

Weekly Gospel Readings

The 1st Sunday of Paone

Our Father Prayer

On this Sunday (06/11/23), the First Sunday of the Paone, the Church reads [Luke 11:1-13](#). In this reading, Christ provides instructions on how to perform true spiritual prayer through the Our Father prayer. As we begin the Apostle's Fast, we must remember that in order to serve others, we must first have a deep relationship with God through prayer. While there are many aspects of the reading we can focus on, we will break down the Lord's Prayer verse by verse in order to truly understand the words we pray so regularly.

Christ begins teaching the disciples by saying, "Our Father in heaven..." ([Luke 11:2](#)). When we pray, we must first recognize the relationship we have with God—one of an ignorant child with a loving, nurturing Father. St. Cyril of Jerusalem describes the beauty of this relationship saying, "How great is God's love for men!..... He granted even those who have gone astray from Him, and have fallen in the pit of transgressions, the forgiveness of sin, and an abundance of grace; to call Him '*Our Father in heaven.*'"

Then, Christ continues by saying, "Hallowed be Your name..." ([Luke 11:2](#)). The word *hallowed* means to make holy. Thus, in this, we are asking for the Lord's name to be made holy and exalted on Earth similar to how it is glorified in Heaven. Of course, the Lord's name is Holy without us praying for it; however, we are asking the name of the Lord to be made Holy in us and through us. As St. Cyril of Jerusalem explains, "The name of God is holy by nature, whether we say so or not... We seek to have the name of God hallowed in us, not as though it was not hallowed before in us, we who try to sanctify ourselves, by practicing the befitting works."

Christ then says, "Your kingdom come..." ([Luke 11:2](#)). By saying this, we are acknowledging that our life on this Earth is temporary and that our true goal is being with the Lord in His kingdom. St. Cyril the Great describes this part of the Lord's prayer saying, "Those who so utter, seem to wish that the Savior of the world would come again to illuminate the world." Even while we are in this world, we must remember that we will soon be with the Lord in His kingdom.

Christ then continues the prayer, "Your will be done, On earth as it is in heaven" ([Luke 11:2](#)). This part of the prayer is relatively straightforward—we are asking the Lord to reveal to us His will and allow us to subject ourselves to His will. As St. John Chrysostom writes, "Make us, O Lord, able to walk according to the heavenly life; Let us wish what You, Yourself, wish us to do."

Christ then prays saying, “Give us day by day our daily bread” ([Luke 11:3](#)). The daily bread can refer to multiple things, whether it be Christ as the Bread of Life or actual bread. For our purposes, we will contemplate daily bread as the daily needs in our lives. We are asking the Lord to provide for us our material needs and trusting Him as the Provider.

Christ then continues the prayer saying, “And forgive us our sins, For we also forgive everyone who is indebted to us...” ([Luke 11:4](#)). How can we expect God to forgive us our sins if we do not forgive others when they commit wrongdoings against us? St. Cyril of Jerusalem explains this, “The wrongdoings against us, being little and of no significance, it would be easy for us to forgive them; whereas our wrongdoings against God are big, and we have no way other than His love for men...Beware then, not to make it difficult for God— on account of the little things that happened against you— to forgive you the big things you yourself have committed.”

Christ finishes the prayer by saying, “And do not lead us into temptation, But deliver us from the evil one” ([Luke 11:4](#)). We end the Lord’s prayer by asking for Him to give us the strength to fight off the temptations of this world. Without God, it is impossible to resist all the temptations we face. However, through God’s love, mercy, and the hope He provides us, we can successfully stay away from evil. As St. Basil explains, “It is unbecoming of us, in our prayer, to seek tribulations to come over us, for Christ commands all mankind in general, to pray not to fall into temptation. But in case one does fall into it, he is committed to seek from God to give him the strength to endure it.”

As we strive to serve others during this time of the Apostle’s Fast, let us remember to keep up our practices of having a deep, personal prayer life with God. Whenever we recite the Lord’s prayer, let us contemplate the meaning of each and every section—remembering the gift of salvation the Lord has provided for us.

Sources:

- Bible, New King James Version
- Bible, English Standard Version
- Commentaries on the Gospel of St. Luke by Father Tadros Malaty