

Never Stop Seeking Holiness

Daily Gospel / Liturgical Cycle A

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Matthew 7:7-12

"Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks, receives; and the one who seeks, finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened. Which one of you would hand his son a stone when he asks for a loaf of bread, or a snake when he asks for a fish? If you then, who are wicked, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give good things to those who ask him. Do to others whatever you would have them do to you. This is the law and the prophets."

Introductory Prayer: Heavenly Father, I take these moments to adore you and to enter into your loving presence. I dare to tell you I believe in you, although you know how weak my faith is. You are the reason for all my hope in life. Lord, I count on you as I strive to love you more totally and to attain the holiness of life to which you have called me. Amen.

Petition: Lord, teach me how to pray.

1. The Shortcut to Holiness: Again we are confronted with that fundamental principle of our sanctification: "He must increase, and I must decrease" (Cf. John 3:30). Christ must become more and more in us. That's what genuine prayer accomplishes, if that prayer consists of a one-on-one conversation with the Savior that engages heart, mind and will. Could it be the case that I am seeking holiness without having firmly decided to anchor each day, indeed my entire life, in prayer?

2. Trust Like Little Children: Why is it that the prospect of our personal holiness seems so outlandish to us? Why are we so inwardly reluctant to believe that God, the almighty, the all-powerful, who created us from nothing, can also sanctify us? Maybe the part that discourages us is our unwillingness to jump headlong into that part of our sanctification that depends on us. But even here, Christ urges us to pray with confidence: "If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good things to those who ask him!" (Matthew 7:11). Is it too much to believe and trust that God will strengthen our will in the pursuit of holiness? Will his grace fail us if we ask for holiness with complete trust and childlike confidence?

3. What a Combination! Prayer, holiness and apostolic fruitfulness are intrinsically linked. If we, as lay apostles, wish to see fruit in all our apostolic endeavors, we know it will depend in large part on our degree of holiness: our degree of real union with God, the degree to which his divine life flows through us. That divine life, given to us in baptism and increased through our sacramental life, can be enhanced every day in personal prayer where our thirst for God is not quenched, but rather greatly increased. We should pray always, so that prayer will be the secret of our holiness and apostolic fruitfulness.

Prayer continues to be the greatest power on earth. It must be at the very center of our quest for holiness.

Conversation with Christ: Lord Jesus, thank you for this time of prayer. Thank you for teaching me interiorly, little by little every day, how to pray more perfectly. For the sake of those men and women, my brothers and sisters, whose own salvation is somehow mysteriously linked to my life and to my fidelity to you, give me holiness! Amen.

Resolution: I will renew my determination to make a daily prayer time, and make sure that this becomes, or continues to be, a part of my daily routine.