

Pathway(s) to the Father's Heart

“From Scattered to Gathered”

(all Scripture passages are from the New American Bible)

1. Litany of God the Father's Heart

Lord, have mercy

Lord, have mercy.

Christ, have mercy.

Christ have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.

God the Father of Heaven,

Have mercy on us.

God the Son, Redeemer of the world,

Have mercy on us.

God the Holy Spirit, our Advocate,

Have mercy on us.

Holy Trinity, one God,

Have mercy on us.

Holy Heart of God the Father, have mercy on me. Resp:

I put my trust in You.

Infinite Heart of God the Father, have mercy on me.

Resp.

Loving Heart of God the Father, have mercy on me.

Resp.

Merciful Heart of God the Father, have mercy on me.

Resp.

Forgiving Heart of God the Father, have mercy on me.

Resp.

Faithful Heart of God the Father, have mercy on me.

Resp.

Compassionate Heart of God the Father, have mercy on me. Resp.

Mystical Heart of God the Father, have mercy on me.

Resp.

Caring Heart of God the Father, have mercy on me.

Resp.

Everlasting Heart of God the Father, have mercy on me.

Resp.

Suffering Heart of God the Father, have mercy on me.

Resp.

Grace-filled Heart of God the Father, have mercy on me. Resp.

Mighty Heart of God the Father, have mercy on me.

Resp.

Glorious Heart of God the Father, have mercy on me.

Resp.

Blessed Heart of God the Father, have mercy on me.

Resp.

Healing Heart of God the Father, have mercy on me.

Resp.

Invisible Heart of God the Father, have mercy on me.

Resp.

Fatherly Heart of God the Father, have mercy on me.

Resp.

Flaming Heart of God the Father, have mercy on me.

Resp.

Tender Heart of God the Father, have mercy on me.

Resp.

Listening Heart of God the Father, have mercy on me.

Resp.

Powerful Heart of God the Father, have mercy on me.

Resp.

Filial Heart of God the Father, have mercy on me.

Resp.

Endearing Heart of God the Father, have mercy on me.

Resp.

Glorified Heart of God the Father, have mercy on me.

Resp.

Sacred Heart of God the Father, have mercy on me.

Resp.

Comforting Heart of God the Father, have mercy on me.

Resp.

Visible Heart of God the Father, have mercy on me.

Resp.

Understanding Heart of God the Father, have mercy on me.

Resp.

Plentiful Heart of God the Father, have mercy on me.

Resp.

Enduring Heart of God the Father, have mercy on me. Resp.

Magnificent Heart of God the Father, have mercy on me. Resp.

Peaceful Heart of God the Father, have mercy on me. Resp.



Constant loving Heart of God the Father, have mercy on me. *Resp.*

Always vigilant Heart of God the Father, have mercy on me. *Resp.*

Accepting Heart of God the Father, have mercy on me. *Resp.*

Lamb of God, Who takes away the sins of the world, *Spare us, O Lord.*

Lamb of God, Who takes away the sins of the world, *Graciously hear us, O Lord.*

Lamb of God, Who takes away the sins of the world, *Have mercy on us.*

Let us pray.

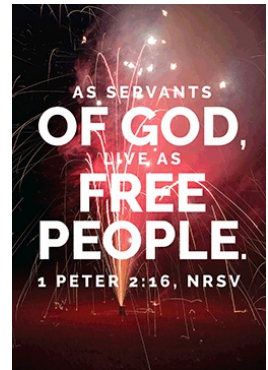
O Heavenly Father, You desire that we come to You for all our needs. You have sent Your Son, Jesus, to forgive us and save us through the power of the Cross. In this great act of forgiveness, we are restored to You. May we desire to grow in holiness and Your love now and for all eternity. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

