

Homily 17th Sunday Year C 2022

Teaching us the prayer we now call the 'Our Father', puts us in the right disposition to approach God with the respect, dignity and openness we need to appreciate his deep love for us. It is like entering the company of a best friend and being filled with delight. Presence more than words is the most important. If anything, in prayer we want God to speak to us first – we want to listen.

What does Jesus have to say?

Jesus says: *Ask, and it will be given to you; search, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened to you. For the one who asks always receives; the one who searches always finds; the one who knocks will always have the door opened to him.*

Prayer needs to be completely open and trusting. If we do not really believe Jesus is a true friend, then we will not realise that we always receive especially when what we receive is different from that for which we asked. Often it is in hindsight that we realise that what God gives us is better than that for which we asked. The door that opens may not always be the one we thought we would be entering but discover it to be a better one. And we always find when we search but not always what we were looking for. And again, it is often something better.

Jesus makes it clear that God never gives us anything that is detrimental, evil or harmful to us like scorpions or snakes nor does God sell us short.

Prayer, then, is the way to God's heart and God's way of reaching our hearts!

Let's end with a story:

A wise woman who was traveling in the mountains found a precious stone in a stream.

The next day she met another traveller who was hungry, and the wise woman opened her bag to share her food. The hungry traveller saw the precious stone and asked the woman to give it to him.

She did so without hesitation.

The traveller left rejoicing in his good fortune. He knew the stone was worth enough to give him security for a lifetime. But, a few days later, he came back to return the stone to the wise woman.

"I've been thinking," he said.

"I know how valuable this stone is, but I give it back in the hope that you can give me something even more precious. **Give me what you have within you that enabled you to give me this stone.**"

A couple of elderly ladies were sitting together chatting about their grandchildren. *"I send gifts, greeting cards and cheques with substantial amount of money to my grandchildren and still they don't visit me"* said the first one sadly.

The second old lady said *"Oh I, too, send cheques to my grandchildren and they visit me all the time!"*

"Wow you are so fortunate it's great to have family around".

The second old lady smiled: **"Rest assured, my grandchildren are the same as yours. I just don't sign the cheques"**