

REFLECTION FOR TUESDAY OF FIRST WEEK OF LENT

Isa 55:10-11 Matt 6:7-15

The Lord's Prayer is the greatest of all Christian prayers. Properly understood, it contains a whole programme for Christian living.

Unfortunately, like all prayers, it suffers from repetition. It tends to be said hurriedly and much of its meaning is lost. We have to pray it and not merely say it. Often we say prayers rather than pray.

The Lord's prayer covers every aspect of our lives – our present needs, the forgiveness of our past sins and protection from future temptation.

Order of the prayer.

1. **"Father, may your name be held holy.."** -We give God his glory, honour and the reverence due to God first before we ask any thing for ourselves.

2. **"your kingdom come.."** – we pray for the coming of God's kingdom – a kingdom of truth and life, holiness and grace, justice, love, and peace. We have a part to play in making that Kingdom a reality.

3. **"your will be done.."** – we pray that God's will may be done on earth. 'On earth' means in our lives too. God's will may not always be the easiest thing to do, but it is always the best thing.

The second part deals with us and our needs.

4. **"Give us each day our daily bread..."** – we begin by praying for our daily bread. 'Bread' stands for all our material needs. All we really need is enough for today. When we pray for our daily food, we thereby bring the needs of the present before God.

5. **"Forgive us our sins, for we ourselves forgive each one who is in debt to us..."** – We ask for forgiveness from God and thereby bring our past into the presence of God and the grace to extend same forgiveness to others.

6. **"And do not put us to the test..."** – God does not put temptation in our path but life does. We are asking God to help us to cope with the temptation that come to us and thereby commit all the future into the hands of God.

So by this Prayer (the Lord's Prayer) we are taught to give glory and honour to God and to bring our whole life before God: the present, the past and the future before God.

Prayer and faith are closely connected. It is because we have faith that we pray. At the same time prayer sustains our faith. We need to pray, not just when we are in trouble, but at all times.

As Christians how often do we pray for others. We should not underestimate the power of our prayers for others. James 5:16 says the fervent prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective.

Let us pray:

Our Father who art in heaven.

When we are inclined to forget about you, Lord, teach us to pray.

Hallowed be thy name.

when we feel pessimistic about our lives and about the state of the world.

Thy Kingdom come.

When we have difficult decisions to make, and are tempted to take the easy way out.

Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

When we complain about little upsets and forget that millions of people are poor and hungry.

Give us this day our daily bread.

When we are worried about our sins, and find it hard to forgive those who sin against us.

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

When we are troubled by temptation.

Lead us not into temptation.

When we are finding it hard to cope.

Deliver us from evil.

When we are preoccupied with ourselves and our own glory.

For the Kingdom, the power and the glory are yours, now and for ever.

Fr Patrick