

# 12<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time – June 20/21, 2020 – Father’s Day Reflection

“When you are praying, do not heap up empty phrases as the *Gentiles* do; for they think they will be heard because of their many words. Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask Him. Pray then in this way: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name ...”

(Matthew 6: 7-9)

The summer before my third year in graduate school, I was home in NY for the summer working on the docks in Brooklyn. It was right around the Fourth of July holiday and after I got home from work one evening, my Dad and I had a couple of drinks together while we had dinner. Later on that evening, I went out to get together with some of my friends. After our gathering broke up, I got in my car to make the half hour drive home. It began to rain and I put the windshield wipers on. That’s the last thing I remember until I had to climb out of the car through the window in the back seat. I felt moisture on my forehead and just thought it was from the rain. I was in front of a pub which was still open at that late hour and so I went to the door, opened it, and was greeted by a waitress who screamed! I didn’t think all that much of that since that was the reaction my appearance usually produced in women! I guess it finally dawned on me though that the moisture running down my face was not rainwater. It was blood. I’d been in an accident. My car had hit a parked car which then hit a tree. The force

of the impact propelled my head through the glass of the front windshield. The people in that pub called for an ambulance and also asked me if they could call anybody for me. I gave them my Dad's number at our house. Before the ambulance got there, my Dad got there. I don't really remember saying all that much to him when I first saw him. I was covered with blood, kinda shook up, and a little scared. I just took his hand and all the fear, the shame, the worry, left me in his strong hand and I knew, no matter what, all would be well.

"When you pray, say Father ..."

So often when we turn to God, we've messed up, we're in trouble, we're afraid, at wits end.

"When you pray, say Father ..."

Reach out your hand with your raw heart in it ... reach for God ... say Father ... everything won't be perfect or fixed or straightened out. All the debts might not be paid, all the consequences gone away, but, with your hand in your Father God's hand, you'll be okay, think more clearly, act more strongly, face trial bravely, all because you put your hand in your Father's.

Amen.