



Reflections from the Catechism of the Church on the Lord's Prayer: a summary of the Gospel and the foundation of our spiritual desires.

St Thomas Aquinas said the Lord's Prayer is the 'most perfect of prayers'.

On the one hand the Son gives us the words which the Father gave him.

On the other, as Word Incarnate, Jesus, knows in his human heart the needs of his human brothers and sisters.

In the Lord's Prayer we discover seven petitions which express the groanings, the deepest desires, of the present age, as we eagerly await with patience and expectation the return of the Lord, the second Coming.

It is a simple prayer built on trust, joyous assurance and humble boldness in the certainty of the love the Father has for each one of us.

Our Father

Probably one of the most extraordinary parts of this exquisite prayer is the tiny word which is overlooked – 'our'.

It brings us together, we are not alone, no-one is alone. We stand together as a community of faith, love and hope.

When we combine this with Abba, our Dad, we have a massive spiritual call to be and allow ourselves to be God's children in an unbreakable covenant of closeness and intimacy.

In our prayer, we boldly and simply ask God to keep us close as beloved children.

Being named as His children is a gift, where we may feel the warmth of His love and be confident in obtaining what we are about to ask.

We dare to call God Our Father and we promise to keep God present in prayer, sacrament, words and deeds.

Help us walk together in a pilgrimage of hope.

Who art in heaven

Heaven is not a place or a space, not a floaty cloud in the firmament but is a way of being.

It does not mean that God is distant but it does mean God is majestic.

God is not elsewhere, He transcends everything and because He transcends everything He is close to the humble and contrite of hearts.

When the Church prays 'Our Father who art in heaven' she is professing that we are the People of God who long for our heavenly dwelling, our true homeland, where we are heading.

Help us walk together in a pilgrimage of hope.

Hallowed be Thy name

Through this phrase Jesus draws us into the innermost mystery of God and into the drama of our salvation.

The holiness of God is the eternal mystery people have grappled with throughout the ages.

God is mysterious, glorious and radiant and we are made in His image and we are called to be restored into the image of our loving Creator.

The work of salvation is complete if we hold His name as hallowed (sacred) by us and in the deepest part of ourselves.

Help us walk together in a pilgrimage of hope.

Thy Kingdom come

The Kingdom of God lies ahead of us. We and all of creation are called to cry out 'Maranatha' – Come Lord Jesus!

We are called to be united with the cry of the Holy Spirit so that righteousness, peace and joy can fill our lives, hearts and world.

We are called to be people of faith and faith-in-action to create the Kingdom.

Help us walk together in a pilgrimage of hope.

Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven

This section of the prayer calls us to gather up all things of heaven and earth so that our Father's loving plan can be actualised, realised.

We ask to unite our will to the Son's in order to fulfil the plan of salvation.

Help us walk together in a pilgrimage of hope.

Give us this day our daily bread

We are the people of the sacred covenant: we are God's and God is our Father. We are called to trust in this loving relationship.

In the times past, as today, people are hungry: hungry for food and hungry for spiritual nourishment.

We cannot ignore the drama, the pain and suffering of the hungry. As children together we are called to show solidarity with our human family whether their hunger is material or spiritual.

We are called to be leaven in the dough, the Kingdom should make the earth rise by the Spirit of Christ.

We are called to establish justice in personal, social, economic and international relations without ever forgetting that there are no just structures without people who want to be just.



Feeding the hungry is the ethical imperative of the whole Church.

We are called to share the bounty of the 'bread' not out of coercion but out of love. The day of the Lord, the day of the feast of the Kingdom, anticipated in the Eucharist that is a foretaste of the Kingdom.

St Peter Chrysologues teaches us:

"The Father in heaven urges us, as children of heaven, to ask for bread of heaven. (Christ) himself is the bread who, sown in the Virgin, raised up in the flesh, kneaded in the Passion, baked in the oven of the tomb, reserved in Churches, brought to altars, furnishes the faithful each day with food from heaven."

Help us walk together in a pilgrimage of hope.

And forgive us our trespasses AS we forgive those who trespass against us

An astonishing petition!

Yes, we must look to the future but our personal response must come first.

Love is indivisible:

we cannot love the God we cannot see if we do not love the sister and brother we can see.

We are called to forgive as God forgave us. This, forgiveness, is the fundamental condition of reconciliation.

Help us walk together in a pilgrimage of hope.

And lead us not into temptation

Translating the meaning of this from Greek into English is very difficult.

"do not allow us to enter into temptation"

and "do not let us yield to temptation"

God does not want to impose good on us, He wants us to be free children. The petition suggests that there is a certain usefulness in temptation. We can use our gift of discernment to get to know ourselves better, get to know our darkest inclinations.

We are called to be vigilant people of prayer who vanquish the tempter.

Help us walk together in a pilgrimage of hope.

But deliver us from evil

This is the last petition of the prayer. It is not a petition for an individual but for 'us' – we.

We are in communion with all the People of God: past, present and future.

We pray for deliverance of the whole human family.

Evil is not an abstraction and we as the loving children of the Father ask to be delivered from all evils (inclinations towards darkness)

past, present and future

Help us walk together in a pilgrimage of hope.

For the Kingdom the power and the Glory are Yours

In this final doxology (a short hymn of praise) we praise the Kingship, Power and Glory of God. We recognise that the mystery of salvation will be brought to completion and God will be all in all.

Help us walk together in a pilgrimage of hope.

Amen – so be it!



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