

# The Lord's Prayer Explained

The Lord's Prayer is also commonly referred to as Our Father Prayer, Oratio Dominica or Pater Noster in Latin. This prayer was taught to us by Jesus Christ in Matthew 6:9-13 and Luke 11:2-4

These two Gospels give us the two versions. The longer form within the Sermon on the Mount is found in Matthew and the shorter one in Luke. This, however, doesn't mean that the message is different, the message is still the same in both Gospels. Both have the first three petitions addressing The Lord God and the last four petitions relating to our human needs.

The Lord's prayer is used by most Christian churches with few variations like the inclusion of the doxology, which is the last part of the prayer; "For yours is the Kingdom and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen."

In the Catholic Church, the Lord's Prayer is incorporated in almost all prayers and Novena's because it is a very rich and wholesome prayer that captures all our daily needs and wishes.

The Our Father Prayer has been translated severally originally starting from the original Greek. The first was the Vulgate Latin translation, which was later translated to the Liturgical Greek and Latin text (Patriarchal Edition in 1904). Consequently, it was translated into the Roman Missal and finally into the English version we know and love. The English version was first translated from the Greek and Latin version as early as 650 AD with the Northumbrian translation.

As mentioned above, the Lord's prayer can be divided into sections called petitions, called so because a petition is a humble request for something, in this case from God. Our Father Prayer has seven such petitions and an ending referred to as the doxology. Every petition has a specific request to God for ourselves and some are requests for our fellow human beings. The petitions are:

### **Introduction – Our Father Who Art in Heaven**

We refer to God as our Father because we all become the adoptive children of the Lord through baptism. We use "Our" to indicate that the prayer is not just from one person but from a group of people (His children).

### **First Petition – Hallowed Be Thy Name**

The word "Hallow" is used to mean honor as Holy. We, therefore, honor the Heavenly Father's Name as Holy and should thus respect and revere His Name.

This means recognizing who we are talking to and the seriousness involved in invoking His name.

### **Second Petition – Thy Kingdom Come**

This petition is believed to be a reference to the coming of the reign of God through the return of his son Jesus Christ in his final return. The coming of God's Kingdom is usually seen as a divine gift that should be prayed for. We pray for the Kingdom of God in our everyday lives.

### **Third Petition – Thy Will Be Done on Earth as it is in Heaven**

In this petition, we are asking for God's glorious plan to be actualized here on Earth as it already is in Heaven. It is God's invitation to make things on Earth the way they are up in Heaven. Through prayer, we can understand what God's will is, and obtain the strength to do it.

### **Fourth Petition – Give Us This Day our Daily Bread**

Our daily bread in this instance does not only mean nutritional nourishment, but all the nourishment life requires both material and spiritual. In the world today which is ravaged by world hunger this petition calls on Christians to take responsibility towards the poor, to share with love both our spiritual and material goods.

It also addresses the spiritual hunger of the world, and we as Christians are supposed to proclaim the good news (the Bread of Life); the Body of Christ received in the Holy Communion.

### **Fifth Petition – And Forgive Us Our Trespasses, as We Forgive those who Trespass against us**

We are all sinners asking for forgiveness from our father, not unlike the prodigal son returning home after realizing the error of our ways. As Pope John Paul II said, "Forgiveness is the key to peace." Presbyterian churches and some other 'reformed' churches are more partial to debts as in the Gospel of Mathew in place of sins, and debtors in place of those who trespass against us.

## **Sixth Petition – And Lead Us Not into Temptation**

We ask our Heavenly Father not to let us stray along the path that leads to sin, it can also mean not being caught up in the material pleasures. Though some earlier texts referred to God as leading us into sin, that is not the case as Satan is the only one seen tempting both Job in the Old Testament and Jesus in the New Testament.

## **Seventh Petition – But Deliver Us From Evil**

We use 'us' because we are praying with the church for the salvation of the entire human family. There are certain biblical scholars who believe evil refers to the state of being as opposed to the dark prince Satan.

But most believe evil is a reference to the Devil, and we ask God to deliver us from his grip. Victory over the dark prince was won once and for all when Jesus Christ died for us on the cross.

## **Doxology – For Thine is the Kingdom, the power, and the glory, Forever and ever. Amen**

This is the final part of The Lord's Prayer; it references the first three petitions to Our Father. It is a hymn to praise the Heavenly Father. Most scholars do not think it was part of the original prayer and was added on a later date. This is because it was absent in Luke's version and was also not present in the earliest manuscripts of Matthew.

## **Is the Catholic Church Changing the Lord's Prayer?**

People all over the world are asking if the Pope has changed the wording of the Lord's Prayer for the whole Church. The answer is, the Italian bishops' conference in 2019, approved the new edition of the Messale Romano for the Italian See which had the Our Father prayer wordings changed from (ne nos indúcas in tentatiónem) (lead us not into temptation) to "non abbandonarci alla tentazione" (do not abandon us to temptation).

The existing version had translated it as "non ci indurre in tentazione" (lead us not into temptation). This change does not apply to other languages like English or Spanish. It is only for the Italian Roman Missal.

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