

17TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

It is always important to sustain the relationships we develop/form and the friendship we establish.

To sustain our relationships/friendship we spend time together; we communicate with our relations and friends. The communication takes various forms: writing, talking, physical presence and the rest.

Spending time with them or communicating with them turns to deepen our relationships.

In the gospel reading we see Jesus sustaining and deepening his relationship with his Father through prayer. Through prayer Jesus spends time with God his Father and stays in touch with him.

The disciples of Jesus see him as a man of prayer; as a person who spends time with his Father and they desire to spend time with God also. So, in the gospel, one of them asks him to teach them to pray.

As a result of the request Jesus teaches them what is known today as **“The Lord’s Prayer”, “Our Father”**

By this prayer Jesus teaches them that prayer is about forming and deepening a relationship with God. Through prayer each person enters into a personal encounter with God the Father.

The point is, in the gospel Jesus teaches that prayer helps to establish the most intimate relationship between God and his children.

We know in the Scripture that prayer encompasses the entire range of human emotions and expressions from petitions and lamentations to meditations, benedictions, thanksgiving, praise and adoration.

It is always important to remember our identity as Christian in our relationship with God.

St Paul tells us in the second reading that through baptism we are buried with Christ and are raised with him. There is, therefore, the need to be mindful of our new status as adopted sons and daughters of God.

We need to sustain our new status as adopted sons and daughters of God through prayer. It is essential to spend time with God in order to build our relationship with him.

The Church invites us today to have a new or renewed desire for prayer which includes in a special way praise, adoration and thanksgiving.

We have to learn to pray ever anew from the lips of the Divine Master. We should not take our prayer life for granted

As it is said, in the face of the many trials to which today's world subjects faith if we do not intensify our prayer life we will become "Christians at risk".(NMI. No. 34)

We need to intensify our prayer life, both personal and communal especially, our attendance to Mass which is the heart and the summit of all prayers (CCC. No. 1407)

Another point I would like to make is that our deeper relationship with God, our prayer life should lead us to show concern for others.

In the first reading we see Abraham who has intimate relationship with God showing concern for all, the innocent as well as the sinners in the city of Sodom and Gomorrah. The city of Sodom and Gomorrah, in the Bible, is the symbol of widespread sinfulness.

Abraham appeals to God's mercy, insisting that God can never let the just be swept away with the guilty.

In our prayer let us bring all people to the mercy of God and also pray for those who have asked us to pray for them.

To conclude, I will say let us continue to value prayer in our Christian life and continue to find out and follow God's will even if all seems to be going against us.