show to what depths the relationship with Christ can lead.
 2. The great mystical tradition of the Church of both East and West ... shows how prayer can progress, as a genuine dialogue of love, to the point of rendering the person wholly possessed by the divine Beloved, vibrating at the Spirit's touch, resting filially within the Father's heart.
 3. This is the lived experience of Christ's promise: "He who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him" (Jn 14:21).
 4. It is a journey totally sustained by grace, which nonetheless demands an intense spiritual commitment and is no stranger to painful purifications (the "dark night").
 5. But it leads, in various possible ways, to the ineffable joy experienced by the mystics as "nuptial union".
 6. Yes, dear brothers and sisters, our Christian communities must become genuine "schools" of prayer,
 - a. where the meeting with Christ is expressed not just in imploring help
 - b. but also in thanksgiving, praise, adoration, contemplation, listening and ardent devotion,
 - c. until the heart truly "falls in love".
 - d. Intense prayer, yes, but it does not distract us from our commitment to history: by opening our heart to the love of God it also opens it to the love of our brothers and sisters, and makes us capable of shaping history according to God's plan (18).
- C. Call for every Christian
 1. Christians who have received the gift of a vocation to the specially consecrated life are of course called to prayer in a particular way: Of its nature, their consecration makes them more open to the experience of contemplation, and it is important that they should cultivate it with special care.
 2. But it would be wrong to think that ordinary Christians can be content with a shallow prayer that is unable to fill their whole life.
 - a. Especially in the face of the many trials to which today's world subjects faith, they would be not only mediocre Christians but "Christians at risk".

- b. They would run the insidious risk of seeing their faith progressively undermined,
 - c. and would perhaps end up succumbing to the allure of "substitutes", accepting alternative religious proposals and even indulging in far-fetched superstitions
3. It is therefore essential that education in prayer should become in some way a key-point of all pastoral planning.
 - a. How helpful it would be if not only in religious communities but also in parishes more were done to ensure an all-pervading climate of prayer.
 - b. Liturgy of the Hours
 - c. What I'm doing at St. Anthony's
 - d. Many parishes really are not characterized by an all-pervading climate of prayer.
 - e. Liturgical education
 1. With proper discernment, this would require that popular piety be given its proper place, and that people be educated especially in liturgical prayer.
 2. Perhaps it is more thinkable than we usually presume for the average day of a Christian community to combine the many forms of pastoral life and witness in the world with the celebration of the Eucharist and even the recitation of Lauds and Vespers.
 3. The experience of many committed Christian groups, also those made up largely of lay people, is proof of this.

II. What is prayer?

- A. We need an education in prayer, a training in the art of prayer. This retreat should first become a "school of prayer".
- B. That begins with an accurate understanding of the purpose of prayer.
- C. There are all types of notions about what prayer is and what prayer is for.
 1. St. Therese: For me, prayer is a surge of the heart; it is a simple look turned toward heaven, it is a cry of recognition and of love, embracing both trial and joy.
 2. St. John Damascene: "Prayer is the raising of one's mind and heart to God or the requesting of good things from God."
 3. Some have called it a conversation, a dialogue with God.
 4. Some have called it an abiding in the presence of God.
- D. The reason why there are different definitions is partly because there are different methods of prayer with slightly different emphases: meditation, vocal prayer, contemplation, liturgical prayer, etc.
- E. When it comes right down to it, what unites them all, is that prayer is a conversation, a dialogue, a communion for the sake of uniting ourselves in love with Him and with his will.
 1. It's a two-way street, in which we first say to the Lord, "Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening," and then secondly make our wishes known to him.
 2. But there's a purpose to it, so that we might become united with him, one with him, more and more in his image and likeness, by uniting our will with His divine, saving will.
 3. It's, therefore, more than a monologue directed toward the Lord.
 4. It's more than just "shooting the breeze" with Him, or, as some people have said, "wasting time with God."
 5. *It's a loving communion with Him, in which we seek Him, find him, love Him, and try to become more and more like Him who is holy.*
 - f. This is meant to occur in all the types of prayer we engage in:
 - vocal prayer,
 - the Our Father,
 - the Rosary,
 - the Mass,
 - meditative prayer,
 - contemplative prayer,

- aspirations,
- g. *as well as the various forms of prayer:*
 - praising God
 - thanking Him,
 - adoring Him,
 - petitioning Him for things for us and for others
 - begging him to forgive our sins.
- F. There would be a lot of ways to focus on this art of prayer, to learn, but I think the best would be to follow the example of the first disciples who went to Christ the Lord and asked, “Lord, teach us how to pray.”
- G. Today we will sit as we learn from the Master the importance of prayer and how to pray as God wants.
 1. I’ll begin by focusing on Jesus’ example of prayer,
 2. then discussing the actual prayers that we have recorded from him in Sacred Scripture,
 3. then by looking at the various things the Lord said about the disposition of the one who prays,
 4. and we’ll conclude by focusing on the specific prayer he taught us.

