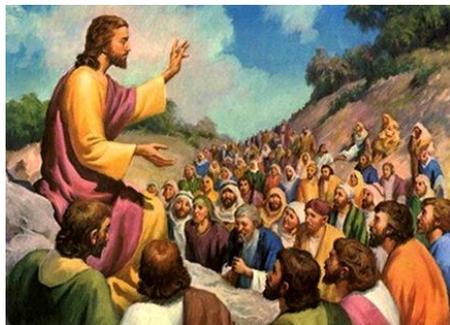




# Archdiocesan Program

## WHY CATHOLIC?

STRENGTHENING FAITH ... MAKING DISCIPLES



## CHRISTIAN PRAYER

### *THE LORD'S PRAYER: "OUR FATHER"*

#### **Biblical Reflection: Mt 6:5-13**

The traditional expression "the Lord's Prayer" –*oratio Dominica*– means that the prayer to our Father is taught and given to us by the Lord Jesus. The prayer that comes to us from Jesus is truly unique: it is "of the Lord." On the one hand, in the words of this prayer the only Son gives us the words the Father gave him: he is the master of our prayer. On the other, as Word incarnate, he knows in his human heart the needs of his human brothers and sisters and reveals them to us: he is the model of our prayer. (CCC 2765)

The Lord's Prayer is the quintessential prayer of the Church. It is an integral part of the major hours of the Divine Office and of the sacraments of Christian initiation: Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist. Integrated into the Eucharist it reveals the eschatological character of its petitions, hoping for the Lord, "until he comes". (CCC 2776)

We can invoke God as "Father" because the Son of God made man has revealed him to us. In this Son, through Baptism, we are incorporated and adopted as sons of God. (CCC 2798)

When we say "Our" Father, we are invoking the new covenant in Jesus Christ, communicating with the Holy Trinity, and the divine love which spreads through the Church to encompass the world. (CCC 2801)

"Who art in heaven" does not refer to a place but to God's majesty and his presence in the hearts of the just. Heaven, the Father's house, is the true homeland toward which we are heading and to which, already, we belong. (CCC 2802)

*"The Lord's Prayer is the most perfect of prayers... In it we ask, not only for all the things we can rightly desire, but also in the sequence that they should be desired. This prayer not only teaches us to ask for things, but also in what order we should desire them"* St. Thomas Aquinas. (CCC 2763)

#### **Questions for discussion:**

- **Share with the group what does it mean to you to call God, "Father"**
- **What does it imply that God is Father of all and not only yours or mine?**
- **Who did teach you to pray the Our Father?**
- **...and that person that taught you to pray it, who do you think, did teach it to her/him? And so one generation after the other up to the moment it was taught by Jesus himself. How do you feel recognizing that you have received this prayer directly from Him?**

**Further reading:** Catechism of the Catholic Church, numbers 2759-2802