



His will or mine?

By Fanny Pedraza

As an adult I have adopted a prayer style that is a little less conventional, but I never placed in an “inactive file” those traditional prayers that I inherited from my holy mothers — the Catholic Church and the one who brought me into this world.

Of these prayers, the Our Father is my template for how I should pray and what I should seek. In the Lord’s Prayer Jesus not only gives me the words of my filial response to my Father, but he also gives me the Spirit by whom these words become “spirit and life” in me (CCC 2766) .

What is my attitude when I pray the Our Father?

Over time I have learned to pray in a more reflective way. I not only speak words; I listen, I question, and I confront my feelings as I respond to God’s invitation to begin a dialogue. Contrary to what I once believed, I am not the one who initiates the conversation but the one who responds.

God is ever-present in my life, inviting me to let him in. I acknowledge and welcome his presence, although sometimes the rhythm of my everyday activities prevents me from listening to his voice.

When I do start responding to God’s invitation, I usually tell him what is going on in my life and what I am feeling — as if he did not know! And when I realize that I am monopolizing that sacred moment, I tune my heart to the sweet and gentle whisper of his voice. I feel that whisper penetrating my being, illuminating me, strengthening me, and cleansing me.

Occasionally, when I come to the words, “thy will be done,” I have to pause and reconsider my petition, because what I am truly asking God is to do my will, to grant me what I am so fervently asking him.

By listening to his voice I have learned to trust his will — whatever it may be — and to patiently wait for the blessings that come from his answer, not from my petition.

The Our Father helps me to trust God and “not rely on your own insight.” It gives me the assurance that “he shall make straight your paths” (Proverbs 3:5-6) and that he will deliver me in times of distress and trouble (see Matthew 6:13.) I have gratefully realized that his is always the best answer to my prayer, so I humbly ask that his will, not mine, be done.

To read and reflect

Matthew 7: 7-9: Are these words a guarantee that Jesus will grant me exactly what I am praying for?

Luke 11: 1-4: Is it easy for me to submit my will to God when I pray? How do I respond when his will and mine are not the same?


Take time to share with your family

How, when and to whom do we pray as a family? Recall and discuss what blessings the family has received, as well as what prayers seem unanswered.

Dr. Pedraza is a national consultant for Hispanic catechesis with RCL Benziger. A nationally known speaker, she lives in Texas and has developed and adapted training programs for parish catechetical leaders.



8805 Governor’s Hill Drive, Suite 400
Cincinnati, OH 45249

 1-877-275-4725