III. Jesus’ example of prayer

- A. Jesus was constantly praying. Even though as God, he had no need to pray, as 100% man, he did, just like we do. And the Gospels describe to us, on many occasions, that he prayed. Here’s just a sampling:
 1. **Matt. 14:23** And after Jesus had dismissed the crowds, he went up the mountain by himself to pray. When evening came, he was there alone.
 2. **Mark 6:46** After saying farewell to [his disciples], he went up on the mountain to pray.
 3. **Luke 6:12** Now during those days he went out to the mountain to pray; and he spent the night in prayer to God.
 4. **Luke 9:28** Now about eight days after these sayings Jesus took with him Peter and John and James, and went up on the mountain to pray.
 5. **Matt. 26:36** Then Jesus went with them to a place called Gethsemane; and he said to his disciples, “Sit here while I go over there and pray.”
 6. **Luke 11:1** He was praying in a certain place, and after he had finished, one of his disciples said to him, “Lord, teach us to pray, as John taught his disciples.”
- B. Just like the first disciples did, we, too, need to learn how to pray. We come to him saying, “Lord, teach us how to pray.”
 1. The first way he shows us is by his example. Prayer was something that Jesus always did, as these above passages make clear. He was always taking himself apart to have quiet time with His Father, and to beg for the Father’s help at the decisive moments in his life. He prayed:
 - a. before his Father's witness to him during his baptism, for 40 days in the desert.
 - b. before his Transfiguration,
 - c. before his own fulfillment of the Father's plan of love by his Passion.
 - d. before his election and call of the Twelve,
 - e. before Peter's confession of him as "the Christ of God,"
 - f. before his healing of Lazarus
 - g. that the faith of the chief of the Apostles may not fail when tempted.
 2. Jesus' prayer before the events of salvation that the Father has asked him to fulfill is a humble and trusting commitment of his human will to the loving will of the Father.
 3. Jesus says to us here, as he does in many other circumstances, “follow me!”
 4. Jesus needed to learn how to pray according to his human nature:
 - a. He learned from his mother, who treasured in her heart the great things the Almighty has done.
 - b. He learned from his people, in the synagogue and at the Temple.

- c. He learned to pray from God, a secret source, who told him to be in His Father's house at 12. Prayer is revealed by him as filial. Father awaits the prayer of his children.
5. Jesus was faithful to prayer, even spending all night in vigils.
6. Insofar as he fully reveals man to himself, we realize the great need for us to pray.
7. The drama of prayer is fully revealed in Word made flesh dwelling among us.

IV. Contemplating Jesus praying

- A. For the most part, we know that Jesus prayed, but we don't know the content of those prayers.
- B. We can presume that much of his prayer was ineffable, incapable of being expressed in words, a dialogue of love.
- C. We read that sometimes his prayers would take the form of sighs:
 1. **Mark 7:34** Then looking up to heaven, he sighed and said to him, "Ephphatha," that is, "Be opened."
 2. **Mark 8:12** And he sighed deeply in his spirit and said, "Why does this generation ask for a sign? Truly I tell you, no sign will be given to this generation." (his sigh, groan)
 3. This would go along with what St. Paul had said about prayer, "groanings" of inexpressible longing.
- D. But the evangelists have preserved several explicit prayers of Christ's during his public ministry. They can teach us much about what prayer is. Each begins with Thanksgiving.
 1. The first comes from St. Matthew's Gospel. After Jesus had castigated the generation of those who wouldn't accept the Messiah, all those who thought they knew more than God, he prayed aloud to his Father:
 - **Matt. 11:25-26** At that time Jesus said, "I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and the intelligent and have revealed them to infants; yes, Father, for such was your gracious will.
 - Jesus confesses Father, blesses him.
 - His "Yes! Father" expresses depth of his heart and adherence to Father's pleasure, echoing mother's fiat.
 - His prayer is the loving adherence of his human heart to the mystery of the will of the Father.
 - The Son came to reveal the Father and His plan of love, but it's the humble who hear it, those who trust in the Father.
 - Jesus thanks the Father for this revelation and then invites all the humble to him.
 2. The second explicit prayer came before the healing of Lazarus, in which Jesus revealed himself as the "Resurrection and the Life." Lazarus had been dead for four days. Jesus didn't have to pray aloud, but it's as if he wanted the Father to receive all the credit. He also thanked him first:
 - **John 11:41-42** So they took away the stone. And Jesus looked upward and said, "Father, I thank you for having heard me. I knew that you always hear me, but I have said this for the sake of the crowd standing here, so that they may believe that you sent me."
 - The Father always hears his petitions. Jesus, therefore, must have been making petitions constantly.
 - Before we ask, we should thank the Father. We commit ourselves to the Giver. The Giver is more precious than the gift. He is the treasure. The gift is just added.
 3. The third prayer comes during the Last Supper. We call it the priestly prayer. In this prayer, offered to the Father on the night he was betrayed, shows the depths of Jesus' relationship with the Father. He opens up his soul in prayer. Let's listen to Jesus with fresh ears
 - **John 17:1** After Jesus had spoken these words, he looked up to heaven and said,

