

EQUESTRIAN ORDER OF THE HOLY SEPULCHRE OF JERUSALEM



WELCOME TO OUR

Fall Newsletter

Spirituality Team

UNPACKING THE PRAYERS OF THE ROSARY

There has been a lot written about the Rosary and the power of it. We wanted to explore the mysteries of the most Holy Rosary by unpacking the Prayers of the Rosary. Over the upcoming newsletters we will explore insights into each prayer to help us deepen our understanding for spiritual growth. Recently, on the 17th Sunday in Ordinary time (July 27th), the Gospel reading was Jesus's instruction on how to pray, the Our Father Prayer. So, we will start by unpacking the Our Father Prayer with a homily from *Sir Deacon Carl Shelton*:

The Our Father Prayer is familiar to every one of us at Mass. These words often come from our memory, spoken from the mind rather than the heart.

St. Theresa of Avila aware of this instructed her nuns "if you wish to become holy, you should pray the Our Father daily, taking an hour to meditate on its meaning."

THE STRUCTURE OF JESUS' PRAYER

The order of the prayer is deeply significant. Jesus directs us to begin by honoring God first—His glory and our reverence come before our personal needs.

ADDRESSING GOD AS FATHER

Jesus teaches us to begin with,
"Our Father who art in Heaven, hallowed be thy name."
This is personal and affectionately calling to God as a "Father,"
Our Prayer is not a means of extracting unwilling gifts
but an approach to a loving parent eager to care for His children.
It is Jesus, the Son, who revealed this intimate relationship.
When we first honor God as our loving Father, then all other concerns in
life fall into their rightful place.

HALLOWED BE THY NAME

Jesus instructs us to pray that our Father's name be hallowed, recognized He is Holy and we hold above all others. When this is established, everything else flows rightly into God's created order.

THY KINGDOM COME

"Thy Kingdom come" asks that God's way of ordering the world becomes our guide. We pray for our earthly choices to reflect the order and mind of God. The life of Jesus reveals the qualities of God's kingdom: peace (shalom), nonviolence, inclusion, forgiveness, and the order of the Trinity.

THY WILL BE DONE

"Thy will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven" is a petition for our will to be shaped by God's. We seek guidance in all our decisions, desiring to align our path with His.

GIVE US THIS DAY OUR DAILY BREAD

This petition is often misunderstood.

In Luke's original Greek writing he uses a word for bread "epi-ousion," is unique, and not used anywhere else meaning "super substantial food." It refers not only for daily physical sustenance but also a special nourishment for the soul. In our Catholic understanding, this bread is the Body and Blood of Jesus—transformed through transubstantiation feeding us for eternal life. God provides both for our bodily needs and our spiritual souls.

THE STRUCTURE OF JESUS' PRAYER *(Cont'd)*

FORGIVE US OUR TRESPASSES

"Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us" is central to Jesus' teachings. Forgiveness is not simply a wish; it is a concrete act of mending broken relationships, for families and into the broader world. Without God's grace, forgiveness is impossible.

St. Theresa urged her nuns to use this petition to consider ways to heal relationships, to share the lavish forgiveness we received from our Father with others.

LEAD US NOT INTO TEMPTATION

Finally, "Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil" acknowledges our spiritual struggle. To choose life not death.

Our eternal destiny—heaven or hell—is at stake.

Jesus warns of the many forces opposing God's kingdom. We are called to be warriors, elevating our Father's holiness by the way we live our choices.

St. Paul reminds us that our true battle is not against flesh and blood but against spiritual powers. We pray for God's strength to resist temptation and protection us from the evil one—both visible and invisible.

CONCLUSION

We thank our Father for sending Jesus, who taught us this prayer that leads us to holiness and eternal life and draws us closer to God's heart.

AMEN

A CHRISTIAN PILGRIM'S JOURNEY

Did you ever wonder what compelled a Christian Pilgrim to Journey to the Holy Land? What was it like? How long did it take? This essay explores pilgrimages during the era of the Crusades, from the late 11th to the 13th centuries. Pilgrimages to the Holy Land were acts of deep faith, physical endurance, and personal sacrifice. Pilgrims set out to seek penance, divine aid, and to venerate sacred sites linked to the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, with Jerusalem as the ultimate goal.

Routes varied, but many converged through major European cities toward Mediterranean ports. Northern Europeans often traveled via Germany and Italy to Venice, Genoa, or Pisa. French pilgrims journeyed through Lyon or Arles, then on to Italy or southern ports for sea voyages. Sea travel, though risky due to storms and piracy, was quicker than the treacherous overland route through the Balkans and Asia Minor.

Journeys ranged from months to over a year, depending on the route, resources, and conditions. Overland travel involved harsh terrain, unpredictable weather, and threats from bandits. Most pilgrims went on foot or horseback, traveling in groups for safety and relying on monasteries and churches for rest and provisions.