2. Some important faith thoughts for us before we begin:

- Jesus is always between the Father and each person. “The Cross is the unique sacrifice of Christ, the ‘One Mediator between God and men.’ But, because in His incarnate divine person He has in some way united himself to every man, ‘the possibility of being made partners, in a way known to God, in the Paschal Mystery’ is offered to all men. He calls his disciples to ‘take up [their] cross and follow [Him],’ for Christ also suffered for [us], leaving [us] an example so that [we] should follow in His steps.’ In fact Jesus desires to associate with his redeeming sacrifice those who were to be its first beneficiaries. This is achieved supremely in the case of his mother, who was associated more intimately than any other person in the mystery of His redemptive suffering. Apart from the Cross there is no other ladder by which we may get to heaven.” (*Catechism of the Catholic Church, CCC, #618.*)
- "No one can say 'Jesus is Lord' except by the Holy Spirit." "God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, 'Abba! Father!'"
²This knowledge of faith is possible only in the Holy Spirit: to be in touch with Christ, we must first have been touched by the Holy Spirit. He comes to meet us and kindles faith in us. By virtue of our Baptism, the first sacrament of the faith, the Holy Spirit in the

Church communicates to us, intimately and personally, the life that originates in the Father and is offered to us in the Son..." (*Catechism of the Catholic Church, #683*)

- The Scripture passage that makes sense of this conference is: “³Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavens, ⁴as He chose us in Him, before the foundation of the world, to be holy and without blemish before Him. In love ⁵He destined us for adoption to Himself through Jesus Christ, in accord with the favor of his will, ⁶for the praise of the glory of his grace that he granted us in the beloved. Fulfillment through Christ. ⁷In Him we have redemption by His Blood, the forgiveness of transgressions, in accord with the riches of His Grace ⁸that He lavished upon us. In all wisdom and insight, ⁹He has made known to us the mystery of His will in accord with His favor that he set forth in Him¹⁰as a plan for the fullness of times, to sum up all things in Christ, in heaven and on earth. Inheritance through the Spirit. ¹¹In Him we were also chosen, destined in accord with the purpose of the One who accomplishes all things according to the intention of His will, ¹²so that we might exist for the praise of His Glory, we who first hoped in Christ. ¹³In Him you also, who have heard the Word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and have believed in Him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, ¹⁴which is the first installment of our inheritance toward redemption as God’s possession, to the praise of His glory.” (Ephesians 1:3-14)



3. If we were to take a straw poll today, how many of you would want a brand new beginning on your spiritual life? Undoubtedly, many of you would say “yes.” There are a number of new terms that will be used today to help us come from being somewhere out there to feel that you are being drawn to know the Father’s Heart and being His child through spiritual adoption. A child of God happens through Baptism and remains with us all the days of our lives. God the Father wants to

have in actuality a loving intimate relationship with us. In a former part of my life I was afraid of being called a child of God because I wanted to be strong on my own without God’s strength. What a mistake! Now I see now that being a child of God brings enormous strength from God through humility and blessings upon blessings each day. The following Opening Prayer called the Collect from the Roman Missal speaks quite well of God’s great gift to us.

“O God, who through the grace of adoption chose us to be children of light, grant, we pray, that we may not be wrapped in the error but always be seen to stand in the bright light of truth. Through our Lord Jesus, Your Son who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God for ever and ever.” (Roman Missal, 13 Sunday of Ordinary Time Collect, Page 327).

Can you imagine that something would hold you back from the Father’s love and intimacy? The **Our Father** is the greatest prayer and it holds phenomenal teaching about forgiveness expressing, “... forgive us our trespass and as we forgive those who trespass against us..” The desire of not wanting to be a child of God and unforgiveness are terrible stumbling blocks to spiritual growth in one’s life. Before we begin this teaching, let’s take a moment to see whether there is someone that you or I have not forgiven. (Pause) The following prayer is the release needed to open the doors to the love and intimacy with God the Father.

First Prayer

Dear Lord, I forgive (name this person) for _____. I release this person to You. I choose not to hold on to my bitterness and anger, and I ask You to take away any pain or hurt that I am feeling and heal my damaged emotions. In Jesus’ Name I pray. Amen.

