

Homily Summary – 17th Sunday in Ordinary Time (Year C)

Theme: The Power of Prayer of Petition

Overview:

This homily focuses on the importance of prayer of petition—asking God for what we or others truly need. Drawing from the priest's own story of surviving a life-threatening heart condition at birth, we are invited to see how God works through prayer, especially through the intercession of others. The homily aligns with this Sunday's readings, which teach us that God is merciful, responsive, and close to those who call on Him with faith and persistence.

Main Points:

- **Personal Testimony of God's Mercy:**
 - Fr. Greg's grandmother's faithful rosaries and prayers accompanied him through a medical crisis as a newborn. What seemed like a miracle became a deeper sign of God's work through persistent prayer.
- **Prayer of Petition in Scripture:**
 - Abraham (Genesis 18:20–32): Boldly pleads for Sodom; God listens, showing His readiness to spare the many for the sake of the few.
 - Psalm 138:3: "On the day I called, O Lord, you answered me."
 - Colossians 2:13–14: God's ultimate answer to our prayers: forgiveness and life through Christ's Cross.
 - Luke 11:1–13: Jesus teaches the Our Father, and urges us to ask, seek, and knock with persistence.
- **Why Persevere in Prayer?**
 - God is not reluctant—but our repeated prayer forms us, opening our hearts and teaching us humility and trust.
- **God Answers Perfectly:**
 - Like a loving parent, God answers prayers in ways that are ultimately for our good—even if that means a "yes," "no," or "wait."

Key Scripture Quotes (NRSVCE):

- "Ask, and it will be given you; seek, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened to you." (Luke 11:9)
- "He brought you to life along with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses... nailing it to the cross." (Colossians 2:13–14)
- "On the day I called, O Lord, you answered me." (Psalm 138:3)

Catechism References:

- CCC 2629–2633: Petition as a natural and necessary form of prayer.
- CCC 2740–2745: Jesus' model of persistent, trusting prayer.
- CCC 2635: Intercession as a prayer of petition on behalf of others.

Reflection Questions:

- When was a time that God answered your prayer in a way you didn't expect?
- Have you grown discouraged in prayer? What might God be saying in the silence?
- Who in your life is waiting for you to pray for them?
- How might you honor and listen to the wisdom of the elderly in your life this week?
- How can you grow in trust that God hears and answers every prayer?

Rhyme summary:

Abraham prayed with courage and grace,
God heard his plea and gave mercy a place.
The psalmist cried out, and strength God gave,
A God who is kind, and mighty to save.
Christ taught us to ask, seek and knock,
With hearts that trust like a solid rock.
Prayer opens doors to heaven's store,
So let's trust in God and pray even more.

Reasons to come to Mass each weekend

Hebrews 10:24-25 - "And let us consider how to provoke one another to love and good deeds, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day approaching."

Exodus 20:8 - "Remember the sabbath day, and keep it holy."

Luke 22:19 - "Then he took a loaf of bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to them, saying, 'This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.'"

Acts 2:42 - "They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers."

John 6:53-54 - "So Jesus said to them, 'Very truly, I tell you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood have eternal life, and I will raise them up on the last day.'"

Psalms 122:1 - "I was glad when they said to me, 'Let us go to the house of the Lord!'"

Matthew 18:20 - "For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them."

Colossians 3:16 - "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God."

Additional resources to learn more about God and the Catholic faith

- Check out the resource list available on www.frmerkley.com
- Catholic Answers: <https://www.catholic.com/>
- Word on Fire: <https://www.wordonfire.org/>
- Formed: <https://formed.org/>
- The Coming Home Network: <https://chnetwork.org/>
- Catholic Exchange: <https://catholicexchange.com/>
- Dynamic Catholic: <https://dynamiccatholic.com/>
- The Augustine Institute: <https://augustineinstitute.org/>
- Ascension Press: <https://ascensionpress.com/>
- EWTN: <https://www.ewtn.com/>
- The Catholic Company: <https://www.catholiccompany.com/>
- Busted Halo: <https://bustedhalo.com/>
- CatholicCulture.org: <https://www.catholicculture.org/>
- The Thomistic Institute: <https://thomisticinstitute.org/>
- Ignatius Press: <https://www.ignatius.com/>
- Catholic Education Resource Center (CERC): <https://www.catholiceducation.org/>