The pilgrimage tested both body and spirit. Pilgrims endured exhausting days of travel, meager food, poor sanitation, and disease. Yet, shared hardships fostered camaraderie that transcended social class and nationality. Faith provided resilience, with the shared goal of reaching the holy city.

Upon arriving in Jerusalem, pilgrims visited the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, that holds both the site of Christ's crucifixion and tomb. Many touched relics, prayed at sacred shrines, and took part in ceremonies, gaining a profound sense of spiritual renewal. As mementos, they often carried home palm branches, holy soil or water, and the distinctive pilgrim's shell—a badge of honor recognized throughout Christendom as proof of their sacred journey.

The Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem (EOHSJ) played a crucial role in aiding pilgrims. Founded to protect Christian holy sites and ensure safe passage, its members provided shelter, medical care, and armed protection against dangers along the way.

A CHRISTIAN PILGRIM'S JOURNEY (Cont'd)

For medieval Christians, such a pilgrimage was more than travel—it was an act of devotion capable of remitting sins and securing divine favor. The journey's hardships symbolized the pilgrim's willingness to suffer for faith. Pilgrimages also facilitated cultural and economic exchanges, linking distant parts of Europe and the Near East.

Ultimately, medieval pilgrimages during the Crusades were transformative journeys that deeply impacted the lives of pilgrims, offering spiritual renewal, social interaction, and profound personal reflection amidst great adversity. Yet even today, modern pilgrimages can have the same effect; although less arduous and time-consuming.

PILGRIMAGES BEYOND THE HOLYLAND

Although our primary focus of pilgrimages is the Holy Land today, the Order's mission and rich history has provided a path by protecting pilgrims on their spiritual journey, the holy sites and relics for veneration. Beyond Jerusalem, here is a modern pilgrims guide to the locations of sacred relics, churches dedicated to EOHSJ patron saints, and the burial places of saints who shaped the Order and our Christian faith. Each destination serves not only as a historical marker but as a place of prayer, reflection, and renewal—deepening one's commitment to the Order's mission of faith, service, and support for Christians in the Holy Land.

Saint / Item	Location	Site Name	Relevance to EOHSJ	Relics / Burial Site
St. Peter	Rome, Italy	St. Peter's Basilica	Prince of the Apostles; Pope and martyr; model of faith	Tomb beneath main altar
St. Paul	Rome, Italy	Basilica of St. Paul Outside the Walls	Apostle to the Gentiles; linked to the mission to proclaim Christ	Tomb beneath main altar

PILGRIMAGES BEYOND THE HOLYLAND *(Cont'd)*

Saint / Item	Location	Site Name	Relevance to EOHSJ	Relics / Burial Site
St. John the Baptist	Rome, Italy	San Giovanni in Laterano	Patron of the Order; forerunner of Christ	Relics (skull) venerated here, though contested with Amiens, France
St. Helena	Rome, Italy	<i>Santa Maria in Ara Coeli</i>	Mother of Constantine; finder of the True Cross; patroness of EOHSJ	Relics under the main altar
St. James the Greater	Santiago, Spain	Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela	Apostle; model for EOHSJ pilgrim spirit	Tomb in crypt under the main altar
St. George	Lydda (Lod), Israel (not visited here)	Church of St. George	Patron of knights, soldiers, and Christians in the East	Tomb in Lod, Israel (but widely venerated in Beirut, Madaba, and England)
St. Louis IX (King of France)	Saint-Denis, France	Basilica of Saint-Denis	Crusader king; model of holy leadership	Buried here; some relics formerly in Sainte-Chapelle, now dispersed

PILGRIMAGES BEYOND THE HOLYLAND (Cont'd)

Saint / Item	Location	Site Name	Relevance to EOHSJ	Relics / Burial Site
St. Pius X (Pope)	Vatican Grottoes	St. Peter's Basilica (Grottoes)	Pope who supported the Latin Patriarchate; model of Eucharistic piety	Body preserved under the Altar of the Presentation
Our Lady of Palestine	Deir Rafat, Palestine	<i>Sanctuary of Our Lady of Palestine</i>	Principal patroness of the EOHSJ	No burial, Assumed
Relic: Crown of Thorns	Paris, France	Sainte-Chapelle / Notre-Dame Treasury	Symbol of Christ's Passion; Crusader kings' prized relic	Now held in Louvre Treasury since Notre-Dame fire
Relic: True Cross	Rome, Italy	Santa Croce in Gerusalemme	Emblem of EOHSJ devotion to the Passion	Fragments of the True Cross, nails, and more housed here
Relic: Titulus Crucis ("INRI" sign)	Rome, Italy	Santa Croce in Gerusalemme	Believed to be part of the inscription above the Cross	On display in chapel reliquary

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