- “Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son so that the Son may glorify you, 2 since you have given him authority over all people, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him.
- 3 And this is eternal life, that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent. 4 I glorified you on earth by finishing the work that you gave me to do.
- 5 So now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had in your presence before the world existed. 6 “I have made your name known to those whom you gave me from the world. They were yours, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word. 7 Now they know that everything you have given me is from you; 8 for the words that you gave to me I have given to them, and they have received them and know in truth that I came from you; and they have believed that you sent me.
- 9 I am asking on their behalf; I am not asking on behalf of the world, but on behalf of those whom you gave me, because they are yours. 10 All mine are yours, and yours are mine; and I have been glorified in them.
- 11 And now I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you.
- Holy Father, protect them in your name that you have given me, so that they may be one, as we are one.
- 12 While I was with them, I protected them in your name that you have given me. I guarded them, and not one of them was lost except the one destined to be lost, so that the scripture might be fulfilled. 13 But now I am coming to you, and I speak these things in the world so that they may have my joy made complete in themselves.
- 14 I have given them your word, and the world has hated them because they do not belong to the world, just as I do not belong to the world.
- 15 I am not asking you to take them out of the world, but I ask you to protect them from the evil one.
- 16 They do not belong to the world, just as I do not belong to the world.
- 17 Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth.
- 18 As you have sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world.
- 19 And for their sakes I sanctify myself, so that they also may be sanctified in truth.
- 20 “I ask not only on behalf of these, but also on behalf of those who will believe in me through their word, 21 that they may all be one. As you, Father, are in me and I am in you, may they also be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me.
- 22 The glory that you have given me I have given them, so that they may be one, as we are one, 23 I in them and you in me, that they may become completely one, so that the world may know that you have sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.
- 24 Father, I desire that those also, whom you have given me, may be with me where I am, to see my glory, which you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world.
- 25 “Righteous Father, the world does not know you, but I know you; and these know that you have sent me. 26 I made your name known to them, and I will make it known, so that the love with which you have loved me may be in them, and I in them.”

- John 18:1 After Jesus had spoken these words, he went out with his disciples across the Kidron valley to a place where there was a garden, which he and his disciples entered.
 1. Tradition calls this the “priestly prayer” of Jesus. It’s the prayer of our high priest, inseparable from his sacrifice or passover.
 2. Priestly prayer reveals ever present prayer of our High Priest and teaches us about prayer to our Father. This allows us a glimpse of his filial prayer, which we see later in Garden and on Cross.
 3. It embraces whole of economy of creation and salvation, his death and Resurrection.
 4. Everything is recapitulated in Christ’s paschal and sacrificial prayer.
 5. God and the world;
 6. the Word and the flesh;
 7. eternal life and time;
 8. the love that hands itself over and the sin that betrays it;
 9. the disciples present and those who will believe in him by their word;
 10. humiliation and glory.
 11. It is the prayer of unity.
 12. His prayer extends to the end of time, like his sacrifice.
 13. All troubles of humanity are summed up in this prayer and prayer of passion and death. Father accepts them by raising his Son. This answer brings to completion the drama of prayer in economy of creation and salvation.
 14. Jesus, to whom the Father has given all things, has given himself wholly back to the Father freely.
 15. Our high priest, who prays for us, is also the one who prays in us and the God who hears our prayer.
 16. The priestly prayer reveals the knowledge of Father’s and Son’s inseparable unity, which is the very mystery of the life of prayer.
- 4. The fourth prayer was in the Garden
 - a. In the agony of the Garden, he prayed, and one of his prayers was recorded
 - b. “My Father, if it be possible, let this cup **pass from me**; nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt.”
- 5. And during his time on the Cross, of his seven last words, three of them were short prayers:
 - a. Father, Forgive them for they know not what they do.
 - b. My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?, quoting Psalm 22, which ends on a note of great trust in God
 - c. Father, into your hands, I commend my spirit
 1. These show Jesus speaking to the Father with trust
 2. His reaffirming the Father’s will
 3. His putting everything in the Father’s hands

