

THE PARACLETE

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Archdiocese of Miami



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Happy New Year!



We begin the New Year by the grace and mercy of the Lord. There is much to be happy and grateful for in our personal lives, our families and our parishes. This year we celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Archdiocese of Miami. The diocese was formed on October 7, 1958. The ultimate goal of a jubilee year is to bring people into a deeper relationship with the Lord. Let us begin this New Year by thanking our Father for His goodness to the Archdiocese throughout the years and for the growth that has taken place. From the book of Wisdom verse 11:25 we read: “And how could a thing remain unless you willed it; or be preserved, had it not been called forth by you? But you spare all things, because they are yours, O Lord and lover of souls.”

† † †

OUR FATHER

by Sister Bernadette, DLJC
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The disciples having seen Jesus in prayer are drawn to imitate Him. Often Jesus would go apart in the evening or in the morning before dawn to be alone with His heavenly Father. The disciples may have wondered what Jesus did in that time. They must have seen there was something different about the way Jesus prayed. So they asked Him...

Lord, Teach Us to Pray

Jesus responded to them, “In your prayers do not babble as the pagans do for they think that by using many words they will make themselves heard. Do not be like them; your Father knows what you need before you ask him.” (Mt. 6:7-8) Jesus goes on to tell them, “but when you pray, go to your private room and, when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in

that secret place, and your Father who sees all that is done in secret will reward you.” (Mt 6:6) Jesus was exhorting his disciples not to imitate the hypocrites or the pagans by babbling on with a multiplicity of empty words, making a show of themselves for others to see, but to come apart to a private place, alone with the heavenly Father. He tells his disciples to enter into the secret place of the heart, that place of intimacy, and share in a personal way with God.

Jesus went on to teach His disciples, “You should pray like this:

Our Father in heaven,
Your name be held holy,
Your kingdom come,
Your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread,
and forgive our debts,
as we have forgiven those
who are in debt to us.
And do not put us to the test,
but save us from the evil one.”

(Mt 6:10-13)

When Jesus taught His disciples to pray he taught them that God is our Father. The word he used for father in Aramaic is *Abba*. This is the same word that a Jewish child would use in addressing his father in a personal way. It is filled with tenderness and affection. This divine filiation helps us to know that God is our Father, my Father, who loves me in a personal way and cares for me. He provides for me, and He knows my needs even before I ask Him. What Jesus taught His disciples was so new and revolutionary – an intimate personal relationship with God as Father; a God who is not too far away or too distant that He is unknown to us. On the contrary, not only can we know Him but He also knows the intimate details of our life. “Why, every hair on your head has been counted.” (Mt. 10:30)

Your Name be Held Holy

He is my Creator and I am His child. This Father

of mine who brought me into being is the Creator of the whole universe who dwells in the highest heaven and holy is His name. In the Scriptures the name of the person is more than just a title. It reflects the entire being of that person. When Jesus teaches his disciples to pray to the Father, “Your name be held holy,” (Mt. 6:9) He is really teaching them the kind of disposition we need to have toward the Father – one of reverence and awe. This sacred relationship calls us to praise, honor, and glorify the Father in true worship. In this petition, we are asking that “...God be known, loved, honored, and served by the whole world, especially by ourselves.” (*Catechism of St. Pius X*, 290)

Your Kingdom Come, Your Will be Done

When we enter that secret place of the heart with the Father in united prayer, asking that His kingdom would come and His will be done on earth as in heaven, we acknowledge God’s wisdom for our lives. We trust in His divine providence for us and those we pray for. We ask that the kingdom of God be advanced; that He reign in our hearts and our world. We ask that we may be conformed to His holy will, and that it may become a concrete reality in our life, just as much as it is a concrete and visible reality in heaven.

Give Us Today Our Daily Bread

In perfect confidence as His children we ask, “Give us today our daily bread.” (Mt 6:11) What was Jesus teaching His disciples in this petition? Ask for what you need. “So I say to you: Ask, and it will be given to you;...For the one who asks always receives;...If you then, know how to give your children what is good, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask!” (Lk. 11:9-13) Jesus is teaching us to not only ask for our daily sustenance, but to also expect that our heavenly Father will provide for our spiritual needs in giving us the Holy Spirit.

The early Church Fathers applied this petition for daily bread to be the Holy Eucharist, the divine sustenance that the Father gives us. Jesus tells us, “I am the living bread which has come down from heaven. Anyone who eats this bread will live forever; and the bread that I shall give is my flesh, for the life of the world.” (Jn. 6:51)

Forgive Us Our Debts

In this petition we ask for God’s mercy upon us for we “all have sinned and are deprived of the glory of

God.” (Rom. 3:23) How often have we lost our dignity as children of God, and turned aside from God’s law to “degrading passions” and “have given up divine truth for a lie and have worshipped and served creatures instead of the creator?” (Rom. 8:25) It is only in acknowledging our sinfulness in true repentance that we are then able to receive God’s mercy. We, like prodigal children, come back to the Father’s house saying, “Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you; I no longer deserve to be called your son; treat me as one of your paid servants.” (Lk 15:19) It is through Jesus’ death on the cross that we are redeemed and “reconciled to God.” (Rom. 5:10) It is because of this gift bestowed on us by the Father, that we “become His adopted sons, through Jesus Christ” (Eph. 1:5) and our debts are forgiven.

