



Our Father Reflection

The Our Father is the foundation of all Christian prayer, as taught by Jesus to his disciples, and encountered in the Scriptures. It is a prayer of petition, asking God for all we need in living out our daily lives.

Here is an opportunity to break open this significant prayer with your children, to consider the meaning of its words so that we pray them with engaged hearts, minds, and hands.

For each phrase of the prayer, a series of age-appropriate questions is offered to stir thought and discussion with children in grades 1–5. A heart-felt prayer follows. At the end, the prayer appears in full with hand motions to accompany each phrase, for full and active participation in praying the “Our Father” together. Just imagine how meaningful this prayer will become, now, every time it is prayed!

Our Father . . .

Reflection:

How is God like a father? A mother? How does God care for us and love us like a parent? Can you think of a time when you have experienced God through the action and love of your parents? Do you have a favorite name for God?

Let us pray:

God, you have so many names and you are so much more than I could ever imagine! Jesus taught us that you are our Father, that you want such a close relationship with me, with all of my friends and family, and with all people. Jesus said we should never be afraid. Help me to never be afraid of you but to come to you with all of my thankfulness, love, and even the things I am not proud of, the ways I have hurt others, or all of the things I am worried and anxious about. I know you can help me to heal and fix things and make them right again. Thank you for giving me life, with the help of my parents, for loving me just the way I am, and for calling me to grow into the goodness and the grace you give me. Lord, always teach me to pray. Amen.



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Who art in Heaven . . .

Reflection:

Where is God? Where does God live? God lives in Heaven, in our hearts, in the people we meet, in the Eucharist given to us at Mass, so that we can be the hands and feet of Jesus in the world, continuing his mission of helping and healing. God lives in all of his creation. Where have you been most aware of God's presence?

Let us pray:

God, you are so big! How awesome that you are with me at all times—above me, around me, within me. I want to always be able to see you in all of my comings and goings throughout the day. May your Holy Spirit, who is within me, help me to see you in all that I do, especially as I try to follow Jesus' example by being like him. Lord, always teach me to pray. Amen.

Hallowed be thy name . . .

Reflection:

What does it mean to honor someone? Honor happens when we show respect, reverence, care, kindness, love. Jesus tells us that we honor him when we feed those who are hungry and care for those who are poor, because when we care for others in their need, we are actually caring for Jesus himself! Who do you honor? What are some ways you honor that person? How do you honor God?

Let us pray:

God, you are the most important in all of life. Help me to always keep you in the most important place, because you also honor me, as your child. You call me to all that is good in this life, giving to me your Holy Spirit who lives within me. You make me to be holy, just like you—able to love and forgive, to show mercy to others, to bring healing and harmony, to bringing your peace. Give me the grace I need to grow in holiness and to see you in all things and people so that I can continue to honor you by growing in love, kindness, and care for others. Lord, always teach me to pray. Amen.

Thy Kingdom come . . .

Reflection:

Jesus taught us about the Kingdom of God, comparing it to so many ordinary yet amazing things. He tells us the Kingdom of God is like a beautiful pearl that is priceless, like a hidden treasure that when found causes great joy, and like a mustard seed, the smallest seed known, that actually produces a tree! So, the Kingdom of God is like no other kingdom that we know. It causes great joy, and it produces miraculous and unexpected goodness. How would you describe the Kingdom of God? How is the Kingdom of God different than what you might expect? When have you experienced the Kingdom of God in your life?

Let us pray:

God, help me to realize that when I put my goodness and holiness and my faith in you into action, I help your Kingdom to exist here. When I work to create peace and love, your Kingdom is here. Thank you for trusting me so much to be a part of your Kingdom and to make it known here on earth. Help me always to spend time with you so that I can be a humble instrument of your peace, justice, forgiveness, compassion, love, and hope, knowing that it is you working through me. Lord, always teach me to pray. Amen.



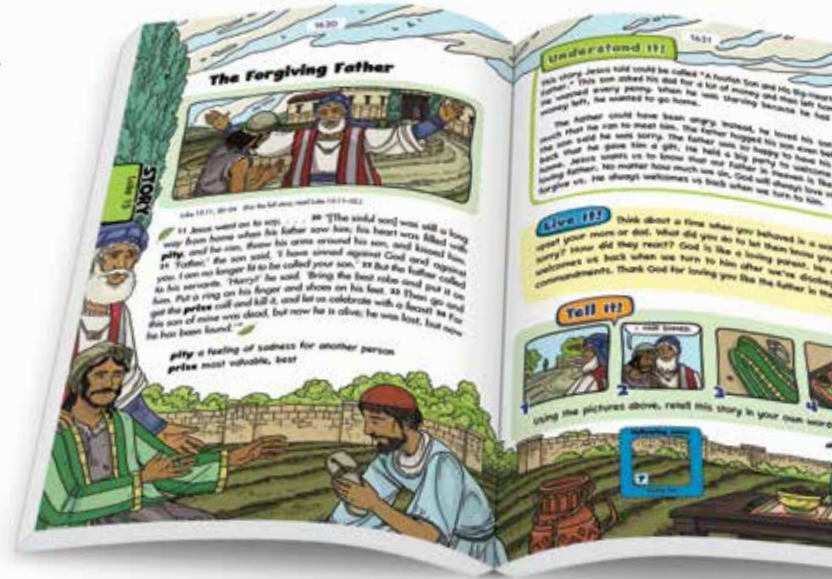
Thy will be done on earth, as it is in Heaven.

