

# Persevering in Prayer

proskartereō means "to continue to do something with intense effort, with the possible implication of despite difficulty - 'to devote oneself to, to keep on, to persist in'"

<sup>10</sup>Be kindly affectionate with brotherly love toward one another, in honor giving precedence to one another; <sup>11</sup>in zeal, hesitate not; fervent in spirit, serving the Lord; <sup>12</sup>rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, persevering in prayer, <sup>13</sup>contributing to the needs of the saints, pursuing hospitality.  
[Rom. 12:10-13]

## Prayer First – As essential as air is to the body, so is prayer to the soul

“...everyone devotes all their energy to the work they have at hand, forgetting completely the work of prayer because they think that the time they give to God is lost to the work they are supposed to do...they leave prayer aside and all their hope in their own hands without remembering who has given them hands.  
(Gregory of Nyssa, On the Lord's Prayer)

# Prayer for one another is an essential act of the Body of Christ

Saint Chrysostom: "...We are also taught to make our entreaty common, that is, on behalf of our brethren,...for the body in common, and nowhere anyone looking to his own, but everywhere to his neighbor's good."

<sup>7</sup>And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is *the* word of God— <sup>18</sup>by means of every prayer and entreaty, praying in every season in *the* Spirit, and being vigilant toward this same thing with all perseverance and entreaty for all the saints, <sup>19</sup>and for me, that utterance may be given to me, in *the* opening of my mouth to make known with boldness the mystery of the Gospel, <sup>20</sup>for which I am an ambassador in a chain, that in it I might speak boldly as there is need for me to speak.  
[Eph. 6:17-20]

It's a daring thing to call God one's Father –  
“Make us worthy to dare, with boldness  
without condemnation to dare call you Father”

“If he has any sense, he would obviously not dare to call God by the name Father since he does not see the same things in himself as he sees in God. (*Sermon 2, Gregory of Nyssa, p. 39-40*).”

# The Lord's Prayer

- ❖ Historically, the Lord's Prayer was not taught publically only on the eve of one's baptism. Cannot be said until initiated
- ❖ To call God one's Father is only for those who have been made His children through being joined to Christ in baptism and have His virtue in us – merciful, forgiving, peacemakers, purity of heart, doing the will of God, walking in the Spirit, having died to sin are living in righteousness...
- ❖ It is a prayer that Jesus does not say himself but given as an instruction to others on how one should prayer
- ❖ All authentic prayer are an elaboration of the Lord's Prayer – we do not pray anything else.

# The Lord's Prayer

A transliteration by Fr. Thomas Hopko)

Our Father in heaven, (through Jesus Christ Your Son, most high God over all creation)

Make Your Name be sanctified

Make Your Kingdom come

Make Your will be done

As in Heaven in the risen Christ so also in us His body and members on earth.

Give us this day the supra-substantial bread of the coming Age which is Christ Himself

Forgive us what we owe as we have already forgiven the those who owe us.

Let us stand when we are tested and tried and tempted in the final tribulation.

And deliver us from the evil one.

# Our Father in heaven, through Jesus Christ Your Son, the most high God over all creation

- ❖ Jesus is literally God's Son he says "the Father, my Father, Father"
- ❖ In Jesus, ALL who are baptized into Christ become sons and can therefore call God as "father."

*Under the old covenant are only free, Jewish males part of the covenant community so both males and females are "Sons" of the most High*

"For all are sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For as many as were baptized into Christ, you put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male and female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus [Gal. 3:26-28]."

# Make Your Name be sanctified

“May everything in the world, beginning with my own life, my deeds, my words be a reflection of this sacred and divine name, which has been revealed and given to us...This is also a petition for help in the difficult effort in this ascension and transformation...Each ascent is vanquished by a fall...it is precisely in this struggle that man fulfills his high vocation, only here in this effort, in these ascents and descents, can he consider himself a person. (*Our Father*, Fr. Schmemmann).”





# Make Your Kingdom come

- ❖ The Kingdom *has* come, it *comes* to us and it *shall come* on the final Day – Christ is the Kingdom of God.
- ❖ The kingdom comes and begins when a person meets God, recognizes Him and with love and joy offers himself to Him
- ❖ We pray that God would help us not betray this kingdom, not to constantly fall away from it

For behold, the kingdom of God is within you.” [Lk. 17:21]...<sup>17</sup>for the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in *the* Holy Spirit. [Rom. 14:17]

# Make Your will be done in me

- ▣ The most difficult petition of the three
- ▣ This is the ultimate yardstick of faith, the measure by which one can discern, in oneself first of all, profound from superficial faith ...
- ▣ Not – ‘My will be done’

“Grant me strength and help me to understand what is Your will, in order to discern Your paths, even if they are unclear at first. Help me to accept that which is difficult and seemingly unbearable or impossible in Your will. Help me to desire that which You desire (Schmemmann.)”

- Help me see that which prevents me from loving You completely (Dr. Patitsas)

# As in Heaven in the risen Christ so also in us His body and members on earth.

*(On earth as it is in Heaven)*

This verse modifies all three petitions of the Lord's Prayer

Christ is the only one who fulfills the first three petitions

- ▣ He sanctified the Name of God by being Himself pure and blameless
- ▣ He is the Kingdom of God and thus inaugurates it on earth by sending the Holy Spirit
- ▣ He is obedient to the Father in all things

Give us this day the supra-substantial (epiousion arton =absolutely everything necessary for life, everything which makes possible our existence.) bread of the coming Age which is Christ Himself

“Man does not live by bread alone (Matthew 4:4)

“...man believed that from food alone, that by pure reliance on its consumption, he could receive that which is actually possible to receive only from God. By way of food he sought liberation from God, which only led him to slavery and dependence on food; man became a slave of the world. But this also means a slave of death, for the food which gives him his physical life cannot give him that freedom from the world and death, which can only come from God. Food, the symbol and source of life, became the symbol of death. For if a man does not eat he dies. But if he eats he still dies, for food itself is a communion with that which has died and therefore with death. And so, finally, salvation, and recreation and forgiveness, and resurrection itself are linked also in the Gospel with food (Schmemmann, The Lord's Prayer).”

*“I am the bread of life; the one who comes to Me in no wise shall hunger; and the one who believeth in Me in no wise shall thirst at any time. [Jn. 6:35]*

“This is the profound meaning of that new divine food, which constitutes from the earliest days of Christianity the main joy, the chief mystery of the Church that Christians call the Eucharist, which means Thanksgiving.” (Schmemmann)

# Forgive us what we owe as we have already forgiven the those who owe us.

- ❖ We owe to love each another
- ❖ To keep the commandments of God

“To ask for forgiveness of this sin, means to acknowledge our disunity with others, and it implies an effort to overcome it...forgiveness is a mystical action that restores lost wholeness...Only mutual forgiveness has this power. If we forgive one another, then, God forgives us...and the conscience purified.” (Schmemmann)

Let us stand, do not let us fall when we are tested and  
tried and tempted in the final tribulation,  
but deliver us from the evil one.  
“Lead us not into temptation”

❖ An Aramaic idiom meaning that all things come from the hand of God

“...God does not give us explanations for evil, but strength to resist evil and power to overcome it. And again, this victory lies not in the ability to understand and explain evil but rather in the ability to face it with the full force of faith, the full force of hope, the full force of love. It is by faith, hope and love that temptations are overcome, they are the answer to temptation, the victory over temptations, and therefore the victory over evil.” (Schmemmann)

Tribulation: theologically, the end of the world began when Christ was crucified and resurrected from the dead.