

December 2018

✦ Generations of Faith ✦

FAITH NOTES

✦ Enriching, Educating, Engaging All Ages ✦



Holy Creations, Holy Connections Called to Family, Community and Participation

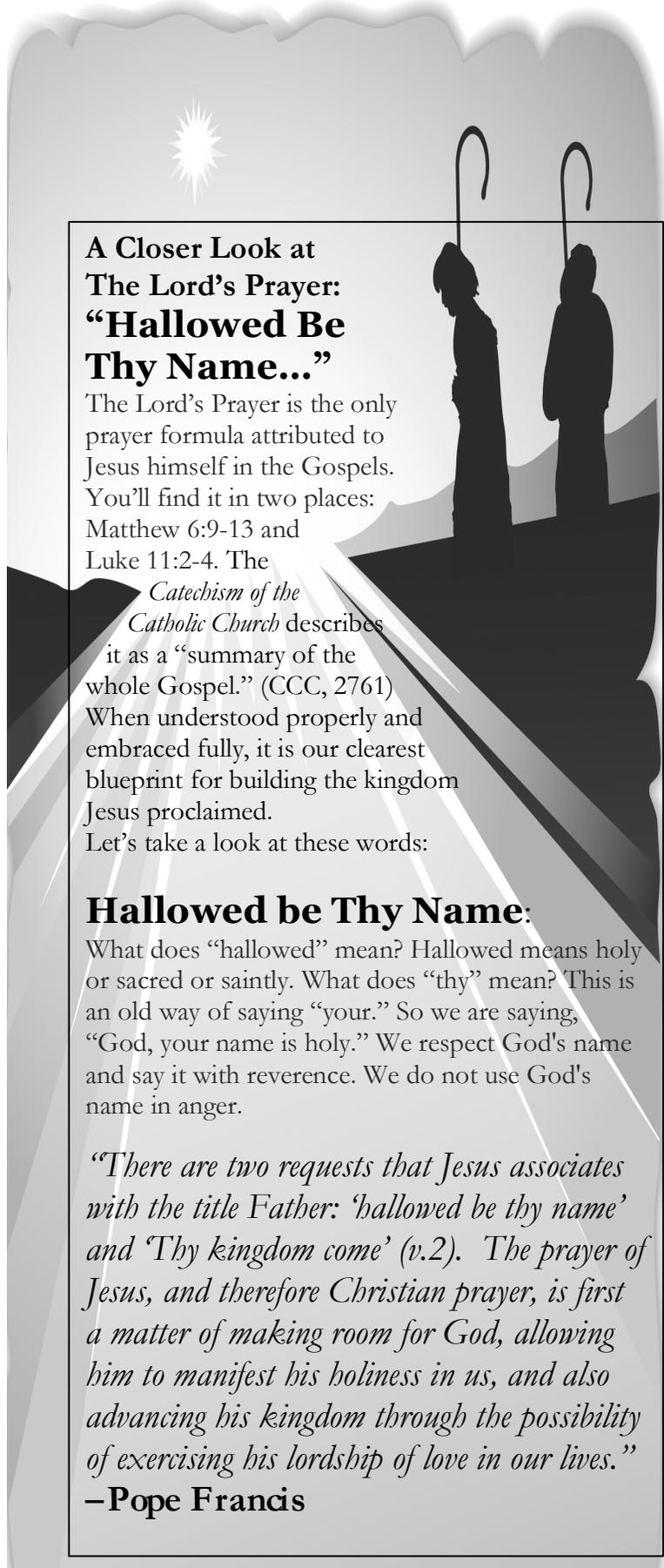


***The Lord will establish you as a holy people, as he swore to you, if you keep the commandments of the Lord, your God, and walk in his ways.
–Deuteronomy 28:9***

“In the name of the Father, the Son & the Holy Spirit.” This ancient prayer is one of the most central affirmations of faith we utter as Christians. It is also the root of the Catholic social teaching principle ***Call to Family, Community & Participation***: For as Kenneth Himes reminds us: “We must appreciate that the God in whose image we are made is Trinitarian; that is, we believe that within the very nature of God there is an eternal celebration of loving communion. A corollary to the claim that human beings are creatures made in the image of a Trinitarian God is that people are created for love. We exist for the purpose of entering into the experience of loving communion. Human beings are not meant to live in insolation but are meant to live in community with one another. We find ourselves precisely in the act of giving ourselves away to another and receiving the gift of another in our lives.”

