



EVANGELIUM INSTITUTE

TEACHING TRUTH - INSPIRING FAITH

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Session 6: Trusting in the Father: The Our Father, Part II.

Key themes: The last four petitions of the Our Father

1. Give us this day...
2. Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive...
3. Lead us not into temptation
4. Deliver us from evil

CCC Paragraphs: CCC 2828 - 2865

Key Scripture Verses: Matt 6: 1 – 34; Luke 11: 1 – 28; Matt 5:16, 5:45, 7:11, 7:21, 10:32-33, 15:13, 16:17, 18:10, 18:14, 18:19, 18:35, 23:9, 12:50, 24:36; Mark 5:48, 11: 25 – 26, 12:50, James 1:17

Definitions:

Devil: A fallen angel or evil spirit, especially the chief of the rebellious angels, Lucifer or Satan (Matthew 25). Adorned at his creation with sanctifying grace, he sinned by pride and along with many other angelic beings was denied the beatific vision. His abode is hell and he does not enjoy the benefits of Christ's redemption. Yet the devil remains a rational spirit, confirmed in evil, who is allowed by God to exercise some influence on living and inanimate creatures. (Ety. Greek *diabolos*, slanderer)

Evil: The privation of a good that should be present. It is the lack of a good that essentially belongs to nature; the absence of a good that is natural and due to a being. Evil is therefore the absence of what ought to be there.

Forgiveness: Pardon or remission of an offense. The Catholic Church believes that sins forgiven are actually removed from the soul (John 20) and not merely covered over by the merits of Christ. Only God can forgive sins, since he alone can restore sanctifying grace to a person who has sinned gravely and thereby lost the state of grace. God forgives sins to the truly repentant either immediately through an act of perfect contrition or mediately through a sacrament. The sacraments primarily directed to the forgiveness of sins are baptism and penance, and secondarily, under certain conditions, also the sacrament of anointing.

Temptation: Solicitation to sin, whether by persuasion or offering some pleasure. It may arise from the world, the flesh, or the devil. Temptation from the world is the attractiveness of bad example and the psychological pressure to conform. Temptations from the flesh are all the urges of concupiscence, whether carnal or spiritual, where man's fallen nature has built-in tendencies to the seven capital sins. Demonic temptations arise from instigations of the evil spirit, whose method is to encourage every form of avarice or selfishness in order to lead one to pride, and through pride to all other sins.

Suggested Reading List:

Anthony DeStefano: *Ten Prayers God Always Says Yes To* (New York: Image/Doubleday, 2007)

Anthony DeStefano: *A Traveler's Guide to Heaven* (New York: Image, 2003)

Jacques Philippe, *The Way of Trust and Love: A Retreat Guided by St. Therese of Lisieux* (New York: Scepter, 2011)

Meditation and Reflection questions

Three simple steps to prayer:

Before you begin, ask the Holy Spirit to help you in your prayer, to show you the things that God wishes for you to hear.

Step one: Read the meditation. As soon as something strikes you, stop reading.

“Meditation is only the introduction, the initiation into what should become a profound contemplative communion with the indwelling Trinity.”¹

Step two: Reflect or think about what struck you as long as it nourishes your soul. Talk to God about it and pay attention to the things He inspires within you. If your mind wanders, simply go back to the point that struck you or move on to another. God is not hindered by your distractions.

Step three: Before you conclude, pick one thing to remember or to do today based on your meditation – this is a resolution. By the resolution we turn our meditation into action and live the meditation all day. Choose something practical and concrete to remember or do through the day. It may be helpful to write down your resolution and keep it with you.

Consider underlining that strikes you, or write your own thoughts in the margins, etc.

What we are asking for with the words *our daily bread*.²

Give us this day our daily bread...

A certain Asian legend tells of a king and his son. The king bestowed upon the prince a royal endowment that would enable him to live in worthy fashion for all twelve months of the year. But the king decided that rather than give these things away all at once he would distribute them in daily allotment. In this way the king was able to see his son every day of the year and vice versa.

