

## DADDY IN HEAVEN!

On July 28, (17th Sunday Ordinary Time Year C), I had the honor and privilege to be the main celebrant and preacher at the Sunday Mass at my home parish St Jacques ( St James) in Muret, France. Please find below the main points of my homily focusing on the prayer that Jesus taught us the "Our Father"  
(Luke 11:1-13 and Matthew 6:9-13)

**FIRST**, Jesus asks us to pray to God our Father, calling Him ABBA, which in Jesus' own language Aramaic means: DADDY! What a revolution! In the times of Jesus, the Jewish people could not even pronounce the name of God, YAHWEH, and here Jesus asks us to call GOD: ABBA, DADDY! So whenever we pray the Our Father, the most beautiful prayer, being the one Jesus gave us when asked to teach us how to pray, let us always remember that we are praying to "DADDY IN HEAVEN", a personal Father, who as God, LOVES us like a Dad loves His Son or Daughter.

**SECOND**, while Luke's Gospel contains only four petitions of the Our Father, the most complete version of the Our Father is found in the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew's Gospel (6:9-13) It contains seven petitions which cover the entirety of what we need to ask God. I will comment briefly on each of the petitions.

1. **HALLOWED BE THY NAME:** Hallowed means Holy. I pray that I will always consider my DADDY in HEAVEN as a personal and loving GOD much above me, a DADDY that I should LOVE MORE THAN ANYONE ELSE! I should not worship idols like money, power, pleasure, recognition.

2. **THY KINGDOM COME:** the coming on earth of JESUS HIMSELF, the only begotten Son of the Father, is the beginning of the Kingdom of God. I pray: "JESUS, COME INTO MY HEART!"

3. **THY WILL BE DONE ON EARTH AS IT IS IN HEAVEN:** I pray that I will always OBEY my Daddy in Heaven, meaning that I will obey HIS TEN COMMANDMENTS, which JESUS summarized in the two commandments of LOVE: LOVE GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART AND ALL YOUR MIND, AND LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS I LOVE YOU! When praying this, I recall the best definition of CHRISTIAN LOVE, as given by St Thomas Aquinas (13th century): "TO LOVE SOMEONE IS TO WANT GOOD FOR THAT PERSON NOT EXPECTING ANYTHING IN RETURN" (Unconditional love).

4. **GIVE US THIS DAY OUR DAILY BREAD:** the Greek text of the Our Father (as given in the New Testament which was written in Greek as being the dominant language in Jesus' time, like English in today's world) reads : "*Ton Arton ton Epiousion* ". Many commentators on the Our FATHER PRAYER have struggled with what Jesus meant. It is remarkable that the word "Epiousios " is mentioned only once in the entire New Testament, and also is apparently not found anywhere else in the

Greek literature. OUSIOS means SUBSTANCE and EPI means ABOVE/SUPER. One possible translation as opposed to DAILY (the one we use) is SUPER-SUBSTANTIAL or SUPER-NATURAL. Many of the early Fathers of the Church (first four centuries after Christ) and more recently POPE BENEDICT XVI have favored this translation as it has an EUCHARISTIC meaning. I like this viewpoint! Therefore, I PRAY TO DADDY IN HEAVEN: "FEED ME WITH THE EUCHARIST, THE BODY OF YOUR SON JESUS." Through the Eucharist, we are totally transformed: WE BECOME TRULY ONE WITH JESUS, WE ARE TRANSFORMED SPIRITUALLY AS WE BECOME WHAT WE EAT: THE BODY OF CHRIST!

5. **FORGIVE US OUR TRESPASSES AS WE FORGIVE THOSE WHO TRESPASS AGAINST US:** I pray: JESUS, SON OF ABBA, SON OF DADDY, GIVE ME THE DESIRE TO GO FREQUENTLY TO THE SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION so that I can be totally united to JESUS in a state of grace (without sins) and I may receive the EUCHARIST totally in union with JESUS and all my brothers and sisters who also in state of grace enter into COMMUNION WITH JESUS!

6. **DO NOT LEAD US INTO TEMPTATION:** I pray: "DADDY IN HEAVEN, help me not to fall into temptation. SEND ME YOUR HOLY SPIRIT so that I can resist any temptation."

7. **BUT DELIVER US FROM EVIL.** I pray to Daddy in Heaven: "protect me from any evil spirit".

**THIRD**, I invite everyone to pray daily the "Our Father" very slowly, reflecting on each of the above seven petitions and selecting which one is most relevant for you on that particular day and how you can obtain ABBA/DADDY'S SUPPORT.

It was wonderful to spend some time with my whole family in France and also to go to Lourdes. As promised, I prayed for each one of you when I was immersed into the miraculous waters that have been flowing continuously since the apparitions of Mary to St. Bernadette in 1858.

COME HOLY SPIRIT! Keep filling with Your Love the hearts of all of us, especially our children and youth during this Summer!



*One in Christ,  
Father Alain*