

The Catechism of the Catholic Church

SECTION TWO: THE LORD'S PRAYER

VI. "AND LEAD US NOT INTO TEMPTATION"

2846 This petition goes to the root of the preceding one, for our sins result from our consenting to temptation; we therefore ask our Father not to "lead" us into temptation. It is difficult to translate the Greek verb used by a single English word: the Greek means both "*do not allow us to enter into temptation*" & "*do not let us yield to temptation.*"¹⁵⁰ "*God cannot be tempted by evil & he himself tempts no one*";¹⁵¹ on the contrary, he wants to set us free from evil. We ask him not to allow us to take the way that leads to sin. We are engaged in the battle "*between flesh & spirit*"; this petition implores the Spirit of discernment & strength.

2847 The Holy Spirit makes us *discern* between trials, which are necessary for the growth of the inner man,¹⁵² & temptation, which leads to sin & death.¹⁵³ We must also discern between being tempted & consenting to temptation. Finally, discernment unmasks the lie of temptation, whose object appears to be good, a "*delight to the eyes*" & desirable,¹⁵⁴ when in reality its fruit is death.

God does not want to impose the good, but wants free beings.... There is a certain usefulness to temptation. No one but God knows what our soul has received from him, not even we ourselves. But temptation reveals it in order to teach us to know ourselves, & in this way we discover our evil inclinations & are obliged to give thanks for the goods that temptation has revealed to us.¹⁵⁵

2848 "*Lead us not into temptation*" implies a *decision of the heart*: "*For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.... No one can serve two masters.*"¹⁵⁶ "*If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit.*"¹⁵⁷ In this assent to the Holy Spirit the Father gives us strength. "*No testing has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, & he will not let you be tempted beyond your strength, but with the temptation will also provide the way of escape, so that you may be able to endure it.*"¹⁵⁸

2849 Such a battle & such a victory become possible only through prayer. It is by his prayer that Jesus vanquishes the tempter, both at the outset of his public mission & in the ultimate struggle of his agony.¹⁵⁹ In this petition to our heavenly Father, Christ unites us to his battle & his agony. He urges us to *vigilance* of the heart in communion with his own. Vigilance is "*custody of the heart*," & Jesus prayed for us to the Father: "*Keep them in your name.*"¹⁶⁰ The Holy Spirit constantly seeks to awaken us to keep watch.¹⁶¹ Finally, this petition takes on all its dramatic meaning in relation to the last temptation of our earthly battle; it asks for *final perseverance*. "*Lo, I am coming like a thief! Blessed is he who is awake.*"¹⁶²

VII. "BUT DELIVER US FROM EVIL"

2850 The last petition to our Father is also included in Jesus' prayer: "*I am not*

asking you to take them out of the world, but I ask you to protect them from the evil one."¹⁶³ It touches each of us personally, but it is always "we" who pray, in communion with the whole Church, for the deliverance of the whole human family. The Lord's Prayer continually opens us to the range of God's economy of salvation. Our interdependence in the drama of sin & death is turned into solidarity in the Body of Christ, the "*communion of saints*."¹⁶⁴

2851 In this petition, evil is not an abstraction, but refers to a person, Satan, the Evil One, the angel who opposes God. The devil (*dia-bolos*) is the one who "*throws himself across*" God's plan & his work of salvation accomplished in Christ.

2852 "*A murderer from the beginning, . . . a liar & the father of lies*," Satan is "*the deceiver of the whole world*."¹⁶⁵ Through him sin & death entered the world & by his definitive defeat all creation will be "*freed from the corruption of sin & death*."¹⁶⁶ Now "*we know that anyone born of God does not sin, but He who was born of God keeps him, & the evil one does not touch him. We know that we are of God, & the whole world is in the power of the evil one*."¹⁶⁷

The Lord who has taken away your sin & pardoned your faults also protects you & keeps you from the wiles of your adversary the devil, so that the enemy, who is accustomed to leading into sin, may not surprise you. One who entrusts himself to God does not dread the devil. "*If God is for us, who is against us?*"¹⁶⁸

2853 Victory over the "*prince of this world*"¹⁶⁹ was won once for all at the Hour when Jesus freely gave himself up to death to give us his life. This is the judgment of this world, & the prince of this world is "*cast out*."¹⁷⁰ "*He pursued the woman*"¹⁷¹ but had no hold on her: the new Eve, "*full of grace*" of the Holy Spirit, is preserved from sin & the corruption of death (the Immaculate Conception & the Assumption of the Most Holy Mother of God, Mary, ever virgin). "*Then the dragon was angry with the woman, & went off to make war on the rest of her offspring*."¹⁷² Therefore the Spirit & the Church pray: "*Come, Lord Jesus*,"¹⁷³ since his coming will deliver us from the Evil One.

