**17th Sunday OT – Luke 11:1-13**

The gospel begins with the Our Father, and I like what *Give Us This Day* reflection by Sr. Verna wrote,

“The Lord’s Prayer is no magic formula. It is an instruction about the Father to whom Jesus and his disciples pray. Jesus affirms what should be the quality of our prayer by telling two parables…In the first parable, a neighbor deals with a neighbor; in the second, a father deals with his son. Jesus is assuring his listeners that those who keep on asking, seeking, knocking will be answered, will find, will be welcomed.”

The prayer that Jesus taught his disciples is found in two places in the gospels. Luke’s version is shorter and its context is significant. It is part of the narrative of Jesus’ journey to Jerusalem and follows on the incident of Mary and Martha. It too can be understood as part of the answer to the lawyer’s question, “What must I do to inherit eternal life?” The Christian must have the social conscience of the Samaritan, the eagerness for the Word of God of Mary, and must also know how to address God as Father in prayer.

Short though the prayer is, a commentary on it can be written from the words of the rest of the gospel. The one who addressed God as “Father” (Abba) is Jesus himself, both during his public life and at his death. A model for those who pray, “Hallowed be your name” is Mary in her Magnificat and many others who thank God for the mercy they experience through Jesus. Those who pray, “Your kingdom come,” should remember the persistence of the widow begging for justice from the wicked judge. The best prayer for the forgiveness of sin comes from the publican in the Temple who asks for God’s mercy and has no time to bore God with his own achievements like the pharisee. Jesus himself gives the example of forgiveness of his enemies at his execution, and in his prayer on the Mount of Olives before his death gives his disciples instructions on how to avoid temptations.

The story of the one who wants bread from a friend at midnight, is a commentary on the words, “Give us each day our daily bread.” When we pray to God, we do pray not to a sleepy friend, but to a loving Father, ready to give the Holy Spirit to the children of God who ask him. Such daily bread helps us to carry our cross daily.

But there is one more and better way to pray, and that is today, here at this Eucharist, we as the ***ecclesia*** gather in the name of the ***Trinity*** when we first enter this sacred space by blessing ourselves with Holy Water and then greet each other with a spiritual blessing, ***“The Lord be with you,”*** before we settle ourselves to listen to the ***Word of God***. Then we prepare ourselves to receive our daily bread through the Eucharistic celebration of ***communion*** where we, the Body of Christ, meet ourselves through receiving the Body and Blood of Jesus. There is no more powerful prayer than the Eucharist, as the church reminds us, the pinnacle of our liturgical life as Church.

Each week we come knocking at God’s heavenly door for our daily bread at this Eucharist bringing the Kingdom of God to all those we will meet this week through all the programs here at St. Francis de Sales in education, in feeding the hungry, in taking care of the sick, in providing the means for the street people to clean their clothes and themselves. Did I miss anything?

I can hear Abba, Father saying for their sake, Thank You, Thank You, Thank You.