And a second prayer:

Dear Lord, please remove the plank from my eye to see the enormous beauty that awaits me as I ask for forgiveness in not accepting the gift given in Baptism of being a child of spiritual adoption to You. I believe now that I need to be and want to be a child of God through humility and to be open to the graces and blessings that You desire to give to me. I love that You would gather me from the scattered to be with the gathered.



- Some people encounter God the Father’s love on a daily basis, as a living experience. The Father has great love for all of His children. The purpose of this teaching is to open the door to the reality and acceptance of the Father’s love and intimacy for everyone. The power of God’s Word in the Bible is a direct encounter with God in a number of different ways. There are many categories of words covering the Old and New Testaments, like forgiveness, mercy, love, intimacy, covenant, and many others that are a part of opening the doors for this relationship with God. Jesus expresses freely in the Gospel of John His relationship with the Father. “As the Father loves Me, so I also love you. Remain in my love.” (John 15:9)



We all believe that God the Father is in Heaven. It is a real step in faith to believe that He is with us right now and on a daily basis, continually throughout one’s life. This is the age of the coming of the Father’s Heart. Jesus is the vertical link between the Father and us; the Holy Spirit moves in our midst to carry out the Father’s will that He is in our hearts and that we are in His Heart. The heart stands for compassion and understanding, live-giving and complex. It is a symbol for love—often known as the seat of emotions, the heart is synonymous with affection.

Think for a moment if someone plants a garden to be beautiful with flowers and vegetables; leaves it and never comes back to take care of the garden. Why spend the time to plant all the flowers and the vegetables that are in a garden? God the Father has created everyone of us. We were created in love. We are supported in this life with His Love. We are drawn back to Him through His Son, Jesus, whom He sent to save us. God the Father, also known in a very personal and Fatherly way can be called “Abba.” He grants many graces in this teaching to come to know Him in a special way. It all began when we were created, born, and



reborn into His Kingdom in the Sacrament of Baptism. In Baptism, each one of us became a child of God the Father. This life is the unfolding of His great love for us. Abba wants to be intimate with us.

5. God the Father’s love is in Jesus. Jesus is the vertical means for us to have this love of the Father. Openly pray to God asking Him to experience His love in your life. If after some time goes by and you are not moved, then ask the Father or Jesus to remove the barricades in order for you to receive His love and experience His loving Presence and Heart. We must also recognize that God loves us even when we are not moved. The Father’s love for us is not an occasional activity; it is a steady, ongoing work of God’s Presence from His Heart to each one of us. Daily prayer is an encounter with the Father’s love. See daily prayer as a gift from the Father’s Heart to your heart. It is a gift of His Love that becomes your love for Him, others, and self, and a gift of His Presence to fill your presence. God’s love and intimacy are meant to set you on fire with the Holy Spirit, like a daily experience of the Pentecost and the goodness of God.

6. Here is how the writer of the Book of Psalms speaks of God’s abundant goodness in His blessings¹: “How great is your goodness, Lord, stored up for those who fear² You. You display it for those who trust You, in the sight of the children of Adam.” (Ps 31:20)



Let everything that breathes praise the Lord.

7. God’s love and intimacy helps us to

¹Remember the sense of God’s blessings to each person in the May, 2019, monthly teaching of the Servants of the Heart of the Father.

²Fear has many connotations. Fearing God is a respect and a reverence for God. Fear is used 300 times or more in reference to God in the Bible. Fear of God is something good rather than bad. In the *Catholic Encyclopedia*, Jacques Forget explains the fear of the Lord that it fills us with a sovereign respect for God, and makes us dread, above all things, to offend Him. (Remember fear of the Lord is one of the Gifts of the Holy Spirit.)

work through the daily struggles and fears of life. You can believe that God is present with you in prayer with His love and intimacy. Some days of prayer are so moving that we feel filled with His Presence, Love, and Heart. Other days in prayer, it is a real struggle to make it through the time spent to pray. Ask for the Grace of God to help you identify the source(s) of your struggle to be overcome in prayer. This is where God’s power breaks through the struggle that you may come to know His saving power. This is an experience of His love and intimacy. So often, one faces his/her weakness in prayer and may get stuck there for some period of time. For example, fear can cause great difficulty or struggle in prayer. **Remember that you are loved today.**

