Tuesday of the First Week of Lent

Gospel text (*Mt* 6:7-15): Jesus said to his disciples: “In praying, do not babble like the pagans, who think that they will be heard because of their many words. Do not be like them. Your Father knows what you need before you ask him.

This is how you are to pray: Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy Kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

If you forgive men their transgressions, your heavenly Father will forgive you. But if you do not forgive men, neither will your Father forgive your transgressions.”

“In praying, do not babble; your Father knows what you need”

Fr. Joaquim FAINÉ i Miralpech
(Tarragona, Spain)

Today, Jesus, who is the Son of God, teaches me to behave like a child of God. The first aspect is that of trust when I speak with Him. But the Lord warns us: “Do not babble j(Mt 6:7). When children talk to their parents, they do not do so with complicated reasoning, nor by saying many words, but with simplicity they ask for everything they need. I always have the confidence of being heard because God, who is Father, loves me and listens to me. In fact, praying is not informing God, but asking Him for everything I need, since “your Father knows what you need before you ask Him” (Mt 6:8). I will not be a good Christian if I do not pray, just as one cannot be a good son if he does not speak regularly with his parents.

The Lord’s Prayer is the prayer that Jesus himself taught us, and it is a summary of Christian life. Every time I pray to our Father, I let myself be led by His hand and ask Him for what I need each day to become a better child of God. I need not only physical bread, but above all, the Bread of Heaven. “Let us ask that we never lack the Bread of the Eucharist.” We also need to learn to forgive and to be forgiven: “In order to receive the forgiveness that God offers us, let us turn to the Father who loves us,” say the introductory formulas to the Lord’s Prayer at Mass.

During Lent, the Church asks me to deepen my prayer. “The highest good is prayer and conversation with

God, because it means that we are (…) in union with Him" (St. John Chrysostom). Lord, I need to learn to pray and to draw concrete consequences for my life. Above all, to live the virtue of charity: prayer gives me the strength to live it better every day. For this reason, I ask daily that you help me to forgive the little annoyances of others, to forgive offensive words and attitudes and, above all, not to hold grudges, so that I can sincerely tell you that I forgive my debtors with all my heart. I will be able to achieve this because the Mother of God will help me at all times.

Thoughts on Today's Gospel

- "For what can be a more spiritual prayer than that which was given to us by Christ, by whom also the Holy Spirit was given to us? What praying to the Father can be more truthful than that which was delivered to us by the Son who is the Truth?." (Saint Cyprian)

- "The Our Father begins with a great consolation: we are allowed to say "Father" because the Son was our brother and has revealed the Father to us; because, thanks to what Christ has done, we have once more become children of God." (Benedict XVI)

- "We can invoke God as "Father" because he is revealed to us by his Son become man and because his Spirit makes him known to us. The personal relation of the Son to the Father is something that man cannot conceive of nor the angelic powers even dimly see: and yet, the Spirit of the Son grants a participation in that very relation to us who believe that Jesus is the Christ and that we are born of God." (Catechism Of The Catholic Church, Nº 2780)