

THE OUR FATHER, Part One and Two

The “Our Father” is the prayer our Lord Jesus Christ taught His disciples. It is the prayer of God’s children, who were reborn by Baptism. In the Liturgy, the priest introduces the Our Father with these words: “And make us worthy, O Master, that we may with confidence and without condemnation dare call you ‘Father’, God of heaven, and say...”

- Our Father – God is the Creator of all human beings. But, in Baptism, we receive “filial adoption,” adoption as His own children. We share in the Life of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.
- Who art in heaven – God is exalted above all creation, yet He is “everywhere present and filling all things.”
- Hallowed be Thy Name – God’s Name is Holy and is worthy of reverence. As Christians, we honor God’s Holy Name by living in such a way that we show forth His goodness and love.

St. Augustine said that the petition “Thy Kingdom come” is not to be taken “as if, indeed, [God] were not even now really reigning upon earth and had not always reigned upon it from the foundation of the world.” In saying “Thy Kingdom come,” we pray that all people, including ourselves, would freely accept God’s kingship over them. “Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.” St. John Chrysostom said: “For He did not say ‘Thy will be done in me or in us,’ but ‘on earth,’ the whole earth, so that error may be banished from it, truth take root in it, all vice be destroyed on it, virtue flourish on it, and earth no longer differ from heaven.” St. Cyprian of Carthage said: “We continue and say: ‘Thy Will be done on earth as it is in heaven,’ not as if praying that God may do as He Wills, but that we may be able to do what God Wills. ...And in order that it [God’s Will] might be done in us, we have need of God’s Will, that is, of His Help and Protection, since no one is strong by his own powers, but is safe only by the kindness and mercy of God.”

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