

Fr. Rudy's Reflection  
The Seventeenth Sunday in Ordinary Time  
July 27, 2025

### **Lord, Teach Us to Pray**

My Brothers and Sisters in the Risen Lord,

A woman sits quietly at the kitchen table before dawn. The house is still, the coffee warm in her hand. Her day ahead is full—work, errands, caregiving—but for this brief moment, she prays. She doesn't say much. Just the Our Father. Slowly, reverently. It's not a new habit but a steady one. She prays not because it fixes everything but because it keeps her anchored, focused, and humble. It reminds her that someone else is in charge—and that God is good.

In this Sunday's Gospel, the disciples watch Jesus pray and then ask him a very human question: "Lord, teach us to pray." In response, Jesus gives them—and us—the most foundational and perfect prayer: the Our Father. It is short, simple, and infinitely rich. But Jesus doesn't stop at giving us words. He teaches us about prayer itself: how to pray, what to ask for, and how God answers.

First, we learn that God gives us more than we ask for—not less. That's easy to forget. We might feel discouraged when our prayers seem unanswered, but perhaps the real problem is that we expect too little. We often come to prayer unsure, distracted, or defeated. Yet Jesus tells us to pray with trust and persistence, like the neighbor in the parable who knocks at midnight. God isn't annoyed by our prayers; God welcomes them. God listens. God responds.

Still, we don't always get what we want—and that's because God gives us what we need. Jesus says plainly, "Your Father knows what you need before you ask Him" (Matthew 6:8). He is not a vending machine for blessings but a loving Father. Sometimes, in God's wisdom, God withholds certain things or allows hardship because God sees the whole picture. And yes, even suffering, if we love and trust God, can work for our good. That doesn't make pain easier, but it gives it meaning.

So what do we truly need? Jesus answers that in the Lord's Prayer. The first and greatest need is for God's name to be glorified. We were made for God. Our souls find peace only when we are praising and loving God. That's why we begin with, "Hallowed be thy name." Next, we pray for our daily bread—not tomorrow's wealth or ease but today's sustenance: strength, forgiveness, peace, and trust. God always grants that prayer, in ways we may not expect but always for our benefit. The Lord's Prayer is not just something we recite. It is a way of life. It shapes our hearts to love God first and to trust God with all else. It teaches us humility, patience, and faith. In the end, what God wants most is not our perfect words, but our presence, our persistence, and our trust.

Saint Thomas Aquinas said it best: "Among all prayers the Lord's Prayer stands preeminent, for it excels in the five conditions required in prayer: confidence, rectitude, order, devotion, and humility." May it be our constant prayer, not just in words, but in the way we live."

Yours in Christ,  
Fr. Rudy