

Tuesday 1st of Lent

Gospel text (Mt 6,7-15): Jesus said to his disciples, «When you pray, do not use a lot of words, as the pagans do, for they hold that the more they say, the more chance they have of being heard. Do not be like them. Your Father knows what you need, even before you ask him.

»This, then, is how you should pray: ‘Our Father in heaven, holy be your name, your kingdom come and your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our debts just as we have forgiven those who are in debt to us. Do not bring us to the test but deliver us from the evil one’. If you forgive others their wrongs, your Father in heaven will also forgive yours. If you do not forgive others, then your Father will not forgive you either».

«When you pray, do not use a lot of words; your Father knows what you need»

Fr. Joaquim FAINÉ i Miralpech
(Tarragona, Spain)

Today, Jesus —the Son of God— teaches us how to behave like a son of God. A first aspect is our trust and the confidence we should have when we talk to him. But our Lord warns us: «When you pray, do not use a lot of words» (Mt 6:7). When we talk to our parents, we do not resort to complicate reasoning, nor to using a lot of words, but they simply ask for what they need. We should always know God will listen to us because God —who is also the Father— loves us and listens to us. In fact, to pray is not so much to inform God, but to ask him for all we need, as «Your Father knows what you need, even before you ask him» (Mt 6:8). We will not be good Christians if we do not pray, as a son cannot be a good son if he does not talk to his parents.

The Lord's Prayer is the prayer that Jesus himself taught us, and it is just a compendium of our Christian life. Each time we say the Lord's Prayer we let the

Father to take us by the hand and we ask him what we need everyday to become a better sons of God. We need not only the material bread, but —more than that— the Celestial Bread: «Let us beg we never lack the Eucharist bread». We need also to learn to forgive and to be forgiven: «To be able to receive the forgiveness God offers us, let us to address ourselves to the Father who loves us», as it is said in the Mass in the preliminary introduction to our Lord's Prayer.

During Lent, the Church is asking us to deepen in our prayers. «The prayer, our colloquy with God, is our best treasure, because it means (...) being united to him» (Saint John Crisostom). Oh Lord! I need to learn how to pray and how to draw specific benefits for my own life. Mostly to live the virtue of charity: the prayer gives me strength to live it better every day. And this is why I ask him daily to help me to forgive not only the small troubles I may have to face from others but, also, the offensive words and attitudes and, more than that, to bear no malice to my fellow men, so that I can sincerely tell them I have forgiven from the bottom of my heart those who are in debt with me. I will be able to achieve it because God's Mother will help me at all times.