As Catholics, we believe that God created us to be connected. The desire to feel connected to each other is part of our human nature. As fundamentally relational beings, we can only reach our full human potential in relationship. We can use our connections to build God’s kingdom. In fact, God calls us to do this. God wants us to actively participate in communities in a way that will transform them into vehicles of holiness. This includes in a special way the community of our families. Our families do not need to be perfect to be holy. Take a closer look at Jesus’ family tree (Matthew 1:1-17), and you’ll find a cast of colorful characters: *None* were perfect. *All* were partners in God’s redemptive work. *None* could have done it alone. *All* played their part. *Together* they were partners in God’s plan of salvation, members of a holy family – generations of men and women, patriarchs and slaves, kings and peasants, Jews and Gentiles. God worked through, with and in them to bring forth the Messiah. And if we open our hearts and allow him room, God will work through, with and in our own families to build the kingdom Jesus proclaimed.

*“Growth in holiness is a journey in community, side-by-side with others ... The common life, whether in the family, the parish, the religious community or any other, is made up of small everyday things. This was true of the holy community formed by Jesus, Mary and Joseph, which reflected in an exemplary way the beauty of the Trinitarian communion. It was also true of the life that Jesus shared with his disciples and with ordinary people. Let us not forget that Jesus asked his disciples to pay attention to details. The little detail that wine was running out at a party. The little detail that one sheep was missing. The little detail of noticing the widow who offered her two small coins. The little detail of having spare oil for lamps, should the bridegroom delay. The little detail of asking the disciples how many loaves of bread they had. The little detail of having a fire burning and a fish cooking as he waited for the disciples at daybreak. A community that cherishes the little details of love, whose members care for one another and create an open and evangelizing environment, is a place where the risen Lord is present, sanctifying it in accordance with the Father’s plan...”-Pope Francis, ***Gaudete et Exsultate*** (“***On the Call to Holiness in Today’s World***”), 2018*



A Closer Look at The Lord's Prayer: "Hallowed Be Thy Name..."

The Lord's Prayer is the only prayer formula attributed to Jesus himself in the Gospels. You'll find it in two places: Matthew 6:9-13 and Luke 11:2-4. The

Catechism of the Catholic Church describes it as a "summary of the whole Gospel." (CCC, 2761) When understood properly and embraced fully, it is our clearest blueprint for building the kingdom Jesus proclaimed. Let's take a look at these words:

Hallowed be Thy Name:

What does "hallowed" mean? Hallowed means holy or sacred or saintly. What does "thy" mean? This is an old way of saying "your." So we are saying, "God, your name is holy." We respect God's name and say it with reverence. We do not use God's name in anger.

"There are two requests that Jesus associates with the title Father: 'hallowed be thy name' and 'Thy kingdom come' (v.2). The prayer of Jesus, and therefore Christian prayer, is first a matter of making room for God, allowing him to manifest his holiness in us, and also advancing his kingdom through the possibility of exercising his lordship of love in our lives."

–Pope Francis



Examination of Conscience

- ✚ Do I try to make positive contributions in my family and in my communities? Do my attitudes and interactions create unity or division?
- ✚ Am I aware of problems facing my local community and involved in efforts to find solutions? What about national and global concerns? Do I stay informed and make my voice heard when needed?
- ✚ Who are the modern day outcasts in my communities? How would Jesus treat these people? How do I? Do my attitudes and interactions exclude or include ... empower or disempower them?
- ✚ Who do I include in my personal prayers? In my family's prayers?

Jesus lights the way