

FIRST MODE OF PRAYER

PRAYER OF PETITION

First Part : Teachings, Reflections and Hints

The first priority in prayer should be GOD, not WE

In The Our Father, Jesus tells us first, to pray that God's name be made holy, that God's Kingdom come and that God's Will be done on earth as it is done in heaven.

The Second priority is WE not I

After that, he instructs us to ask for our needs. note that he teaches us to pray for everybody's needs in plural, not in singular, he tells us to say give us our daily bread, not only my daily bread, in other words, Jesus tells us to pray to God for everybody's needs.

By nature, we, humans are creatures of needs and wants. We need countless things to live, to grow and lead a dignified life.

According to the teachings of Jesus our attitude at praying has to be '**centrifugal, not centripetal**'. We have to go out of our narrow selfish 'egos' to others in love and concern.

When Jesus tells us to ask for OUR DAILY BREAD we have to remember that we pray as members of one family - the human family - nay, God's family.

Symbolic meaning of word 'bread'

By the word "BREAD"– being the basic staple food in Palestine, in Jesus' days - Jesus signified, better symbolized all that is wanted to satisfy our human needs. namely,

OUR PHYSICAL NEEDS:

Food, water, clothing, housing, work, rest, leisure, health, medicine, material goods, possessions, etc.

OUR MENTAL NEEDS:

Knowledge, education, ability to read, a right to mental growth, refinement, aesthetic needs. etc.

OUR EMOTIONAL NEEDS:

Being loved, acceptance, affection, security, recognition, praise, freedom, achievement, success, friendship, being cared, etc.

OUR SOCIAL NEEDS:

Need of belonging: to a family, to a group, to a society, status, approval and participation in the affairs of one's group, freedom to expression, etc.

OUR SPIRITUAL NEEDS:

Finding meaning in life and death, a system of beliefs, right to make one's life relevant and worth-living. Faith, moral values to live by, a sense of the beyond, prayer in any form whatever, longing for God, freedom of conscience, etc.-

Human indigence and inter- dependency

When we pray for our daily bread, explicitly or implicitly, we acknowledge to God and one another

- Our 'humanity': Our littleness and limitations. It keeps us humble!
- Our 'creatureliness': Our absolute dependency from God.
- Our nothingness: it disabuses us from any false security and illusory sense of self- sufficiency.
- Our "mutual dependency"; we need one another!
We cannot stand as individuals on our own. We cannot be independent from others! It forces us to acknowledge that we need help from our brothers and sisters, and that we need to help them in return..
- We are not sort of "human atoms" in a universal vacuum! We are part of "human cells", human families and of the entire "human society" Linked and leaning on one another we build the Family of men and the Family of God.

Points to be kept in mind:

- It is not enough to ask God to satisfy only our material needs. We are not purely material beings.
- We have to ask the Lord to satisfy also our emotional, intellectual, social and spiritual needs
- We have to ask God not only to satisfy our personal needs, but also the needs of our brothers and sisters.
- Asking God to give us "our daily bread" and not going out to others to offer them the "bread" they need, it's not the way the Lord wants us to pray.

- Before we dare ask God to satisfy our needs, we have to strive to satisfy the needs of others.
- Remember also, that before we ask God to satisfy our needs, He expects us to do whatever we can satisfy them. The contrary would be tempting God, just plain presumption.

IN ORDER TO RIGHTLY AND FRUITFULLY PETITION GOD

FOR OUR DAILY BREAD

WE HAVE TO CLEAR THREE HURDLES

FIRST HURDLE.

We have to go out to our brothers and sisters in love to satisfy their needs.

