

## A Journey towards Spiritual Stewardship, Learning to Pray...

pull out and save for Life!

If you wish to learn to play the piano, you must practice everyday. You must use the proper fingering and hold your hands in the correct position over the keys. You start out with simple pieces and then you work your way through harder ones. You probably do not sit down after your first few lessons and write your own music, you play music that others have written. Even accomplished pianists play music written by others. Because it is beautiful music, well written.

If you wish to learn to pray, you must practice everyday. You should put yourself in a peaceful frame of mind, take two deep breaths to quiet yourself and try to sit in silence for a moment. You should start out with simple prayers, the ones you have known forever: The Lord's Prayer, the Hail Mary, the Glory Be... Or perhaps some of those prayed by saints - prayer experts. But you should pray them slowly, reflecting on every word or phrase. **Do not "say your prayers", pray your prayers.** When you are focused and confident, you will find your own words to express your praise, thanksgiving and petitions to God.

## The Our Father

by Jesus Christ

Because of the Lord's Prayer, *"No one can excuse himself by saying he doesn't know how to pray or what to pray for."* Martin Luther.

*"if we pray rightly and fittingly, we can say nothing else but what is contained in this prayer of our Lord."* St Augustine

*"The Our Father contains all the duties we owe to God, the acts of all the virtues and the petitions for all our spiritual and corporal needs."* St. Louis de Montfort

Pope John Paul II says *"all that can and must be said to the Father is contained in those **seven requests**, which we all know by heart."* There is *"such a depth that a whole life can be spent meditating on the meaning of each of them."* Each petition speaks to us of what is essential to our existence.

John Paul II, *The Way of Prayer*

*"[Speak] slowly. Think about what you're saying, who is saying it and to whom. Because talking fast, without pausing for reflection, is only noise - the clatter of the cans."* St. Josemaria Escriva, *The Way*

### Scriptural Origins of the Lord's Prayer:

He 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." Lk 11:1-4

"This is how you are to pray: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread; and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors; and do not subject us to the final test, but deliver us from the evil one. MT 6: 9-13 at the Sermon on the Mount



## The Our Father, The Seven Petitions:

2857 In the Our Father, **the object of the first three petitions is the glory of the Father**: the sanctification of his name, the coming of the kingdom, and the fulfillment of his will. The **four others present our wants to him**: they ask that our lives be nourished, healed of sin, and made victorious in the struggle of good over evil.

2858 By asking "**hallowed be thy name**" we enter into God's plan, the sanctification of his name - revealed first to Moses and then in Jesus - by us and in us, in every nation and in each man.

2859 By the second petition "**thy kingdom come**", the Church looks first to Christ's return and the final coming of the Reign of God. It also prays for the growth of the Kingdom of God in the "today" of our own lives.

2860 In the third petition, "**thy will be done**", we ask our Father to unite our will to that of his Son, so as to fulfill his plan of salvation in the life of the world.

2861 In the fourth petition, by saying "**give us,**" we express in communion with our brethren our filial trust in our heavenly Father. "**Our daily bread**" refers to the earthly nourishment necessary to everyone for subsistence, and also to the Bread of Life: the Word of God and the Body of Christ. It is received in God's "today," as the indispensable, (super-) essential nourishment of the feast of the coming Kingdom anticipated in the Eucharist.

2862 The fifth petition "**forgive us our trespasses**", begs God's mercy for our offences, mercy which can penetrate our hearts only if we have learned to forgive our enemies, with the example and help of Christ.

2863 When we say "**lead us not into temptation**" we are asking God not to allow us to take the path that leads to sin. This petition implores the Spirit of discernment and strength; it requests the grace of vigilance and final perseverance.

2864 In the last petition, "**but deliver us from evil,**" Christians pray to God with the Church to show forth the victory, already won by Christ, over the "ruler of this world," Satan, the angel personally opposed to God and to his plan of salvation.

2865 By the final "**Amen,**" we express our "fiat" concerning the seven petitions: "So be it."

*From the Catechism of the Catholic Church*

«1956»

Hallowed be Thy name,  
*not mine,*

Thy kingdom come,  
*not mine,*

Thy will be done,  
*not mine,*

Give us peace with Thee  
Peace with men  
Peace with ourselves,  
And free us from all fear.

--Lead us not into temptation,  
But deliver us from evil:  
Let all that is in me serve Thee,  
And *thus* free me from all fear.

Dag Hammarskjöld,  
Secretary-General  
of the United Nations  
In his spiritual journal,  
*Markings*