V. Jesus teaches us how to pray

- A. Jesus’ example of going away to a certain place in solitude, often a mountain, to pray inspires disciples to ask, “Lord, teach us to pray.”
 1. Prayer is contagious.
 2. By contemplating and hearing the Son, the master of prayer, the children learn to pray to the Father.
 3. Prayer is to do the will of God, “Thy will be done!”
- B. We have to learn to pray as it were learning this art ever anew from the lips of the Divine Master himself, like the first disciples: “Lord, teach us to pray!” (Lk 11:1). The Lord wants to teach us how to pray, but we have to show up for class! (JP II in NMI)
 1. JME: “You don’t know how to pray? Put yourself in the presence of God, and as soon as you have said, “Lord, I don’t know how to pray!” you can be sure you’ve already begun.”

C. He teaches us several things about prayer

1. By his example — When Jesus prays, he's already teaching us how to pray, the way to the Father with faith, hope and love.
2. About the Father — He takes us and progressively leads us to the Father. Jesus gives us access to the Father.
3. About the HS — who will lead us into all truth and remind us of what he has commanded us. When our prayer is united to Jesus', Father sends us HS, "another Advocate, the Spirit of Truth." In HS, Christian prayer is communion of love with Father, not only through Christ but in him. "Hitherto you have asked nothing in my name; ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full" (Jn 16:24).
4. About the proper dispositions and what not to do. In the Sermon on the Mount (Mt 5, 6), Jesus insists on:
 1. conversion of heart —
 - a. **Mt 5:20** For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.
 2. reconciliation with others —
 - a. 23 So when you are offering your gift at the altar, if you remember that your brother or sister has something against you, 24 leave your gift there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother or sister, and then come and offer your gift; 44 But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, 45 so that you may be children of your Father in heaven; for he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the righteous and on the unrighteous
 3. praying to the Father in secret —
 - a. **Mt 6:6** But whenever you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.
 4. not multiplying words,
 - a. "Lord, Lord" but doing the will of the Father! — 7 "When you are praying, do not heap up empty phrases as the Gentiles do; for they think that they will be heard because of their many words. 8 Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him; ... "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father in heaven.
 5. prayerful forgiveness —
 - a. 14 For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you; 15 but if you do not forgive others, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.
 6. purity of heart —
 - a. 21 For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. 22 "The eye is the lamp of the body. So, if your eye is healthy, your whole body will be full of light; 23 but if your eye is unhealthy, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light in you is darkness, how great is the darkness!
 7. seeking the kingdom of God above all else —
 - a. 31 Therefore do not worry, saying, 'What will we eat?' or 'What will we drink?' or 'What will we wear?' 32 For it is the Gentiles who strive for all these things; and indeed your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. 33 But strive first for the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.
 8. About praying with confidence and thanksgiving to Father:
 - a. "Whatever you ask in prayer, believe that you will receive it and you will" (Mt 21:21). All things are possible for him who believes.

9. About insistence in prayer through parables in St. Luke

- a. Importune friend (asking for food for guest) invites us to urgent prayer
“Knock and it will be opened to you.” Father will give HS to those who seek him.
 - i. **Luke 11:5** And he said to them, “Suppose one of you has a friend, and you go to him at midnight and say to him, ‘Friend, lend me three loaves of bread; 6 for a friend of mine has arrived, and I have nothing to set before him.’ 7 And he answers from within, ‘Do not bother me; the door has already been locked, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot get up and give you anything.’ 8 I tell you, even though he will not get up and give him anything because he is his friend, at least because of his persistence he will get up and give him whatever he needs. 9 “So I say to you, Ask, and it will be given you; search, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened for you. 10 For everyone who asks receives, and everyone who searches finds, and for everyone who knocks, the door will be opened.”
- b. The importune widow against the judge shows necessity of praying always and patience of faith —
 - i. **Luke 18:1** Then Jesus told them a parable about their need to pray always and not to lose heart. 2 He said, “In a certain city there was a judge who neither feared God nor had respect for people. 3 In that city there was a widow who kept coming to him and saying, ‘Grant me justice against my opponent.’ 4 For a while he refused; but later he said to himself, ‘Though I have no fear of God and no respect for anyone, 5 yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will grant her justice, so that she may not wear me out by continually coming.’” 6 And the Lord said, “Listen to what the unjust judge says. 7 And will not God grant justice to his chosen ones who cry to him day and night? Will he delay long in helping them? 8 I tell you, he will quickly grant justice to them. And yet, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?”

10. About humility, through parable of pharisee and tax collector

- a. **Luke 18:9** He also told this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous and regarded others with contempt: 10 “Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. 11 The Pharisee, standing by himself, was praying thus, ‘God, I thank you that I am not like other people: thieves, rogues, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. 12 I fast twice a week; I give a tenth of all my income.’ 13 But the tax collector, standing far off, would not even look up to heaven, but was beating his breast and saying, ‘God, be merciful to me, a sinner!’ 14 I tell you, this man went down to his home justified rather than the other; for all who exalt themselves will be humbled, but all who humble themselves will be exalted.”

