

# THE LORD'S PRAYER [MATTHEW 6:7-15]

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Has there ever been a more powerful or important prayer than the "Our Father"? After all, it's the prayer that Jesus Himself taught us to say. And yet how easy it can be for this prayer to become just another part of our routine! Let's take a little time right now and meditate on the "Our Father", letting the teachings of St. Augustine help us find new life in a very familiar prayer.

*When we pray, "Hallowed be Thy name," we are counseling ourselves to desire that His name, which is always holy, may be held holy among all people. That is, we are praying that His name not be treated with disdain or contempt.*

*When we pray, "Thy Kingdom come," which will certainly come whether we want it to or not, we can stir our desire for that Kingdom. We can ask that it may come for us personally, and that when it comes we will be worthy to reign with God in His Kingdom.*

*When we pray, "Give us this day our daily bread," we mean right now, this present moment. "Bread" can signify whatever will be sufficient for us to live today. But it can also refer to the Sacrament of the Eucharist, which is our spiritual food here and now that helps us obtain everlasting happiness.*

*When we pray, "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us," we are advising ourselves both as to what we should ask for, and what we should do to be worthy to receive it.*

*When we pray, "Lead us not into temptation," we are encouraging ourselves to look to God for His help so that we don't find ourselves left to our own inadequate defenses. How easy it is to give in to temptation through self-deception or self-pity!*

*Finally, when we pray, "Deliver us from evil," we can bring ourselves to reflect on the fact that we are not yet in that blessed condition where we will be free of all evil. This last petition in the Lord's Prayer has such a wide scope, in fact, that a Christian in any trouble can use it to help them deal with whatever pains them or causes them tears. We can even pray it first, or at length, or at the end of our intentions.*