Another Scripture passage from the New Testament is a great help in the struggle of prayer. “... perfect love drives out fear because fear has to do with punishment, and so one who fears is not yet perfect in love.” (1 John 4:18)

8. God the Father asks for all of our struggles, difficulties, and fears, etc. in prayer. My servant give Me all of your worries, troubles, unknowns, health problems, forgetfulness, your perceived limitations of all kinds, and let Me take care of them. Let this be a form of your prayer:

“Abba Father, I give to You all of my worries, troubles, unknowns, health problems, forgetfulness, my perceived limitations of all kinds, stresses, pains, lack of money. I give all of the pressures in my life to You. Let me move and walk in peace in Your ways, Love, Presence, and Heart. Let me live life with simplicity, not on luxuries and the things of this world.” Amen.

9. Prayer advances us in the Kingdom of God and the love and intimacy of the Father’s Heart, the saving power of Jesus, and in the life of the Holy Spirit. “For freedom Christ has set us free; so stand firm therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery.” (Galatians 5:1)



Come to the heights were God the Father is calling you.

Also, remember this “If we live by the Spirit, let us also keep in step with the Spirit. Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another.” (Galatians 5:25-26). The Holy Spirit was sent to us by the Father and the Son to carry on the work of salvation, the mission

of Jesus, and to offer others what God has given to us in blessings. Faith has a unique characteristic, whatever we share in faith with another person, it does not grow smaller, but rather grows greater.

10. Sometimes it is so difficult to give up the old way of life. We have become too accustomed to it. God’s calling is to remain in His love and to keep His Commandments. For instance, the 10 Commandments come across to us as “thou shalt not.” There is a far greater vision given to everyone in the 10 Commandments. The Commandments open us to the vision of God’s love and intimacy, and to live in the freedom of the Holy Spirit. “If you keep My Commandments, you will remain in My love, just as I have kept My Father’s commandments and remain in His love. I have told you this so My joy might be in you and your joy might be complete.” (John 15:10-11).
11. Have you noticed or realized that the old ways in your spiritual life are holding you back? For instance, stubbornness- a resistance to God’s ways, that is holding us back from the beautiful grace for this day that God wants to give to make your day lived in His love and intimacy. Another step in spiritual growth is waiting for us, as we give up the old ways to receive the love and intimacy of the Father’s Heart. It is God’s desire to renew us spiritually, on an ongoing basis. This keeps one’s faith alive and motivates a person continually. This spiritual renewal is God’s way of keeping us faithful to Him and the life of the Church. The living of one’s faith can positively or negatively effect the life of one’s church and also being a servant as well. God does teach us in prayer to reject godless ways. “Whoever heeds instruction is on the path to life, but he who rejects reproof leads others astray.” (Proverbs 10:17)

12. It is quite common that we have learned to curse or say negative words against others for even the smallest of reasons. Our Father is a Father of blessings. Every word that God speaks is a word of blessing. By the Spirit of God moving in our midst, life takes on a new dimension. “... He turned the curse into a blessing for you, because the Lord your God loves you.” (Dt 23:5, NIV) Negative or cursing words cause wounds. Blessing words heal wounds and the broken-hearted. There is no shortage of words



that wound people in our world: you are too dumb, you cost the family a lot of money, you’ll never be any good, and many more phrases like this in our lives. Ask God the Father in prayer to make you a new creation and give you a new heart. Ask the Holy Spirit to give you the words to speak light in the midst of darkness. The movement of the Holy Spirit is to make cleansing water flow with the words that you speak. The grace of the Holy Spirit provides forgiving words to release the harmful words caught up in anyone’s heart.