11. About praying in His name.

- a. Lots of things we cannot ask in His name, according to His will. The certainty of our prayer’s being heard is founded on prayer of Jesus.
- b. **John 14:13** I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. 14 If in my name you ask me for anything, I will do it.”

VI. The Lord’s Prayer

1. Jesus summarized all of these teachings in the specific prayer he gave us when the disciples asked him to teach them how to pray. “Lord, teach us to pray, as John taught his disciples.”
2. Jesus didn’t teach us so much a formula as a method of praying. (We can see that in the two different versions of the Our Father in Luke and Matthew.)

3. The Our Father is not just a summary of Christian prayer given to us by the Lord, but a summary of the whole Gospel.
4. STA: The Lord's Prayer is the most perfect of prayers.... In it we ask, not only for all the things we can rightly desire, but also in the sequence that they should be desired. This prayer not only teaches us to ask for things, but also in what order we should desire them.
5. It's the Lord's prayer because it is taught and given to us by Jesus.
6. The Son gives us the words the Father gave him (Jn 17:7).
7. The Son also fully knows man and knows man's needs and taught us what to ask for.
8. Jesus didn't give us a formula to repeat mechanically.
9. As in every vocal prayer, the HS teaches us how to pray to the Father through Word.
10. Jesus doesn't just give us words, but gives us HS, so that we can cry "Abba, Father!"
11. Our Father teaches us to pray in common for all brethren — not "my Father."
12. Our Father was taught to catechumens only at the end of their preparation, as the Christian prayer. We pray it in baptism.
13. In Mass, the Lord's prayer is between Eucharistic prayer and communion, summing up 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.
14. The seven petitions are divided as follows:
 - a. The first three draw us toward the glory of the Father
 1. His name
 2. His kingdom
 3. His will
 - b. It's a characteristic of love to think first of the one whom we love. In none of these petitions do we mention ourselves.
 - c. Son's burning love for Father's glory becomes our own.
 - d. All three were answered in Christ's passion and resurrection, but directed now toward their fulfillment when Christ will be all in all.
15. The last four, as ways toward him, commend our wretchedness to his grace.
 - a. They go up from us and concern us from this very moment:
 - b. give us... forgive us... lead us not ... deliver us.
 - c. We ask to be fed and healed of sin;
 - d. We ask to be victorious in battle of prayer.
16. First three ask that we be strengthened in faith, filled with hope, set aflame with charity.

Our Father

1. Father
 - a. We dare to pray with filial boldness. Jesus gives us this confidence.
 - b. HS impels us to cry out "Abba!"
 - c. We know the Father through the Son. Jesus reveals Father to little children (Mt 11:25-27).
 - d. To pray Our Father is to enter into mystery He is, not our own ideas.
 - e. Jesus reveals the name of the Father and HS makes him known to us. We could not know this relationship otherwise.
 - f. When we pray to the Father, we are in communion with Him and with his Son, Jesus.
 - g. First phrase of Our Father is blessing of adoration before supplication. We give him thanks for having revealed his name to us, for the blessing of believing in it, and the indwelling of his presence in us.
 - h. He is our Father through adopting us as his children in only Son through baptism. He incorporates us into his Son's body and sends HS to make us other "Christs".
 - i. Reborn through baptism, we can say "Father," because we have begun to be a son.
 - j. The Lord's prayer reveals us to ourselves, therefore, at the same time it reveals the Father to us.

- k. Free gift of adoption requires continual conversion and new life on our part.
 - l. The desire to become like God, to become his likeness by grace. When we call God “our Father,” we ought to behave as sons of God (St. Cyprian). Must be merciful.
 - m. A trusting, humble heart that makes us turn and become like children, for it’s to children that the Father is revealed.
 - n. What would the Father not give his children, since he has already given them the gift of being his children? (St. Augustine).
2. Our
- a. We have new relationship with God. We have become “his” people and he is “our God,” just as prophets foretold.
 - b. This is completely God’s gratuitous gift.
 - c. When we pray to the Father, we adore and glorify him together with the Son and the HS.
 - d. “Our,” grammatically means a reality common to all those who, through faith in his only Son, are reborn by water and the Spirit.
 - e. Church is this new communion of God and men.
 - f. By praying “our” Father, each of baptized is praying in communion with other baptized, in communion with the Son and HS.
 - g. In spite of divisions, Our Father remains common patrimony of all Christians and an urgent summons. Pater ‘umon in Jerusalem during Jubilee year.
 - h. If we pray Our Father sincerely, we leave individualism behind and love brothers and sisters. The “our” at the beginning, like the “us” at the end, excludes no one. To pray it truthfully, our divisions and oppositions have to be overcome.
 - i. Tonight’s Gospel. Lazarus was ignored by the Rich Man. This is not worthy. When we ignore him, we ignore Christ and ignore his Father.
 - j. “Our Father” opens us to dimensions of God’s love revealed in Christ for all people. We need to be inserted in God’s mission.

