

2023-2024 RCIA #23

3/18/24

Part III: The Sacraments and Prayer (Chapter 37)

- Prayer
 - The What and Why of Prayer
 - Prayer That Reaches God
 - For Whom Shall I Pray?

Prayer

- The What and Why of Prayer
 - What is Prayer?
 - The lifting up of our minds and hearts to God
 - Mind means our attention
 - Hearts means to let our will go out in an act of love to God
 - Do we need prayer?
 - Yes, for without it there is no salvation
 - Every good thing comes from God, He is our creator and we are in His image and likeness
 - We owe God the duty of our prayers as an act of justice not piety

Prayer (Cont)

- How do we pray?
 - Begin by directing our attention to God
 - Hard to do because other things creep in and the devil will try and distract us
 - Avoid pride because prayer and pride cannot co-exist
 - Prayer needs to be sincere not just a duty

Prayer (Cont)

- We are body-soul, so we need to pray with the wholeness of body and soul
- Our prayers of petition do not tell God anything that He does not know, but they focus ourselves on our needs for His help and His goodness
- We can also pray to the Blessed Mother and the Saints for in doing so we still adore and honor God as we seek their intercessions as part of Christ's mystical body (The oneness in Christ the head)

Prayer (Cont)

- God will answer our prayers but not always in the way we expect. He has a better plan
- Sometimes, like St. Paul, we are given a thorn in the flesh to help us grow in grace and prayer
- We need to pray in a childlike manner
- We must always pray for the graces to get to heaven
- Perseverance is essential for prayer

Prayer (Cont)

- Four types of prayer: (ACTS)
 - **Adoration** – to acknowledge His infinite majesty as Lord and Master of all creation
 - **Contrition** – to acknowledge our sinfulness for we owe Him our complete loyalty
 - **Thanksgiving** –to acknowledge His infinite goodness because all graces come from Him
 - **Supplication** – to ask God for graces and favors we need for ourselves and others

Prayer (Cont)

- Levels of prayer:
 - **Vocal prayer**
 - As an individual
 - In groups (Corporate prayer)
 - The Our Father
 - Rosary
 - Novenas
 - Divine Mercy
 - Liturgy at Mass

Prayer (Cont)

- **Meditative prayer**
 - Meditate on
 - Scripture
 - Spiritual works
- **Contemplative prayer**
 - Becoming one with God
 - Foretaste of the Beatific Vision

Prayer (Cont)

- This is how our prayer life has evolved
 - Blessings at meals
 - A daily family rosary
 - **Night prayer**
 - Examination of conscience
 - Before going to bed – always **the Lord's Prayer**
 - List of people we pray for

Prayer (Cont)

- **Morning prayer:**
 - Morning Offering
 - Reading the scriptures for daily Mass
 - Spiritual readings
 - Saint for the day
 - A daily meditation
- The Office
- Daily Mass
 - Rosary on the way to Mass

Prayer (Cont)

- **The Morning Offering**

- O Jesus,
through the Immaculate Heart of Mary,
I offer You my prayers, works,
joys and sufferings
of this day for all the intentions
of Your Sacred Heart,
in union with the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass
throughout the world,
in reparation for my sins,
for the intentions of all my relatives and friends,
and in particular
for the intentions of the Holy Father.
- Amen.
 - *This prayer has numerous variations, but the main idea is to start your day giving to God everything you may encounter during the upcoming day.*

Prayer (Cont)

- **For Whom Shall We Pray?**

- Ourselves
- Our neighbors
- Church leaders
- National (International) leaders
- The dead (especially those in Purgatory)
- Missionaries
- Sinners
- Unbelievers

Prayer (Cont)

- **What prayer should we know?**
 - Our Father
 - Hail Mary
 - Glory be
 - Apostle's and Nicene creeds
 - Confiteor (said at every Mass)
 - Act of Faith, Hope and Love
 - Act of Contrition

Prayer (Cont)

- Catholics begin all prayer with **the sign of the cross**
- We should pray first thing in the morning and the last thing in the evening and as needed during the day, especially at meal times
- **Pray always**

Part III: The Our Father (Chapter 38)

- The Best Prayer

The Lord's Prayer

- The Apostles asked Jesus to teach them to pray
- His prayer teaches that God is personal and loves each one of us individually
- It is corporate prayer - “our” not “my” Father

The Lord's Prayer (Cont)

- Seven petitions: - first 3 are about God
 - ***Hallowed be thy name*** – Adoration and praise of God
 - ***May thy kingdom come*** – Ask that His grace may come to all men
 - ***May thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven*** – whatever God wants not what we want

The Lord's Prayer (Cont)

- Second 4 are about the one praying:
 - ***Give us this day our daily bread*** – all our needs both physical and spiritual for today
 - ***Forgive us our sins (as we forgive those who sin against us)*** – this is hard to do
 - ***Lead us not into temptation*** – He may give us tests or trials for our own good
 - ***Deliver us from evil*** – protect us from all that can harm us

Merit

- Look at discussion on Merit from Conversation with God
- Thursday, 23rd week of ordinary time