- ❖ In plain words: “ IT’S NONE OF OUR BUSINESS to ask God to give us our daily bread”, if we do not share the bread we have with those in need”.
- ❖ The above-mentioned sentence implies not only the bread or material needs, but also all other human needs.
- ❖ All of us - even those who are poor - can and should share our bread – our riches - with others. Examples:
 - I may be materially poor, I may not be able to help others with money and material goods, yet I may satisfy my neighbors’ emotional and social needs by being friendly, supporting,, sharing my time, by my appreciating them, etc.
 - I may be wealthy in material possessions, yet I may be emotionally poor and spiritually a pauper. If I wish to have my emotional and spiritual needs satisfied, I should first share my material goods with those in need.
 - Let us not forget that all of us are members of one single family! The family of God’s Children, the human family. We have to share our bread!
 - **All the material, intellectual, emotional, social and spiritual wealth of humanity, belongs to all men and women.**
 - **There are enough resources in the world to satisfy everybody’s needs, yet not for everybody’s greet!**
 - There is enough food in the world to feed all its inhabitants.
 - There is enough water in the world to quench everybody’s thirst.
 - There are enough hearts in the world to satisfy the emotional needs and longings of all men.
 - There are enough people in the world to satisfy everybody’s need of friendship and companionship.

- **It is up to us all to share them.** Remember the oft-quoted sentence: **“There is enough of everything in the world for everybody’s needs; but not, for everybody’s greed”.**

These are the words of Jesus:

- Mt 5/42 “When someone is asking you for something, give it to him”
 “It is better to give than to receive.”
- Mt 20/28 “I did not come to be served, but to serve.”
- Mt 7/12 “Do to others what you want others do to you”.
- Mt 6/2 “When you give something to a needy person, do not make a show of it... Your Father will reward you secretly”.
- Lk 6/38 “Give to others, and God will give to you”... The measure you use for others is the one God will use for you.”

JESUS, IN THE OUR FARHER, IMPLICITLY TAGHT US TO SAY:

***“Give us our daily bread, as we share
 the bread we have”with others***

SECOND HURDLE

**Before we ask God to satisfy our needs, we have to try
 by all means to satisfy our needs ourselves**

We have to be diligent, by all the means at our disposal, to satisfy our needs. To ask God to help us when we can help ourselves would be tempting Him. For instance, if we are sick, we have to use all the medical means, we can afford, to recover our health. If we are studying, we have to apply ourselves wholeheartedly to our lessons to secure good results.

THIRD HURDLE

**If We Cannot Manage on our Own, to satisfy our Real Needs
 We Should Be Humble Enough to Expose our Needs
 to Those Who Can Help Us**

Remember our “human condition”. We are needy and depending on one another. *‘Our very existence and survival are based on receiving and giving both, from God and from others!’* Remember the old saying:” **We are rich, we give; we are poor, we receive**

It's unfortunate that some of us will rather die of hunger than to ask for 'bread'.
Still others, who feel lonely and unloved, will never expose their need for love to anyone. Because of our pride and misguided sense of self-sufficiency', we will rather lead a life of silent desperation than ask for help.

We should not to put on masks of self-sufficiency when we are not! *Either we like it or not, we need each other.* If we cannot help ourselves, we should go to our parents, to our close relations, to friendly neighbors, to social workers, to a Priest, to a Counselor, to a Doctor or anyone who may help us.

In a way God tell us: "Go to my people, to my own images living next to you, and ask them for the 'bread' you need. Do not feel ashamed of showing your indigence. I am helping you through my children. **Today, I have no other hands than theirs**"

How to Make Others Know our Needs and Wants.

- In openness and honesty!
- With child-like simplicity
- Not begging or nagging, but simply exposing to others our need for 'bread'
- Not demanding, not throwing expectations on others, but leaving them free to respond.
- Without creating "guilt" in them.
- Speak to them without blaming or faultfinding.

Gains and Advantages of Making our needs known to others

- We grow in humility and simplicity.
- In many cases, we may have our needs satisfied.
- We become more aware of them.
- We strike deep and lasting friendships.
- We grow in emotional maturity.
- We learn how to relate with others in an adult-to-adult style.
- We understand others and ourselves better.

FINAL CONCLUSION:

After we satisfied, as much as we could, others' needs, and tried our level best to satisfy them on our own even to the point of approaching others in case of need,

TURN TO GO AND SAY:

"GIVE US OUR DAILY BREAD".