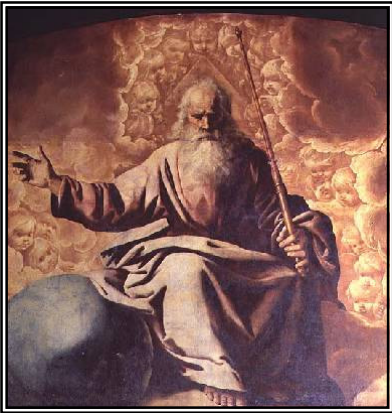
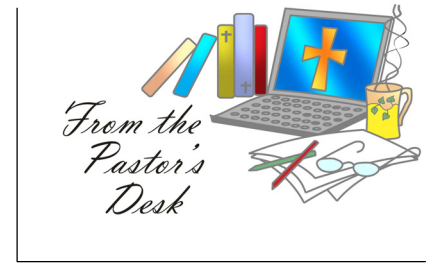


My Dear Friends in Christ,

Meditations on the “Our Father”... Part Five

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.”



One of the realities of Cardinal Hayes High School during the 1990's, and probably still is close to the same today, was that 70% of all the young men came from one parent families. Sadly, there was no father or positive father-figure in their lives. Those they had experience of were usually police officers and other authority figures. So on top of the normal teenage attitudes there was an aversion to authority or a strong male figure. Therefore, the student's introduction to Hayes was at time difficult because they had to adjust to a “male” in their lives with priests, brothers in administrative and teaching positions and other male teachers and coaches. So, when it came to discussing with the students about God the Father, their experience of father or male figures was skewed according to their daily environment.

We do the same. Often times we will hear that a daughter wants or does not want to marry a man just like her father because we transfer the concrete realities we know to the ideas and concepts that transcend. One of the most poignant scenes in the movie *Forrest Gump* was when Jennie returned as an adult to the home of her childhood. Facing the house in the background, she started to throw whatever rocks she could at the house... at her father... because of the abuse she had endured. *Forrest* commented, “Sometimes there just aren't enough rocks.” What picture of God as “Father” did she develop? What understanding of God as “Father” did the students of Hayes have? What understanding of God do the people who grew up in the Church before Vatican II have? How is that different from the post-council ideas? And with the crisis in the Church coming to light, how has the impression of God as Father and priest being called “Father” changed in the hearts and minds of so many souls?

So, as we begin to understand the prayer “The Our Father” as given us by the Saviour of the World, we have to be careful to open our hearts and minds to that which Jesus intended when He taught us how to pray.

It was said of Mother Teresa, that when she meditated on *The Our Father*, she never got passed the word “father” in her contemplation. The spiritual, physical, emotional and intellectual fullness of “father” captured her soul. Therefore, let us pray to her that through her intercession, we may come to know and love God as our father, as Jesus intended.



God love you... Father