Who art in heaven

- 1. This heaven is not a place, but a way of being, a state, in which God is majestic in holiness.
- 2. Heaven, the Father’s house, is the true homeland toward which we are heading and to which, already, we belong.
- 3. Our hearts are called to become heavenly, a fitting temple for the Lord.
- 4. The Father is in heaven, our homeland.
- 5. Sin has exiled us from land of covenant, but conversion enables us to return.
- 6. We are in heaven to the extent we are in Christ, hidden with him in God.
- 7. We are called ever more to be citizens of heaven.

Hallowed be thy name

- 1. God’s name is already holy, so God doesn’t have to hallow it.
- 2. It’s asking that we treat his name as holy, in praise, thanksgiving and adoration.
- 3. Asking that his name be hallowed draws us into his plan of loving kindness for fullness of time.
- 4. His name needs to be hallowed by us and in us. This is work by which God’s name is revealed — **Mt 5:16** In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.
- 5. God’s revelation of his name has helped man recover his image and likeness.
- 6. Holy means consecrated, other, qadosh. God is holy.
- 7. Israelites profaned his name among the nations (Ezek 20:9, 14, 22, 39; cf. Lev 19:2), and for this reason the prophets burned with passion for the name.
- 8. Jesus reveals fullness of name of Father, “Holy Father.” Jesus, by sanctifying his own name, reveals to us name of the Father.
- 9. God’s name is blessed when we live well, but is blasphemed when we live wickedly. (Rom. 2:24 For, as it is written, “The name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you.”)

10. Father calls us to holiness, in whole of our life. The will of God is our sanctification (1Thess4:7).
11. Both his glory and our life depend on the hallowing of his name in us and by us.
12. This first petition is therefore urgent.
13. We ask that we who were sanctified in baptism may persevere in this holiness.
14. We're asking that God's holiness be in our souls.
15. We're also asking that it be in others whom God's grace still awaits. We don't ask specifically that it be hallowed "in us," but in all (Tertullian).
16. This petition embodies all the others.
17. Like the six petitions that follow, it is fulfilled by the prayer of Christ.
18. Prayer to our Father is our prayer if prayed in name of Jesus.
19. Jesus asks, in his priestly prayer, "Holy Father, protect in your name those whom you have given me."

Thy kingdom come!

1. Basileia can be translated:
 - a. kingship
 - b. kingdom
 - c. reign
2. "Now and not yet": Kingdom of God lies ahead of us, it has been brought near by incarnate Word, it was proclaimed in Gospel, and has come in paschal mystery. It is in our midst now. It will come in glory when Christ hands it over to the Father.
3. Kingdom means Christ himself, whose coming we wish to be manifested quickly to us.
4. "Marana tha," "Come, Lord Jesus."
5. "Thy kingdom come" refers primarily to final coming of reign of God through Christ's return.
6. But this spurs on Church's mission in this world, to complete his work on earth and bring us the fullness of grace (Euch IV). His kingdom is where his will is done on earth as it is in heaven.
7. We live in the age of the outpouring of the HS. "The kingdom of God is righteousness, peace and joy in the HS" (Rom 14:17).
8. Only a pure soul, purified in action, thought and word, can boldly say, "Thy kingdom come!"
9. This petition is taken up and granted in prayer of Jesus in Eucharist.

Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven

1. Our Father desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth (1Tim 2:4). He commands us to love others as he has loved us, which expresses his whole will.
2. His will is to gather up all things in Christ, in heaven and on earth.
3. We ask insistently that this loving plan be fully realized on earth as it is in heaven.
4. Jesus said upon entering this world, "Lo, I have come to do your will, O God" (Heb 10:7; Ps 40:7). Jesus can say, "I always do what is pleasing to him" (Jn 8:29). His will is committed to Father's: "Not my will, but thine be done."
5. Although he was a Son, Jesus learned obedience through what he suffered (Heb 5:8). How much more do we need to learn obedience, we who in him have become children of adoption.
6. We ask Father to unite our will to his Son's, in order to fulfill his will, his plan of salvation for the world.
7. United with Jesus, in the power of the HS, we can surrender our will to him and decide to choose what the Son has chosen, to do what is pleasing to the Father.
8. This petition for whole earth, not just "us" or "me."
9. By prayer we can discern, "what is the will of God" and obtain the endurance to do it.
10. Jesus says that one enters the kingdom of God not by speaking words, but by doing "the will of my Father in heaven."

