

Catholic Prayers: The Our Father

**Our Father, who art in Heaven;
hallowed by Thy name;
Thy kingdom come;
Thy will be done
on earth as it is in Heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses
as we forgive those who trespass against us,
and lead us not into temptation;
but deliver us from evil.
Amen**

Jesus was praying at a certain place, and one of his disciples said to him, "Lord, teach us to pray" (Luke 11:1). Jesus presents to them the Christian family prayer that stresses the Fatherhood of God and acknowledges Him as the one to whom the disciples owe daily subsistence, forgiveness, and deliverance from death.

Jesus 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.'" (Luke 11:2-4).

He then went on to instruct the disciples about the importance of persistence of prayer and then the effectiveness of prayer. Jesus gave this prayer not only to his disciples, but also to the Church.

Saint Matthew's gospel sets Jesus teaching of the Lord's Prayer in the Sermon on the Mount. Matthew 6:9-13 gives us this version:

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.*

The liturgical tradition of the Church has retained this version for community prayer. Jesus offers instruction on the Christian way of life. Jesus teaches us how to pray, to be humble and not to babble on. He teaches the *Our Father* as a short, but awesome example of prayer which relies totally on God. This prayer is addressed to the Father as taught by Jesus and is prayed by us through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. This was a radical idea to call God "Father" because it brings us into direct communication with God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. What a prayer – with its straight forward simplicity, the humble trust and joyous assurance and certainty of being loved.