This legend is somewhat analogous to our relationship with God. ‘Our daily bread’ depends upon the prayers we offer each day. The fact that we ask only for today’s needs implies that we will have another encounter with our Father God tomorrow. This is the way the Father encourages us to be steadfast in saying his prayer.

The Lord taught us to ask for *bread*, that is, for everything we need to live as children of God – faith, hope, love, joy, food for the body and food for the soul, docility to the Will of God in everyday life, a heart big enough to understand other people and be of service to them... Bread is a symbol of all the many gifts that come to us from God. (Ex 23:25; Is 33:16) In the first place we ask for whatever we need in a material sense; then our request is for whatever we need for the health of our soul.

The Lord wants us to ask him for temporal goods. If their use is well-ordered, they can certainly help us to attain Heaven. We find many examples of this truth in the Old Testament. The Lord himself moves us to ask for what we require in this life. We should not forget that the first miracle worked by Jesus was to change water into wine at a wedding feast. On another occasion he fed a great crowd of people who had

¹ Thomas Dubay, *Fire Within: St. Teresa of Avila, St. John of the Cross, and the Gospel – on Prayer*, (Ignatius Press: San Francisco, 1989), 49.

² Francis Fernandez, *In Conversation with God: Daily Meditations*, vol. 5 (New York: Scepter, 2003), 227 – 228.

followed him into a deserted place.... When Jesus had brought the daughter of Jairus back to life, he asked that she be given something to eat...

When we ask for *our daily bread* we are acknowledging the fact that our entire existence depends on God. The Lord wants us to ask the Father for whatever we need. As a consequence, we are constantly reminding ourselves that we are children who depend entirely on our Father God. We can do nothing by ourselves. To pray the *Our Father* well, with devotion, is to recognize our radical poverty before the loving eyes of God. He will make sure that we have what we need each day. God will never let us down.

When we pray for our *daily bread*, the Lord wants us also to keep in mind the intentions and needs of our brothers and sisters, especially those who have been entrusted to our care and those who suffer deprivation of any kind.

The means to overcome temptation³

If we are to overcome temptation, we must have recourse to God's help. He can do all things: *In the world you have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.* (Jn 16:23) With Christ by our side, we can say: *...I can do all things in him who strengthens me.* (Phil 4:13) *...The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear?* (Ps 26:1)

God has given us the Guardian Angels to help us in times of trial and danger. *For he will give his angels charge of you to guard you in all your ways. On their hands they will bear you up, lest you dash your foot against a stone.* (Ps 90:11-12) We should seek the help of the Guardian Angels at all times, but especially when we are experiencing temptation. Our Guardian Angel is a very powerful ally and friend who is ready to assist us when we are in trouble.

We will be best prepared against temptation when we are faithful to our personal prayer, when we avoid lukewarmness, when we keep in mind the need to practice mortification. We are strong when we flee from occasions of sin. *Keep your heart with all vigilance; for from it flow the springs of life.* (Prov 4:23) When we work well with intensity and order we will avoid laziness and vice. We should always keep in mind that it is easier to resist temptation at the beginning. *This is the moment when the enemy is at the door of the soul. That is why people say: 'attend to the first signs; it is hard to cure an old wound.'* Even when the wound is 'old,' however, we can always have recourse to a remedy in the Sacrament of Penance.

We can do effective combat against temptation in the setting of spiritual direction. When we reveal our temptations, we are well along the road to overcoming them. Let us ask the help of Our Lady that we may be victorious in the trials of our interior life.

Questions for meditation & small group discussion:

Is there anything going on in your life right now that could use some prayers? How can we pray specifically? Is there anyone you are struggling to forgive? What are your thoughts after the discussion re: Forgive us our trespasses **as** we forgive?

³ Francis Fernandez, *In Conversation with God: Daily Meditations*, vol. 5 (New York: Scepter, 2003), 243 – 244.

How is your prayer life going? What does your prayer look like from day to day?

Is there anything struck you, surprised you, challenged you from today's session on the Lord's prayer?

