Wednesday of the Twenty-seventh Week in Ordinary Time

Gospel text (*Lk* 11:1-4): Jesus was praying in a certain place, and when he had finished, one of his disciples said to him, "Lord, teach us to pray just as John taught his disciples." He said to them, "When you pray, say: Father, hallowed be your name, your Kingdom come. Give us each day our daily bread and forgive us our sins for we ourselves forgive everyone in debt to us, and do not subject us to the final test."

"Lord, teach us to pray just as John taught his disciples"

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Today we hear one of the disciples say to Jesus, "Lord, teach us to pray just as John taught his disciples" (Lk 11:1). Jesus' answer is simple and profound: "When you pray, say: Father, hallowed be your name, your Kingdom come. Give us each day our daily bread and forgive us our sins for we ourselves forgive everyone in debt to us, and do not subject us to the final test" (Lk 11:2-4). This can be summed up in one phrase: the right disposition for Christian prayer is the attitude of a child before his father.

We see immediately that prayer, according to Jesus, is a relationship of "father and child." It's a family matter, grounded in familiarity and love. The image of God as Father speaks to us of affection and intimacy—not primarily of power and authority.

To pray as Christians means putting ourselves in the position where we see God as our Father, speaking to Him as His sons: "You write: 'To pray is to talk with God. But about what?'. About what? About Him, about yourself: joys, sorrows, successes and failures, noble ambitions, daily worries, weaknesses! And acts of thanksgiving and petitions: and Love and reparation. In a word: to get to know Him and to get to know yourself: 'to get acquainted!" (Saint Josemaría)

When children speak to their parents, they focus on one thing: to express, in words and gestures, what they carry in their hearts. We grow as men and women of prayer when our dealings with God become more intimate—like the bond of a father with his child. Jesus Himself gave us this example. He is the way.

And if you turn to the Blessed Virgin, the teacher of prayer, how much easier it becomes! In fact: "The contemplation of Christ has an incomparable model in Mary. In a unique way the face of the Son belongs

to Mary (...). No one has ever devoted himself to the contemplation of the face of Christ as faithfully as Mary." (Saint John Paul II).

Thoughts on Today's Gospel

- "You say that you don't know how to pray? Put yourself in the presence of God, and once you have said, 'Lord, I don't know how to pray!' rest assured that you have begun to do so" (Saint Josemaria Escrivá)

- "Take the Gospel, read a small fragment, imagine what happened and discuss it with Jesus. In this way you will have your look fixed on Jesus and not on the soap opera, for instance" (Francis)

- "When Jesus prays he is already teaching us how to pray... " (Catechism of the Catholic Church, nº 2607)