

Seventeenth Sunday in Ordinary Time – Year C 29th July 2007

Gospel (Luke 11:1-13)

Jesus was praying in a certain place, and after he had finished, one of his disciples said to him, "Lord, teach us to pray, 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 indebted to us. And do not bring us to the time of trial.'

And Jesus said to the disciples, "Suppose one of you has a friend, and you go to him at midnight and say to him, 'Friend, lend me three loaves of bread; for a friend of mine has arrived, and I have nothing to set before him.' And your friend answers from within, 'Do not bother me; the door has already been locked, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot get up and give you anything.' I tell you, even though he will not get up and give him anything because he is his friend, at least because of his persistence he will get up and give him whatever he needs."

"So I say to you: Ask, and it will be given you; search, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened for you. For everyone who asks receives, and everyone who searches finds, and for everyone who knocks, the door will be opened. Is there anyone among you who, if your child asks for a fish, will give a snake instead of a fish? Or if the child asks for an egg, will give a scorpion? If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!"

Scripture Reflection

The readings for this Sunday invite us to stop and think about how we stay focused in our relationship with God. Prayer is at the heart of this relationship. Christian prayer keeps us balanced and leads us to an attitude of deep trust in God's presence in our lives.

Luke gives us an insight into the power of prayer and the need for us to be committed to prayer. Luke uses the short parable of the persistent friend to highlight the need to be constant and persistent in prayer not because we need to wear God down but to show us our need to trust in God's loving presence in our lives.

Luke uses a shortened version of Matthew's prayer but the elements are the same. We pray for five basic things:

1. that God's reign will be evident in our world,
2. that God's dream for creation will become a reality in our lives,
3. we ask for what we need to live honestly,
4. we pray for the courage to be authentic in our forgiveness and
5. we pray for the power to resist the temptations that could lead us from deepening our relationship with God.

Five core points that form the basis of all our prayers.

A few questions we all need to answer honestly.

- How do I keep my ordinary human relationships healthy?
- How do I keep my relationship with God healthy?
- What difference does it make to my life when I take time to keep my relationships healthy?
- Does anything need to change for me now?

Pilgrimage: a journey of unity

Pilgrimage is the way of walking in unity with God. All Christians return to the scriptures and there find the ground for their common prayer, the prayer that Jesus teaches us all, still!

We are reminded as we walk, or walk with other pilgrims that division between Christians openly contradicts the will of Christ, scandalizes the world, and damages the sacred cause of preaching the Gospel to every creature (Vatican II).

To be a pilgrim on the way is to be open to all other Christians that we meet on the way; and for that matter, to be open to receive all we meet, no matter who they are!

Pope Quote

“The Catholic Church embraces with hope the commitment to ecumenism as a duty of the Christian conscience enlightened by faith and guided by love. Here too we can apply the words of Saint Paul to the first Christians of Rome: ‘God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit’; thus our ‘hope does not disappoint us’ (Rom 5:5). This is the hope of Christian unity, which has its divine source in the Trinitarian unity of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.”

John Paul II, Ut Unim Sint, 1995



WYD Action

WYD will gather thousands of young people and adults from all over the world. People will travel by planes, trains, boats, cars, buses, bikes and anyway possible to get to the event. Once it is over, what happens to the rubbish that these thousands of people will leave behind? What impact will this sort of event have on the environment and the earth? It will be important to make sure that your WYD legacy is not a pile of rubbish or a trail of exhaust fumes.

Discuss with those in your communities ways in which WYD08 could be an environmentally friendly event. Contact your local council to find out ways to nurture your local parks or plant some trees to offset the environmental impact of WYD08.

WYD Cross and Icon

The UN declared 1985 the International Year of Young People. Recalling the special gathering of 1984, Pope John Paul II again called young people to meet with him on Palm Sunday of that year in Rome. 250,000 young people responded. To everyone’s surprise, a week later, Pope John Paul II announced that there would be an annual “World Youth Day” and in his Christmas address to the College of Cardinals, on 20 December 1985, the Pope repeated his decision that a World Youth Day should in future become an annual event:

The Lord has given his special blessings to this gathering [on Palm Sunday], so in the coming years a celebration of the World Day of Youth shall be held on Palm Sundays in collaboration with the Council for the Laity.

Taken from the WYD 2008 website: www.wyd2008.org

Ritual & Prayer

Preparation

Establish a prayer focus incorporating a doorway or gateway. On one side have emptiness or sand and on the other have symbols of life and growth (eg Green cloths, plants, bowl of fruit, candle).

Ritual

Invite the group to gather on the empty side of the doorway or gateway.

Invite the group to reflect upon and share with each other what God has given them. Read the scripture to the group gathered. Invite the group to spend time in reflection. Ask group members to walk through the doorway/gateway one at a time, they say, "I thank God for...."

Once completed, the group gathers around the prayer focus and prays the final prayer together.

Prayer

Loving God,

You open the door to each of us,
without question.

Thank you for your gracious gifts.

You encourage us to reach our potential
as followers of your word.

Thank you for opening your way to us
through scripture, and lighting the path
with your Holy Spirit.

You have given us Mary,
whose example challenges us to seek
a closer relationship with you.
Thank you for her life of faith
and devotion.

You enliven our hearts
and renew our spirits.

Thank you for your actions in our lives
and all creation.

You provide us with all we need.

Thank you for your faithfulness
and generosity towards us.

You have given us the key to the door,
in the cross of Jesus.

Thank you for loving us
even before we realise we need you.

We join with others around the world,
and those who have gone before us as
we say the words Jesus gave us,

Our Father.....

Amen

Sacred Places

Take time out from your busy life to make a sacred space where you can reflect on your life each week. This place is your sacred place in week you can come and not be disturbed while you reflect on your life in the presence of God.

- What has been revealed during this time of reflection?
- When have I experienced unity with God?
- Where have I worked towards unity with those around me?
- How can I connect with God regularly through prayer?
- How will I respond to God's call this week?