13. The Holy Spirit renews us to have living faith and to gather us into the unity that we celebrate in Jesus. The Father desires to shower His glory upon us in prayer. It is very worldly to build up a complicated life while in God’s world-simplicity of heart and lifestyle are the path to follow. The life of a servant is to discover the worldly ways in one’s life, reject them, and move toward God’s ways. The daily reading of Scripture opens up more doors than you can imagine. The thoughts and inspirations that come from Scripture are truly the work of the Holy Spirit. Consider this as the Father is speaking to you, “My servant, I can fill your life with My Presence ever so easily. My Love can replace all that you consider love (turns out to be a false love) in your life with the real love. God the Father can renew your heart to look like His Heart.”

“Let Me further the call of the servants based on simplicity of lifestyle and the giftedness of yearning for My Heart, Love, and Presence.” “Make known to me your ways, Lord; teach me your paths, guide me by your fidelity and teach me, for You are God my Savior, for You I wait all the day long. Remember Your compassion and Your mercy, O Lord, for they are ages old.” (Ps 25:4-6)

14. The Saints of the Church have provided some remarkable insights into spiritual growth.

A Prayer for Spiritual Renewal

“Disturb us, Lord, to dare more boldly, to venture on wider seas where storms will show Your mastery; where losing sight of land, we shall find the stars. We ask You to push back the horizons of our hopes; and to push us into the future in strength, courage, hope, and love. Because we have dreamed too little, when we arrived safely because we sailed too close to the shore.

Disturb us, Lord, when with the abundance of things we possess, we have lost our thirst for the water of life; having fallen in love with life, we have ceased to dream of eternity and in our efforts to build a new earth, we have allowed our vision of the new Heaven to dim. Amen.” Sir Francis Drake (1540-1596)

Reflection time

1. What are your thoughts and reflections when you hear about the Father’s love for you?

2. Abba is a very close familial term used in a family meaning daddy. Do you want to be close to the Father? And be His daughter or son?

3. From a letter of Pope St. Clement I to the Corinthians

“Seek the good of all, not personal advantage. The command has been written: Cling to the saints, for those who cling to them will be sanctified. There is a passage in Scripture as well which states: With the innocent you will be innocent, and with the chosen one you will be chosen also; likewise with the perverse you will deal perversely. Devote yourselves, then, to the innocent and the just; they are God’s chosen ones. Why are there strife and passion, schisms and even war among you? Do we not possess the same Spirit of grace which was given to us and the same calling in Christ? Why do we tear apart and divide the body of Christ? Why do we revolt against our own body? Why do we reach such a degree of insanity that we forget that we are members of one another? Do not forget the words of Jesus our Lord: Woe to that man; it would be better for him if he had not been born rather than scandalise one of my chosen ones. Indeed it would be better for him to have a great millstone round his neck and to be drowned in the sea than that he lead astray one of my chosen ones. Your division has led many astray, has made many doubt, has made many despair, and has brought grief upon us all. And still your rebellion continues.

Pick up the letter of blessed Paul the Apostle. What did he write to you at the beginning of his ministry? Even then you had developed factions. So Paul, inspired by the Holy Spirit, wrote to you concerning himself and Cephas and Apollos. But that division involved you in less sin because you

were supporting apostles of high reputation and a person approved by them.

We should put an end to this division immediately. Let us fall down before our Master and implore His mercy with our tears. Then he will be reconciled to us and restore us to the practice of brotherly love that befits us. For this is the gate of justice that leads to life, as it is written: Open to me the gates of justice. When I have entered there, I shall praise the Lord. This is the gate of the Lord; the just shall enter through it. There are many gates which stand open, but the gate of justice is the gateway of Christ. All who enter through this gate are blessed, pursuing their way in holiness and justice, performing all their tasks without discord. A person may be faithful; he may have the power to utter hidden mysteries; he may be discriminating in the evaluation of what is

said and pure in his actions. But the greater he seems to be, the more humbly he ought to act, and the more zealous he should be for the common good rather than his own interest.”

Do you agree with the letter from Pope St. Clement I? Why or why not?

