

LENTEN FAITH SHARING

Week Three

Week 3 – Matthew 6:7-15

“Give us today our daily bread; and forgive us our debt, as we forgive our debtors.” Mt. 6: 11-12.



Begin with **Centering Prayer**.

Sit comfortably with eyes closed.

Begin to slowly breathe in through your nose and out through your mouth.

As you slowly breathe in, image God breathing breath into your center.

As you breathe out through your mouth, let it be a moment of letting go of your anxieties, worries, anger, hatred, frustrations.

Repeat this practice several times.

1. Choose a Sacred Word or Mantra as a symbol of your intention to consent to God’s presence and action within.

Whenever you become aware of distractions, sounds, thoughts of other things, simply return to the Lord with Centering or your prayer word/s.

(Repeat this exercise three to four times, trusting that you are sitting in God’s Holy presence by yourself and with your Share group)

While sitting in silence, open your life to become aware of the presence of God with you personally and with the Share Group.

Ask God to Abide in you and lead your heart to abide in Him.

2. **Lectio Divina** – Choose a Reader. [The Leader leads the Lectio Divina](#)

Read **Matthew 6: 7-15** slowly, while pausing between paragraphs for silence.

Invite participants to rest in silence for a few moments.

Invite them to savor a word, a phrase or a feeling that rises in them. Reflect on this quietly.

The Leader, after some time of silence can invite participants to share this **word** or phrase aloud.

The Reading is slowly read a second time by the Reader.

Pause for silent reflection.

The leader invites participants to share their experience using the Reflection commentary.

Commentary

The Lord's prayer falls in the center of the Sermon on the Mount. The 'Our Father' is the model prayer Jesus used to teach his disciples when they asked him to teach them how to pray. We notice first that Jesus begins the teaching by praying: "**Our** Father," addressing God as the Father of all and addressing him with intimacy and trust.

The Lord's Prayer is the central prayer for all disciples of Jesus, just as the **Shema** is the identity prayer of faith for the Jews as they proclaim: "Hear O Israel."

The 'Our Father' as found in Matthew's Gospel is one that the Church has prayed for centuries. It is prayed at Mass prior to our Communion Rite. Scripture scholars consider Luke's streamlined version to be closer to the form that Jesus would have prayed. Matthew's version demonstrates a more liturgical influenced form which is of his church. The invocation "Our

Father in heaven," is found in many rabbinic prayers of the Post New Testament period. The words: "hallowed by thy name." are understood as reverencing God in human praise and with holy obedience to his will.

When we pray the "Our Father," in Eucharistic worship, we are expressing a joyful longing for that time in which sadness and pain will have disappeared. We pray also with joyful longing for the time when death shall be no more, and salvation is manifested throughout the world.

The words: "our daily bread," may suggest that the early Christians used these words to refer to the new experience of Eucharist. It was experienced to be a meal like no other, in which the risen Lord was present to those who are following him. "Thy Kingdom come," is thought to be an expectation still anticipated and a foretaste of the heavenly banquet.

Reflection responses

1. What in the reading stirred your heart?
2. Does this Scripture story take on meaning for your life?
3. Did the story help you make connections to the Eucharist?
4. What did you find enlightening?
5. What verse of the "Our Father" prayer brings new life to your soul today?
6. Does this Gospel message challenge you to forgive before receiving the Eucharist?

Action – Connect with the disconnected.

How or what will you do to share your experience of Eucharist through the Scriptures and worship with someone who is not participating in the Eucharist?

Can you gently and lovingly, and without judgment, ask another what prevents them from coming to experience the Eucharist?

Listen! Listen! Listen! The Holy Spirit will provide the words you should speak.

Matthew 6: 7 - 15

7 In praying, do not babble like the pagans, who think that they will be heard because of their many words.

8 Do not be like them. Your Father knows what you need before you ask him.

9 “This is how you are to pray: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,
10 your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven.

11 Give us today our daily bread;

12 and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors;

13 and do not subject us to the final test, but deliver us from the evil one.

14 If you forgive others their transgressions, your heavenly Father will forgive you.

15 But if you do not forgive others, neither will your Father forgive your transgressions.