Give us this day our daily bread

1. "Give us" shows trust of children in Father, who makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust." The Father gives to all the living "their food in due season." (Ps 104).
2. Jesus teaches us this prayer, because it glorifies Father by acknowledging how good he is.
3. "us" signifies solidarity with all men under the Father.
4. "Our bread" — Father gives us life, but also nourishment it requires.
5. The petition is for all appropriate goods and blessings, both material and spiritual.
6. In Sermon on the Mount, Jesus insists on the filial trust that cooperates with our Father's providence. He wants to relieve us of nagging worry and preoccupation. Such is the filial surrender of the children of God.
7. St. Cyprian: To those who seek the kingdom of God and his righteousness, he has promised to give all else besides. Since everything indeed belongs to God, he who possesses God wants for nothing, if he himself is not found wanting before God.
8. Presence of those who hunger opens up another profound meaning of this petition, that of the call of Christians to exercise responsibility toward their brethren.
9. This petition of the Lord's prayer cannot be isolated from the parables of the poor man Lazarus and the Last Judgment. "I was hungry and you fed me."
10. "our" bread is the "one" loaf for the "many." The poverty of the Beatitudes calls us to share, to communicate material and spiritual goods out of love, so that the abundance of some may remedy the needs of others.
11. Pray and work (St. Benedict). Pray as if everything depended on God and work as if everything depended on you" (St. Ignatius Loyola). Even when we have worked, our food is still a gift from the Father for which we should thank in at grace.
12. Petition also refers to spiritual hunger: "Man does not live by bread alone, but ... by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.
13. Christians must make every effort "to proclaim the good news to the poor." There is a famine on earth, "not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the LORD." (Amos 8:11). Greatest spiritual poverty (Mother Teresa) is poverty of spirit.
14. 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.
15. "Epi-ousious" means super-essential, referring to Bread of Life, Christ's body.
16. "This day" is an expression of trust taught by the Lord, which we would never have invented. Today of God.
17. Daily invites us to trust each day.
18. This day is Day of the Lord, day of the feast of the Kingdom, anticipated in Eucharist, the foretaste of the kingdom to come. For this reason, it's fitting for Eucharist to be celebrated each day.
19. We pray that we may become what we receive, Christ. The Eucharist is our daily bread.
20. Christ is the "bread come down from heaven."

Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us"

1. This petition is astonishing because of the condition given.
2. Our petition will not be heard unless we have first met a strict requirement.
3. The petition looks to the future, but our response must come first.
4. We pray to him like the prodigal son, the tax collector, as sinners. This petition begins with a confession of our wretchedness and mercy. We have confidence in his desire to forgive us in His Son.
5. Concrete way for us to hallow his name.
6. God's outpouring of mercy cannot penetrate our hearts as long as we have not forgiven those who have sinned against us.
7. We cannot love the God we cannot see if we do not love the brother we do see (1Jn 4:20).

8. In refusing to forgive another, our hearts are hardened and become impervious to Father's merciful love. In forgiving others and confessing our sins, our hearts are opened to his grace.
9. This is the only petition which Jesus develops explicitly in the Sermon on the Mount:
Matt. 6:14 "For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you; 15 but if you do not forgive others, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses."
10. The parable of the merciless servant end with words, "So also my heavenly Father will do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother from your heart" (**Mt 18:35**).
11. This crucial requirement of the covenant mystery is impossible for man. But with God, all things are possible.
12. We cannot keep Lord's commandment by imitating a divine model from outside; it needs to be a participation from the depths of the heart, in holiness and mercy and love for God.
13. Only HS can help us have the same mind as was in Christ Jesus. Only here do we find the ability to forgive others as Christ forgave us (Eph 4:32). It is not in our power not to feel or to forget an offense, but the heart that offers itself to the HS turns injury into compassion and purifies the memory in transforming the hurt into intercession.
14. Christian prayer extends to the forgiveness and love of enemies, transfiguring the disciple by configuring him to Christ.
15. Forgiveness is a high point of Christian prayer; only those attuned to God's compassion can receive the gift of prayer.
16. Forgiveness bears witness in the world that love is stronger than sin.
17. Forgiveness is fundamental condition of reconciliation of children of God with Father and with one another.
18. There is no limit or measure to divine forgiveness (7x70). We are always debtors to God and are called to love one another.
19. God does not accept the sacrifice of a sower of disunion, but commands that he depart from the altar so that he may first be reconciled with his brother. God wants our peace with Him to flow to peace with others. This is our offering.

