



NATIONAL
**Eucharistic
Revival**

**Step-by-Step Walk Through the Mass
Do This in Remembrance of Me, Part 60,
The Lord's Prayer, Part 2
by FR. LUKE SPANNAGEL**



We continue diving into the great treasure of the **Our Father**. I once met a priest who was giving a week-long retreat focusing on the Lord's Prayer. He had intended to give two or three conferences a day over the course of a week. As he prepared his notes from meditations in prayer, he only got to the first two words: "Our Father." As Edward Sri says, "The word *Our* in this prayer also is significant. It points to the deep unity we have together by virtue of our common heavenly Father. All who are united in Christ are truly brothers and sisters in him. In Christ, Jesus' Father has become our Father and we all are the Father's children in the covenant family of God" (*A Biblical Walk Through the Mass*, p. 124). Sit back and think for even a few minutes about what that means. God is our Father; we are his children. Amazing! If you ever need a meditation or find yourself with a few extra minutes to think and pray, just think about those two special words: "Our Father."

Three Prayers, Seven Petitions

As for the rest of the Lord's Prayer, according to the *Catholic Encyclopedia*, "Essentially, it consists of three prayers for the glory of God (hallowed be Thy name, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done) and an expression of the extent of that glory (on earth as it is in heaven), followed by three requests (for food, forgiveness, and freedom from temptation) and a final plea for deliverance from evil, that is, moral evil" (*Catholic Encyclopedia*, p. 358). Focusing on the petition for food, *The General Instruction of the Roman Missal* states, "In the Lord's Prayer a petition is made for daily bread, which for Christians means principally the Eucharistic Bread, and entreating also purification from sin, so that what is holy may, in truth, be given to the holy" (GIRM, 81).

While so much could be said about each of the seven petitions, Charles Belmonte gives us a brief overview of each one:

1. *Hallowed by thy name*. "It is not that we think to make God holy by our prayers; rather we are asking God that his name be made holy in us... [W]e desire to give glory to God: that he may be loved and feared by all; that his holiness, his goodness, and his wisdom may be acknowledged everywhere."
2. *Thy kingdom come*. "In the second petition, we desire that God may reign in everybody's will. We ask that we all may happily reach our destination in his Kingdom. We pray that the Kingdom promised to us by God will come, the kingdom won by Christ's Blood and passion..."
3. *Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven*. "In the third petition, we pray that all men serve and obey God on earth as he is served by the angels in heaven; and that all may always avoid sin and do what is pleasing to God..."
4. *Give us this day our daily bread*. "In the fourth petition, we ask for whatever is necessary for nourishment, clothing, and other temporal needs; for our daily food, which for a Christian means also the Body of Christ, and for the forgiveness of sins. Thus, we can understand this petition in a spiritual and in a literal sense..."
5. *Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us*. "Once we requested the needed sustenance from God's magnanimity, we ask him pardon for our sins. To be reminded that we are sinners and forced to ask forgiveness for our faults is prudent and sound..."
6. *Lead us not into temptation*. "In the sixth petition, we ask God to keep us from falling into temptations. We should not trust our own strength; we should fear our malice and lack of constancy, lest these induce us to wander away from his grace and friendship."
7. *Deliver us from evil*. "In the seventh petition, we ask for deliverance from the evils which afflict us and may set us away from his fatherly love... We ask to be liberated from the guilt and punishment of sin, from all snares of the devil and the world set up against us." (*Understanding the Mass*, p. 170-172).

There can be no doubt that this is the greatest prayer. Jesus himself gave it to us. It reveals our special relationship with God. It thoroughly covers so many aspects of our lives. It prepares us with a healthy and real longing for union with God, through Holy Communion on earth and eternally in heaven! No wonder this prayer is found at the heart of the Mass!