As We Have Forgiven Those Who are in Debt to Us

Because the Father has shown us mercy and forgiveness by sending His Son, Jesus, to atone for our sins, we too are called to be merciful in sharing the gift of forgiveness that the Father has given us with others. We must not be like the wicked servant in the parable Jesus tells us about (Mt. 18) who was forgiven a tremendous debt but was unwilling to forgive a fellow servant a small debt. We are called to be like Jesus who when suffering his final agony on the cross prayed, “Father, forgive them; they do not know what they are doing.” (Lk 23:34)

When we recognize we are part of the family of God, we see that we have brothers and sisters in Christ. “Since God has loved us so much, we too, should love one another.” (1 Jn. 4:11) as Christ loved us. We may think we are walking in the light of God’s love but are fooling ourselves because if “anyone claims to be in the light but hates his brother, he is still in the dark.” (1 Jn. 2:9) Like Jesus’ own disciples, we may try to get around these truths and say, “But who is my neighbor?” (Lk 10:29) If I can redefine who is my neighbor, then I can justify my own sinful actions. Remove the blinders from your eyes and let the truth of the Gospel call us to conversion. “Forgive, and you will be forgiven...For the measure you give will be the measure you get back.” (Lk 6:37-38)

And Do Not Put Us to the Test

As members of the body of Christ we not only share in Christ’s glory but also in His sufferings. (Rom 8:17) We learn we are not exempt from suffering, but that “Suffering is part of your training; God is treating you as his sons...He does it all for our good, so that we

may share his own holiness.” (Heb. 12:7, 11b) If we are to grow in holiness, then our virtue must be tested and tried. The many tests or temptations in life serve to exercise our spiritual muscles in holiness. In order for a muscle to be exercised and strengthened, it must have resistance to work against. We have many opportunities each day to fall into temptation or to pass the test! Temptation in and of itself is not evil, but serves as a means for our growth in virtue. It is an opportunity for us to prove our love for God, and when we fail, to turn back to Him in repentance. “My son, if you aspire to serve the Lord, prepare yourself for an ordeal...do not be alarmed when disaster comes...whatever happens to you, accept it, and in the uncertainties of your humble state, be patient, since gold is tested in the fire, and chosen men in the furnace of humiliation.” (Sir. 2:1-5) Therefore, rejoice, although you may suffer various trials, your faith is being proved and purified for the honor and glory of God! (1 Pet 1:6-7) “Blessed is the man who perseveres in temptation...he will receive the crown of life...”(Jas 1:12)

In the Our Father, when we pray, “do not put us to the test,” (Mt 6:13) what are we really saying? Is it to be free of all temptations and trials, so we can be flabby self-indulgent, self-made Christians? No, certainly not. The New American Bible translates this verse, “do not subject us to the final test.” There is only one other place in the Scriptures where the same Greek word “the test” is used. This is when Jesus is in the agony of the garden and he finds His disciples sleeping when he asked them to pray. Jesus says, “Watch and pray that you may not undergo the test. The Spirit is willing but the flesh is weak.” (Mt 26:41) In our final hour when we pass from this world, may we not yield to the temptation of denying Jesus but pass the final test!

But Save Us From the Evil One

Our struggle is not just against the world and the flesh, meaning that which separates us from God. “But against the principalities and powers, the rulers of this world of darkness, the evil spirits in regions above.” (Eph. 6:12) Against the devil himself, a personified evil, that “is prowling around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.” (1 Pt. 5:8) Pope John Paul II has said: “there are times when the existence of evil among people is particularly apparent. Then it becomes even clearer that the powers of darkness that reside in and operate through man are larger than him. It seems that people today almost do

not want to see this problem.”

(Address, May 3, 1987) Not only is there evil in the world, but in our own hearts there is an astonishing capacity to do evil. Even St. Paul struggled with the weaknesses of the flesh. “I do not the good I will to do, but the evil I do not intend.” (Rom. 7:19) We are weak and need Jesus to save us from the evil one. We need Jesus to deliver us from the darkness and transfer us to His Kingdom where we can live in freedom as children of God. (Col. 1:13-14)

“For the Kingdom, and the power and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.” (The Roman Missal)

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- Every Monday - **Healing through the Word**
7:30 PM - St. Louis Church - Maria Vadia
Hospitality Room A
Healing Service
7:30 PM - Last Monday of each month
- Fourth Monday - **Mass and Healing Prayer**
7:30 PM - St. Bernard Church
Celebrant - Rev. Robert Richardson
- First Tuesday - **Mass and Healing Prayer**
8:00 PM - Nativity Church - Hollywood
- First Tuesday - **Mass and Healing Prayer**
7:00 PM - St. Mary Star of the Sea-Key West
- First Thursday - **Mass and Healing Prayer**
8:00 PM - Nativity Church
Indian Community
- Last Thursday - **Mass and Healing Prayer**
7:30 PM - St. Monica Church - Opa Locka
- First Friday - **Mass and Healing Prayer**
8:00 PM - Nativity Church Shrine
Filipino Community
- Forth Friday – **All Night Adoration**
St. Stephen Church - 8:00 PM
Concluding with Mass 8:00 AM-Saturday

