

# Thursday of the Twenty-seventh Week in Ordinary Time

**Gospel text (Lk 11:5-13):** Jesus said to his disciples, «Suppose one of you has a friend and goes to his house in the middle of the night and says: ‘Friend, lend me three loaves, for a friend of mine who is traveling has just arrived and I have nothing to offer him’. Maybe your friend will answer from inside: ‘Don't bother me now; the door is locked and my children and I are in bed, so I can't get up and give you anything’. But I tell you, even though he will not get up and attend to you because you are a friend, yet he will get up because you are a bother to him, and he will give you all you need.

»And so I say to you, Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and it will be opened to you. For the one who asks receives, and the one who searches finds, and to him who knocks the door will be opened. If your child asks for a fish, will you give a snake instead? And if your child asks for an egg, will you give a scorpion? Even you evil people know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more then will the Father in heaven give holy spirit to those who ask him!».

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+ Fr. Josep M<sup>a</sup> MASSANA i Mola OFM  
(Barcelona, Spain)

Today, the Gospel is a catechesis by Jesus on prayer. He solemnly asserts that the Father always listens to him: «Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and it will be opened to you» (Lk 11:9).

**At times, we may think that reality indicates this is not always the case, that it does not actually “work” in such a way. This is because we must want to pray with an attitude adequate to an effective prayer!**

**The first premise is dedication and perseverance. We must pray avoiding feeling disheartened, even if we think our prayer is being ignored, or is not given heed to, right away. This is the attitude of that inappropriate man calling on his friend's home, in the middle of the night, to request a favor. With his doggedness he will get the loaves he needs. God is the friend who listens from within to whom is persistent enough. We must believe that He will end up by giving us what we are asking, because in addition to being a friend, He is also our Father.**

**The second stipulation Jesus teaches us is confidence and filial love. God's paternity goes far beyond man's paternity, which is limited and imperfect: «Even you evil people know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more then will the Father in Heaven...!» (Lk 11:13).**

**The Third one: above all we must ask for the Holy Spirit and not only for material things. Jesus encourages us to invoke him, assuring us we shall receive it: «...much more then will Father in heaven give Holy Spirit to those who ask him!» (Lk 11:13). This petition is always listened to. It is very much like asking the grace of the prayer, as the Holy Spirit is its source and its origin.**

**The blessed fra Giles of Assisi, one of St. Francis' friars and friends, summarizes the idea of this Gospel when he says: «Pray faithfully and devotedly, because a grace God has not granted you once, He may grant to you some other time. On your part, humbly place your whole mind in God, and God will place his grace in you, as and when He pleases».**