2854 When we ask to be delivered from the Evil One, we pray as well to be freed from all evils, present, past, & future, of which he is the author or instigator. In this final petition, the Church brings before the Father all the distress of the world. Along with deliverance from the evils that overwhelm humanity, she implores the precious gift of peace & the grace of perseverance in expectation of Christ's return. By praying in this way, she anticipates in humility of faith the gathering together of everyone & everything in him who has "*the keys of Death & Hades*," who "*is & who was & who is to come, the Almighty*."¹⁷⁴

Deliver us, Lord, we beseech you, from every evil & grant us peace in our day, so that aided by your mercy we might be ever free from sin & protected from all anxiety, as we await the blessed hope & the coming of our Savior, Jesus Christ.¹⁷⁵

ARTICLE 4: THE FINAL DOXOLOGY

2855 The final doxology, "*For the kingdom, the power & the glory are yours, now &*

forever," takes up again, by inclusion, the first three petitions to our Father: the glorification of his name, the coming of his reign, & the power of his saving will. But these prayers are now proclaimed as adoration & thanksgiving, as in the liturgy of heaven.¹⁷⁶ The ruler of this world has mendaciously attributed to himself the three titles of kingship, power, & glory.¹⁷⁷ Christ, the Lord, restores them to his Father & our Father, until he hands over the kingdom to him when the mystery of salvation will be brought to its completion & God will be all in all.¹⁷⁸

2856 *"Then, after the prayer is over you say 'Amen,' which means 'So be it,' thus ratifying with our 'Amen' what is contained in the prayer that God has taught us."*¹⁷⁹

IN BRIEF:

2857 In the Our Father, the object of the first three petitions is the glory of the Father: the sanctification of his name, the coming of the kingdom, & the fulfilment of his will. The four others present our wants to him: they ask that our lives be nourished, healed of sin, & made victorious in the struggle of good over evil.

2858 By asking *"hallowed be thy name"* we enter into God's plan, the sanctification of his name - revealed first to Moses & then in Jesus - by us & in us, in every nation & in each man.

2859 By the second petition, the Church looks first to Christ's return & the final coming of the Reign of God. It also prays for the growth of the Kingdom of God in the *"today"* of our own lives.

2860 In the third petition, we ask our Father to unite our will to that of his Son, so as to fulfil his plan of salvation in the life of the world.

2861 In the fourth petition, by saying *"give us,"* we express in communion with our brethren our filial trust in our heavenly Father. *"Our daily bread"* refers to the earthly nourishment necessary to everyone for subsistence, & also to the Bread of Life: the Word of God & the Body of Christ. It is received in God's *"today,"* as the indispensable, (super-) essential nourishment of the feast of the coming Kingdom anticipated in the Eucharist.

2862 The fifth petition begs God's mercy for our offences, mercy which can penetrate our hearts only if we have learned to forgive our enemies, with the example & help of Christ.

2863 When we say *"lead us not into temptation"* we are asking God not to allow us to take the path that leads to sin. This petition implores the Spirit of discernment & strength; it requests the grace of vigilance & final perseverance.

2864 In the last petition, *"but deliver us from evil,"* Christians pray to God with the Church to show forth the victory, already won by Christ, over the *"ruler of this world,"* Satan, the angel personally opposed to God & to his plan of salvation.

2865 By the final *"Amen,"* we express our *"fiat"* concerning the seven petitions: *"So be it."*

NOTES

150 Cf. Mt 26:41.

151 Jas 1:13.

152 Cf. Lk. 8:13-15; Acts 14:22; Rom 5:3-5; 2 Tim 3:12.

153 Cf. Jas 1:14-15.

154 Cf. Gen 3:6.

155 Origen, De orat. 29 PG 11, 544CD.

156 Mt 6:21, 24.

157 Gal 5:25.

158 1 Cor 10:13.

159 Cf. Mt 4:1-11; 26:36-44.

160 Jn 17:11; Cf. Mk 13:9, 23, 33-37; 14:38; Lk 12:35-40.

161 Cf. 1 Cor 16:13; 1 Col 4:2; 1 Thess 5:6; 1 Pet 5:8.

162 Rev 16:15.

163 Jn 17:15.

164 Cf. RP 16.

165 Jn 8:44; Rev 12:9.

166 Roman Missal, Eucharistic Prayer IV, 125.

167 1 Jn 5:18-19.

168 St. Ambrose, De Sacr. 5, 4, 30: PL 16, 454; cf. Rom 8:31.

169 Jn 14:30.

170 Jn 12:31; Rev 12:10.

171 Rev 12:13-16.

172 Rev 12:17.

173 Rev 22:17, 20.

174 Rev 1:8,18; cf. Rev 1:4; Eph 1:10.

175 Roman Missal, Embolism after the Lord's Prayer, 126: Libera nos, quaesumus, Domine, ab omnibus malis, da propitius pacem in diebus nostris, ut, ope misericordiae tuae adiuti, et a peccato simus semper liberi, et ab omni perturbatione securi: expectantes beatam spem et adventum Salvatoris nostri Iesu Christi.

176 Cf. Rev 1:6; 4:11; 5:13.

177 Cf. Lk 4:5-6.

178 1 Cor 15:24-28.