

On this Sunday, the readings take us to a school of prayer. First of all we have Abraham's intercession for the people of Sodom. Because of their sins, they faced severe punishment. That discussion between Abraham and God is a bargain about the great price of sin. It starts at fifty and goes down to ten. Abraham makes an effort to bring out the good in their lives; he believes that the just people will save the world. His intercession is more important to the fate of humanity than the factors of evil. Abraham trusts in God's justice which saves even the guilty in order to avoid punishing the innocent.

The city of Sodom is presented to us as the most sinful of cities. However, if we look closely, we notice that the evil is always there. Every day, newspapers, radio, and television give us the latest news about politics, crime, and corruption. Then, what can we do? The big temptation would be to give up hope for this perished world. But, Abraham teaches us to change our point of view. In the midst of that corruption, there are the just people. Their generosity reminds us that nothing is lost forever.

Like Abraham, we are invited to stay in the Lord's presence. The exact mission of Christian communities is to intercede with God in this world that He so loves. If you love others as Christians, you keep them in your prayers. Like Abraham, we have a firm belief that the little remnant of faithful can save the multitude.

Unfortunately, in his bargaining, Abraham did not go far enough. But the Apostle Paul announces good news: there is one who is just and it is Jesus himself. By his passion, his death, and his resurrection, his salvation has been offered to humanity; our fate is linked to the Jesus. He rose; we too are called to resurrection. We who are baptized, we believe that God's strength acts in our lives. Christ presents himself to us as the only just one who does not weary of giving mercy.

The Gospel leads us far in learning about prayer. It is Jesus himself who gives us the example. He prays often and at great length. Sometimes he even prays all through the night. Today, Jesus wants us to join Him in prayer. It is important because prayer allows us to enter within a strong and deep relationship with God. We can say to the sick and elderly, "As long as you can pray, you have value on this earth." That is true. Our world needs much prayer from all.

Through the Our Father, the great prayer Jesus teaches us, all is made clear about our relationship to God and others. He teaches us to go to him like a father full of tenderness. The first part tells us what we should be most concerned about - God's reign, his glory, and his will. "Hallowed be thy name..." It is through our life and our world that God's holiness should be manifested. Through these requests, we express our gratitude to the Father who fills us with his love. Our response should be one of love.

The second part of the Our Father concerns our needs and the ones of our world. It is with confidence that we ask God for bread that we need every day. We think of course about material

food that is necessary for us to live. But the most essential bread is the Eucharist, which Christians must feed upon often to be transformed by Christ. It is there that they will find light and strength from his grace.

“Forgive us our sins...” God shows Himself as our Father when his forgiveness liberates our hearts and brings us back to life. And if we ask for forgiveness, it is because we have learned how to forgive our brothers. “Do not lead us into temptation...” That temptation is the one of despair; it is when we think that God has abandoned us. Jesus teaches us to come back to the Father to ask Him to deliver us from that evil which tries to destroy us.

It is in this prayer that we find true gladness. It is by this prayer that we find the courage to love like Jesus does. It is this prayer which will make our lives worthy of God.

Yes, Lord, teach us to pray. Teach us to come back to our Father with confidence and with perseverance. Amen!!!!