

GOSPEL

Lk 11:1-13

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke.

Ask, and it will be given to you.

Once Jesus was in a certain place praying, and when he had finished, one of his disciples said, 'Lord, teach us to pray, just as John taught his disciples.' He said to them, 'Say this when you pray:

"Father, may your name be held holy,
your kingdom come;
give us each day our daily bread,
and forgive us our sins,
for we ourselves forgive each one who is in debt to us.

And do not put us to the test."

He also said to them, 'Suppose one of you has a friend and goes to him in the middle of the night to say, "My friend, lend me three loaves because a friend of mine on his travels has just arrived at my house and I have nothing to offer him"; and the man answers from inside the house, "Do not bother me. The door is bolted now, and my children and I are in bed; I cannot get up to give it to you." I tell you, if the man does not get up and give it him for friendship's sake, persistence will be enough to make him get up and give his friend all he wants.

'So I say to you: Ask, and it will be given to you; search, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened to you. For the one who asks always receives; the one who searches always finds; the one who knocks will always have the door opened to him. What father among you would hand his son a stone when he asked for bread? Or hand him a snake instead of a fish? Or hand him a scorpion if he asked for an egg? If you then, who are evil, know how to give your children what is good, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!'

■ The Gospel of the Lord.

A SERVICE OF THE SOCIETY OF ST PAUL



Reproduction of this bulletin in any form prohibited. Published with ecclesiastical approval by ST PAULS PUBLICATIONS, PO Box 906, Strathfield NSW 2135. Tel 02 9394 3400 Fax 02 9746 1140. Scripture readings from the Jerusalem Bible, published and © 1966, by Darton, Longman and Todd Ltd and Doubleday & Co. Inc. are used by permission of the publishers. Psalm text from The Psalms, A New Translation, © 1963, The Grail (England), HarperCollins. New translation of the Order of Mass from The Roman Missal © 2010, International Commission on English in the Liturgy Corporation. All rights reserved. Artwork by Sr Dorothy Woodward rsj. Layout, commentaries and illustrations © St Pauls Publications, 2019. No 1782. Website: www.stpauls.com.au

Reflections on the Gospel

PRAYING WITHIN THE FAMILY OF GOD

While short and stark compared to the *Our Father* more familiar to us in St Matthew's version, the Lukan form in today's Gospel probably preserves more accurately Jesus' actual words to his disciples.

Behind the opening word 'Father' lies Jesus' characteristic address to God as '*Abba*', the familiar Aramaic address to the male parent, most accurately rendered as 'Dad'. The prayer begins, then, by drawing the disciples into the familial relationship with God that he enjoys.

The sequence of the petitions that follows is itself an instruction on prayer. God's 'agenda' comes first: that God's name be held holy, that God's kingdom come. Only after this Godward focus (which, of course, is ultimately for the benefit of the world) do the petitions address human need: for sustenance ('daily bread'), for forgiveness, and finally for protection in the hour of trial.

In the petition for forgiveness, the sense is not that God waits to see whether we forgive before offering forgiveness. Rather, we can block the flow of God's always available forgiveness if we do not let it flow through us by forgiving others.

The final petition does not imply that God would *lead* us into temptation and trial. Rather, we pray that in trials and troubles our faith may not give way.

As a whole, the prayer is the prayer of a community that knows itself to be the loved family of God, to whom, on its journey through life, it constantly turns in confidence and trust to receive those benefits that only God can give.

Brendan Byrne, SJ

THE SAVING WORD

SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME / C

28 JULY 2019

FIRST READING

Gen 18:20-32

A reading from the book of Genesis

Lord, do not be angry if I speak.

The Lord said, 'How great an outcry there is against Sodom and Gomorrah! How grievous is their sin! I propose to go down and see whether or not they have done all that is alleged in the outcry against them that has come up to me. I am determined to know.'

The men left there and went to Sodom while Abraham remained standing before the Lord. Approaching him he said, 'Are you really going to destroy the just man with the sinner? Perhaps there are fifty just men in the town. Will you really overwhelm them, will you not spare the place for the fifty just men in it? Do not think of doing such a thing: to kill the just man with the sinner, treating just and sinner alike! Do not think of it! Will the judge of the whole earth not administer justice?' The Lord replied, 'If at Sodom I find fifty just men in the town, I will spare the whole place because of them.'

Abraham replied, 'I am bold indeed to speak like this to my Lord, I who am dust and ashes. But perhaps the fifty just men lack five: will you destroy the whole city for five?' 'No', he replied, 'I will not destroy it if I find forty-five just men there.' Again Abraham said to him, 'Perhaps there will only be forty there.' 'I will not do it' he replied 'for the sake of the forty.'

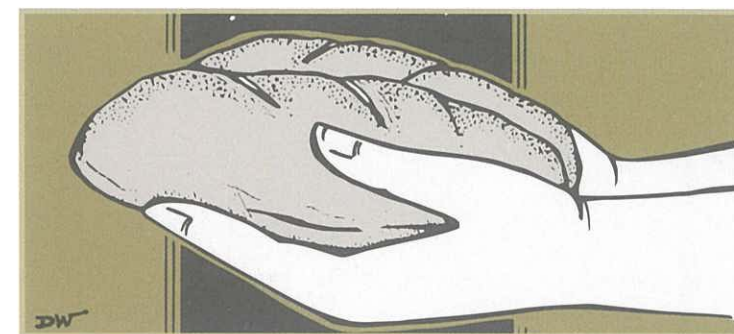
Abraham said, 'I trust my Lord will not be angry, but give me leave to speak: perhaps there will only be thirty there.' 'I will not do it' he replied 'if I find thirty there.' He said, 'I am bold indeed to speak like this, but perhaps there will only be twenty there.' 'I will not destroy it' he replied 'for the sake of the twenty.' He said, 'I trust my Lord will not be angry if I speak once more: perhaps there will only be ten.' 'I will not destroy it' he replied 'for the sake of the ten.'

■ The word of the Lord.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM Ps 137:1-3, 6-8. R. v. 3

R. Lord, on the day I called for help, you answered me.

1. I thank you, Lord, with all my heart, / you have heard the words of my mouth. / Before the



angels I will bless you. / I will adore before your holy temple. **R.**

2. I thank you for your faithfulness and love / which excel all we ever knew of you. / On the day I called, you answered; / you increased the strength of my soul. **R.**

3. The Lord is high yet he looks on the lowly / and the haughty he knows from afar. / Though I walk in the midst of affliction / you give me life and frustrate my foes. **R.**

4. You stretch out your hand and save me, / your hand will do all things for me. / Your love, O Lord, is eternal, / discard not the work of your hands. **R.**

SECOND READING

Col 2:12-14

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Colossians

He has made you alive with Christ for he has forgiven all our sins.

You have been buried with Christ, when you were baptised; and by baptism, too, you have been raised up with him through your belief in the power of God who raised him from the dead. You were dead, because you were sinners and had not been circumcised: he has brought you to life with him, he has forgiven us all our sins.

He has overridden the Law, and cancelled every record of the debt that we had to pay; he has done away with it by nailing it to the cross.

■ The word of the Lord.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Rom 8:15

Alleluia, alleluia! You have received the Spirit which makes us God's children, and in that Spirit we call God our Father. Alleluia!