Continuing his catechesis on the Lord’s prayer at the weekly General Audience, Pope **Francis says the Our Father invites us to turn every pain and disturbance into a dialogue with God.**

Pope Francis continued his reflection on the Our Father during the Wednesday General Audience, calling it “a bold prayer”.

“I say bold because, if Christ had not suggested it, none of us would probably have dared to pray to God in this way,” he said.

The Holy Father noted that there are no prefaces to the prayer. Jesus, he said, invites us to pray directly to the Lord without the barriers of subjection or fear. **“He doesn’t tell us to call God ‘Omnipotent’ or ‘Most High’ or ‘You, who are so distant from us...’ but simply to use the word ‘Father’… expressing closeness and filial trust.”**

7 questions for daily life

Pope Francis said the Our Father is made up of seven questions, saying the number seven represents fullness in the Bible.

He said each of the seven supplications are rooted in the our experience of daily life and its basic needs. We ask for bread, said the Pope, to remind us that **“prayer starts with life itself.”**

“Prayer – Jesus teaches us – begins not when the stomach is full but wherever any person hungers, cries, fights, suffers, and asks themselves ‘why’.”

Pope Francis said our first prayer “was the cry that accompanied our original breath as a new-born child, for it announced our life’s destiny: our continual hunger and thirst and search for happiness.”

Jesus’ prayer, the Holy Father said, turns every pain and disturbance into a dialogue with God, rather than snuffing out our humanity or anesthetizing our suffering.

“Faith,” the Pope said, “is a habit of shouting.”

He gave the example of the Blind Bartimaeus (Mk 10:46-52), who cries out to Jesus, despite the scolding of those around him, and is healed. Jesus, Pope Francis said, seems to say that “the decisive factor in his healing was his prayer – his invocation shouted out in faith – that was stronger than the good sense of those who would have had him be quiet.”

Finally, Pope Francis warned against embracing the theory that the prayer of supplication – or asking something for oneself – is a weak form of faith. “No!” he said, **“A faith that asks is authentic. It is spontaneous and an act of faith in God who is Father”.**

“God is truly a Father who has an immense compassion for us and wants his children to address him directly and without fear.”