Reflection:

God's will is about engaging our best selves. Often we want to do things our way, like Adam and Eve, who ate from the tree God said to stay away from. But when we stay close to and put our trust in God, our hearts become one with his. And when our hearts are one with God's, great things happen! Is there a time when you wanted to do something, but realized that it may not have been the right thing to do? That's God's heart talking to you and trying to get your heart to be one with his, to do good. When we do the right things, have loving attitudes, and work to stay close to God, we are working to make our hearts one with his. In what ways might you help God's will to be done on earth, as it is in Heaven?

Let us pray:

God, show me the way to be my best self. May your Holy Spirit, who lives within me, guide me to speak up for what is good and right and to forgive others and have compassion for them, especially when I don't feel like it, or when I might be afraid. Help me to hear your voice and turn my heart toward yours, so that your heart and mine may be one. Lord, always teach me to pray. Amen.



Give us this day our daily bread...

Reflection:

What do you need to live your life, today, with love, forgiveness, and peace? Is there a hurt on your heart that needs to be healed? What might you ask God for in order to fix it? Asking God for "our daily bread" is asking him for all that we need that will nourish us and strengthen us for the day, just as a good breakfast does for our bodies. God's "daily bread" helps to nourish and strengthen our souls. What "daily bread" has God given to you today?

Let us pray:

God, thank you for all that you give me each day. I want to put all of my trust in you and know, without a doubt, that you will give me all that I need to live each day, fully, like Jesus. Help my trust in you to be strong so that I will never be afraid of your care for me. Help me to accept all that comes in my day, even the things that will be challenging to me, knowing that all of it is gift from you and an opportunity to grow deeper in my relationship with you. Thank you, God, for my life, my friends, my family, my teachers, and for your love, most of all. Lord, always teach me to pray. Amen.



And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us . . .

Reflection:

Forgiving someone who's hurt us is really hard work, especially when we may not get an "I'm sorry" from that person. Here, in the prayer, we are asking God to forgive us as we forgive others! Each of us sins and does hurtful things sometimes. So, if we would like to receive forgiveness when we do something wrong, doesn't it make sense that we should give our forgiveness to others? When we don't want to give someone our forgiveness, we hurt ourselves even more—we stop God's love and mercy from entering our hearts, because we've filled our hearts with anger or revenge. Forgiving someone who's hurt us releases our hearts from that negativity. God wants us to be free of the negativity. It's why he gave Moses the Ten Commandments and Jesus gave us the Beatitudes. Through these, God shows us what not to do and how to be to keep our hearts clear of the negativity that keeps God out. Forgiving others helps our hearts to be open and close to God. Can you think of a time when you were forgiven? What did that feel like? What difference did that make for you? This is a powerful gift we can give others.

Let us pray:

God it's really hard sometimes to do the right thing. Give me the courage and the strength to forgive someone who's hurt me, even when I don't feel like I want to. I know that by forgiving them, my heart will be clear of anything that would stand in the way of keeping me close to you. Help me to forgive myself too, when I sin or hurt another, to always ask for forgiveness and say, "I'm sorry," and to try hard to not do it again. Thank you for Jesus, who saved us from all sin that kept us from being close to you. Thank you for the gift of the Sacrament of Reconciliation, which helps me to ask for and receive forgiveness from you and gives me the grace to offer forgiveness to others. Lord, always teach me to pray. Amen.

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

Reflection:

We are all on a journey in this life, leading us back to God. Sometimes we run into obstacles, things that distract us from keeping our hearts close to God. And, the farther away our hearts stray from God's heart, the easier it is for evil to seep in to our lives. Temptations can keep us far away from God, though God is always looking to have us come close to him, again. If we stay close to God in prayer and keep our hearts free of negativity and close with God's heart, and if seek and give forgiveness and love to others, then we are doing our part. What are some temptations that could lead you away from God? What are some ways that will help resist those temptations?

Let us pray:

God, help me to recognize when I choose to be and act in a way that is not what you would want of me. Keep me safe from the things that can keep me away from your heart. Help me to have the strength to turn away from those things and to keep my life on the path that leads to you. Lord, always teach me to pray. Amen.



Amen.

Reflection:

Amen is the word we use to end each prayer and when we receive the Eucharist at Mass. *Amen* means, “So be it!” That means, “I believe” it—either what we’ve just prayed or received. Name one or two things about faith in God that you believe and want to say “Amen!” to.

Let us pray:

God, you know my heart. Help me to stand up for what I believe and to share with others the joy it brings me. Keep me safe and help me to be brave and bold in loving others, as Jesus did. Lord, always teach me to pray. Amen.

Praying with Movement:

Our Father, (Begin with hands on heart, and then raise them straight up to Heaven.)

who art in Heaven, (With hands still raised, move them away from each other.)

hallowed be thy name; (With hands still raised, face palms toward Heaven.)

thy kingdom come, (Place one hand upon the heart.)

thy will be done on earth, (Place the other hand upon the heart.)

as it is in Heaven. (Raise hands.)

Give us this day our daily bread, (Lower hands to form a bowl.)

and forgive us our trespasses, (“Wipe” the heart with the right hand, as wiping away the offense or wrongdoing. Then return right hand to the heart and extend out in front, with palm facing up.)

as we forgive those who trespass against us; (hands curve back to place palms open and pointing out, as if to offer forgiveness)

and lead us not into temptation, (hold arms at 90 degree angles, making fists, and then cross arms in front of body.)

but deliver us from evil. (With arms still crossed, open hands with palms facing up and then lower arms over front of body.)

Amen. (Make praying hands with fingers folded or palms placed together.)

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