And lead us not into temptation

1. This petition goes to the root of the preceding one, for our sins result from our consenting to temptation.
2. The Greek means both "do not allow us to enter into temptation" and "do not let us yield to temptation."
 - a. Matt. 26:41 Stay awake and pray that you may not come into the time of trial; the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.
 - b. James 1:13 No one, when tempted, should say, "I am being tempted by God"; for God cannot be tempted by evil and he himself tempts no one.
3. God wants to set us free from evil.
4. This petition implores the Spirit of discernment and strength.
5. The HS makes us discern
 - a. between trials (necessary for growth of inner man) and temptation (which leads to sin and death).
 - b. between being tempted and consenting to temptation.
6. The HS helps us discern the lie of temptation, whose object appears good but whose fruit is death.
7. God does not want to impose the good, but wants free beings to choose the good. Hence there's a certain usefulness to temptation. Temptation helps us to know ourselves, discover our evil inclinations and thank God for these temptations' having been revealed to us (Origin).
8. "Lead us not into temptation" implies a decision of the heart, that our treasure and our heart will be with God and not elsewhere.
9. We cannot serve two masters.

10. The HS gives us strength: "No testing has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your strength, but with the temptation will also provide the way of escape, so that you may be able to endure it" (1Cor 10:13).
11. A victory in the battle against temptation becomes possible only through prayer.
12. Jesus vanquishes tempter through prayer, both at outset of public mission and during agony.
13. Christ unites us to his battle and agony through this prayer.
14. He urges us to be vigilant, which is "custody of the heart."
15. The HS seeks to awaken us to keep watch (Cf: 1 Cor 16:13; Col 4:2; 1 Thess 5:6; 1 Pet 5:8).
16. It asks for final perseverance: "Lo, I am coming like a thief! Blessed is he who is awake." (Rev 16:15).

But deliver us from evil

1. This last petition of the Our Father is contained in Jesus' priestly prayer: "I am not asking you to take them out of the world, but I ask you to protect them from the evil one" (Jn 17:15).
2. We're praying not just for each of us individually, but for ourselves.
3. The Lord's prayer opens us to the range of God's economy of salvation.
4. Our interdependence in the drama of sin and death is turned into solidarity in the Body of Christ, the communion of saints.
5. Evil is not an abstraction, but a person, Satan, the Evil One, the angel who opposes God.
6. He is a "murderer from the beginning, a liar and the father of lies" (Jn 8:44).
7. Through him sin and death entered world, but his definitive defeat will free all corruption from sin and death.
8. The whole world is in the power of the evil one (1Jn 5:18-19). But we are of God.
9. One who trusts in God does not dread the devil: If God is for us, who can be against us?
10. Victory over the "prince of this world" was once and for all by Christ, who freely gave himself up to death to give us his life.
11. This is the judgment on the world in which the prince of this world is cast out (Jn 12:31, Rev 12:10).
12. The devil chased after the woman, but she was preserved from sin and corruption of death (Immaculate Conception and Assumption).
13. Dragon makes war with rest of her offspring.
14. Church prays, "Come, Lord Jesus!" since his coming will deliver us from evil one.
15. When we pray to be delivered from the Evil One, we pray as well to be freed from all evils, present, past and future, of which he is the author and instigator.
16. Church brings to Father all the distress of the world.
17. In praying for deliverance from evils, she implores the precious gift of peace and of perseverance in awaiting Christ's return.
18. She anticipates in humility of faith the gathering together of everyone and everything in him, who has the keys of death and Hades.
19. "Deliver us, Lord, from every evil and grant us peace in our day. In your mercy, keep us free from sin and protect us from all anxiety, as we wait in joyful hope for the coming of our savior, Jesus Christ.

VII. Conclusion

1. The Our Father helps us to bring the whole conference to a close.
2. The Father to whom we pray, calls us to holy as he is holy, holy, holy.
3. Our sanctity is the way to sanctify and hallow his name.
4. The saints are those who long for his kingdom, here in this world and in the next.
5. The saints are those who make their will, his will, in this world and in the next.
6. He gives us each day not only our daily food, but also the great Sacrament of the Eucharist and the magnificent gift of his Word, on every syllable of which man is called to live.

7. We ask him to forgive us our sins, in the great pillar of the sacrament of confession his Son gave us on Easter Sunday evening, as we bring share that gift with others.
8. We ask him, through prayer, not to allow us to fall into temptation, but to deliver us from sin, from death, from the evil one.
9. The Lord Jesus, who knows us and loves us, taught us this prayer so that in meaning what we pray, we might come to be those saints he calls us to be, and the Church, as this school of prayer and the sacraments, trains us to be.
10. May we become men and women of that type of prayer that flows into our lives so that we might come, together, to worship our thrice holy God forever in heaven.