

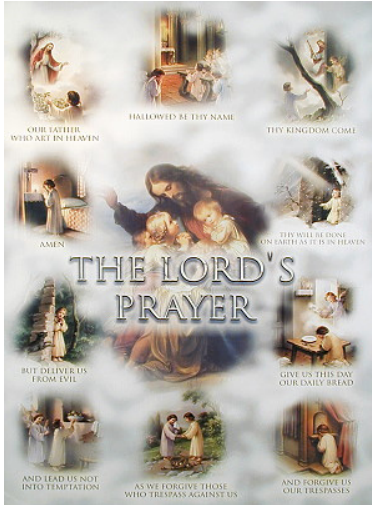
My Dear Friends in Christ,

## Meditations on the “Our Father”

For the sake of uniformity the form of the *Our Father* to be used during these meditations will be the one prayed during Holy Mass...



*“Our Father, Who art in Heaven, hallowed by 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. Amen.”*



“Have you taken Jesus as your personal Lord and Saviour?” This question is often and over used in various Christian churches, especially those mega-churches one might see on television. The very nature of this question demands separatism with the phrase “have you.” This individualistic directive flies in the face of what our Blessed Lord intended when He taught us to pray. (Matthew 6:9 & following) The Saviour chose specific words which were meant for us not only to pray but to use as guide for our everyday life. And Jesus began with the phrase “Our Father,” but today we will only concentrate on the first word “our.”

“Our” by its nature dismisses individuality. “Our” demands not only a sense of community but an understanding of group or an actual gathering. From the beginning of this prayer taught by the Son of God, Jesus Christ, we are being told to get together and worship and praise the Almighty in one community of faith. Separatism within Christianity must be an abomination to God. And since Our

Blessed Lord was raised Jewish, the possibility of Jesus intending the understanding of this prayer to be a unifying tool between the those later to be called Christian (Acts of the Apostles 11:26) and His own Hebrew people is not beyond reasoning. One can surmise as well that Jesus intended a community of faith to be created, He intended a Church to be formed. Jesus wanted us to pray together when He began the prayer spoken from heaven with the word “Our.”

“Our” also is the possessive of “we.” By beginning this most unique prayer with the possessive form of the plural pronoun, humanity is being brought into a never before dreamed of bond with God. Even when our first parents were in the Garden of Eden and they shared a remarkable intimacy with Almighty God where He was used to walk with them (Genesis 3:8), there was still that relationship of Creator and created, between Source of All Goodness and sinner, “*the man and his wife hid themselves from the LORD God among the trees of the garden.*” (ibid) Jesus has given us a deeper understanding of ourselves. Through the Incarnation, God taking on humanity – Jesus being completely divine and completely human, we have been incorporated into the very life of God. Humanity has been raised to a level of “possessing” the divine. God is “Our Father.” And because He is “ours...” “Jesus answered and said to him, “*Whoever loves Me will keep My word, and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our dwelling with him.*” (John 14:23)

Therefore, when we pray the *Our Father* we are joining ourselves to each other in this one community of faith in Saint Matthew Parish, we are joining ourselves to all other Catholics through out the world, we are joining our selves to all Christians, we are praying for the unification of all people under the mantle of Jesus the Saviour of all mankind and we are enjoying the relationship given to us by Jesus with Almighty God, our Creator, Redeemer and Sanctifier.

God love you... Father Fernan