Give us this day our daily bread... Do you have difficulty asking God for things in prayer? Why? Why not? When was time that God answered your prayer?

We can do nothing by ourselves... What does this mean to you? Is there an area in your life where this resonates as true?

Do you pray to your Guardian Angel? Have you ever experienced the help this, your God-given, and heavenly friend?

Did anything strike from the WRAP Scripture meditation?

What are some areas of your life in which you feel tempted? Weak? Helpless? How have you experience God's help in these times? When have you given in to the temptation? What did you learn from this experience?

Have you found new insight into how to pray the Our Father more intentionally? In what way?

What else is on your heart and mind after today's session on the Lord's prayer?

Is there anything that struck you from these meditations? What resonated with you? What caused you confusion? Inspired you? Touched you?

Other thoughts? Reactions? What else is on your heart and mind?

The Lord's Prayer (Luke 11: 1 - 28)

1 He was praying in a certain place, and when he ceased, one of his disciples said to him, "Lord, teach us to pray, as John taught his disciples." 2 And he said to them, "When you pray, say: "Father, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. 3 Give us each day our daily bread; 4 and forgive us our sins, for we ourselves forgive every one who is indebted to us; and lead us not into temptation." 5 And he said to them, "Which of you who has a friend will go to him at midnight and say to him, 'Friend, lend me three loaves; 6 for a friend of mine has arrived on a journey, and I have nothing to set before him'; 7 and he will answer from within, 'Do not bother me; the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot get up and give you anything'? 8 I tell you, though he will not get up and give him anything because he is his friend, yet because of his importunity he will rise and give him whatever he needs. 9 And I tell you, Ask, and it will be given you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. 10 For every one who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. 11 What father among you, if his son asks for a fish, will instead of a fish give him a serpent; 12 or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? 13 If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!" 14 Now he was casting out a demon that was dumb; when the demon had gone out, the dumb man spoke, and the people marveled. 15 But some of them said, "He casts out demons by Be-el'zebul, the prince of demons"; 16 while others, to test him, sought from him a sign from heaven. 17 But he, knowing their thoughts, said to them, "Every kingdom divided against itself is laid waste, and a divided household falls. 18 And if Satan also is divided against himself, how will his kingdom stand? For you say that I cast out demons by Be-el'zebul. 19 And if I cast out demons by Be-el'zebul, by whom do your sons cast them out? Therefore they shall be your judges. 20 But if it is by the finger of God that I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you. 21 When a strong man, fully armed, guards his own palace, his goods are in peace; 22 but when one stronger than he assails him and overcomes him, he takes away his armor in which he trusted, and divides his spoil. 23 He who is not with me is against me, and he who does not gather with me scatters. 24 "When the unclean spirit has gone out of a man, he passes through waterless places seeking rest; and finding none he says, 'I will return to my house from which I came.' 25 And when he comes he finds it swept and put in order. 26 Then he goes and brings seven other spirits more evil than himself, and they enter and dwell there; and the last state of that man becomes worse than the first." 27 As he said this, a woman in the crowd raised her voice and said to him, "Blessed is the womb that bore you, and the breasts that you sucked!" 28 But he said, "Blessed rather are those who hear the word of God and keep it!"

W.R.A.P.

WRITE

Write down the word or verse(s) that grab your attention, inspire you, bother you, or speak to your heart. (Lectio)

REFLECT

Reflect on the word or verse(s) that you have written down? What thought, word, or emotion is stirred within you? Why? What message does God have for you in this? (Meditatio)

APPLY

Apply this to your life. What is going on in your life such that this is coming to mind. Let the Lord inspire you to see how this word/verse(s) speaks into your life and circumstances in a way that makes a difference. How can you apply this message beginning today? (More Meditatio)

PRAY

Write a prayer to God, telling him of what you have experienced in this time. Try to pray from your heart about what is stirred within you. (Oratio) When you are done writing, pause, and rest in His presence, let Him love you, receive grace and strength. (Contemplatio)