ATTENTION

Because of the increased cost of printing and postage, we regret to have to tell you that this office will now have to ask for a minimum of \$5.00 per year to cover the cost of your “Paraclete” newsletter. For those of you who already send contributions specifically for the “Paraclete”, we sincerely thank you. For those of you who have not, we ask you to prayerfully consider sending in your donation. We firmly believe that this newsletter should continue to proclaim the truth of the Gospel and provide you with information concerning up-coming events.

SCRIPTURE READINGS

January

1. Nm 6:22-27; Gal 4:4-7; Lk 2:16-21
2. 1 Jn 2:22-28; Jn 1:19-28
3. 1 Jn 2:29-3:6; Jn 1:29-34
4. 1 Jn 3:7-10; Jn 1:35-42
5. 1 Jn 3:11-21; Jn 1:43-51
6. Is 60:1-6; Eph 3:2-3a, 5-6; Mt 2:1-12
7. 1 Jn 3:22-4:6; Mt 4:12-17, 23-25
8. 1 Jn 4:7-10; Mk 6:34-44
9. 1 Jn 4:11-18; Mk 6:45-52
10. 1 Jn 4:19-5:4; Lk 4:14-22a
11. 1 Jn 5:5-13; Lk 5:12-16
12. 1 Jn 5:14-21; Jn 3:22-30
13. Is 42:1-4, 6-7; Acts 10:34-38; Mt 3:13-17
14. 1 Sm 1:1-8; Mk 1:14-20
15. 1 Sm 1:9-20; Mk 1:21-28
16. 1 Sm 3:1-10, 19-20; Mk 1:29-39
17. 1 Sm 4:1-11; Mk 1:40-45
18. 1 Sm 8:4-7, 10-22a; Mk 2:1-12
19. 1 Sm 9:1-4, 17-19; 10:1a; Mk 2:13-17
20. Is 49:3, 5-6; 1 Cor 1:1-3; Jn 1:29-34
21. 1 Sm 15:16-23; Mk 2:18-22
22. 1 Sm 16:1-13; Mk 2:23-28
23. 1 Sm 17:32-33, 37, 40-51; Mk 3:1-6
24. 1 Sm 18:6-9; 19:1-7; Mk 3:7-12
25. Acts 22:3-16; Mk 16:15-18
26. 2 Tm 1:1-8; Mk 3:20-21
27. Is 8:23-9:3; 1 Cor 1:10-13, 17; Mt 4:12-23
28. 2 Sm 5:1-7, 10; Mk 3:22-30
29. 2 Sm 6:12b-15, 17-19; Mk 3:31-35
30. 2 Sm 7:4-17; Mk 4:1-20
31. 2 Sm 7:18-19, 24-29; Mk 4:21-25

February

1. 2 Sm 11:1-4a, 5-10a, 13-17; Mk 4:26-34
2. Mal 3:1-4; Heb 2:14-18; Lk 2:22-40
3. Zep 2:3; 3:12-13; 1 Cor 1:26-31; Mt 5:1-12a
4. 2 Sm 15:13-14, 30; 16:5-13; Mk 5:1-20
5. 2 Sm 18:9-10, 14b, 24-25a, 30-19:3; Mk 5:21-43
6. Jl 2:12-18; 2 Cor 5:20-6:2; Mt 6:1-6, 16-18
7. Dt 30:15-20; Lk 9:22-25
8. Is 58:1-9a; Mt 9:14-15
9. Is 58:9b-14; Lk 5:27-32
10. Gn 2:7-9; 3:1-7; Rom 5:12-19; Mt 4:1-11
11. Lv 19:1-2, 11-18; Mt 25:31-46
12. Is 55:10-11; Mt 6:7-15
13. Jon 3:1-10; Lk 11:29-32
14. Est C:12, 14-16, 23-25; Mt 7:7-12
15. Ez 18:21-28; Mt 5:20-26
16. Dt 26:16-19; Mt 5:43-48
17. Gn 12:1-4a; 2 Tm 1:8b-10; Mt 17:1-9
18. Dn 9:4b-10; Lk 6:36-38
19. Is 1:10, 16-20; Mt 23:1-12
20. Jer 18:18-20; Mt 20:17-28
21. Jer 17:5-10; Lk 16:19-31
22. 1 Pt 5:1-4; Mt 16:13-19
23. Mi 7:14-15, 18-20; Lk 15:1-3, 11-32
24. Ex 17:3-7; Rom 5:1-2, 5-8; Jn 5:5-42
25. 2 Kgs 5:1-15b; Lk 4:24-30
26. Dn 3:25, 34-43; Mt 18:21-35
27. Dt 4:1, 5-9; Mt 5:17-19
28. Jer 7:23-28; Lk 11:14-23
29. Hos 14:2-10; Mk 12:28-34