From the Desk of Fr. Leo

During our Lord's life, one of his favorite spots for prayer was the Mount of Olives. On that site a Church has been erected called "Pater Noster Church" or simply "The Church of the Our Father." In the arcade of the Church are thirty-two stone tablets upon which the words of the Our Father have been inscribed in thirty-two languages. It was possibly on the Mount of Olives that Jesus had been praying when his apostles came and asked him to teach them how to pray.

The apostles were perhaps looking for a precise formula to use in prayer, but it was not Jesus' intention to give them such. Rather, he wished to indicate to them the manner, the spirit, and the feeling they should have in prayer. The early Christians understood that it was the idea of the prayer that was important, and not the precise words.

The apostles were both surprised and amazed at Jesus' answer. They were surprised at the brevity of the prayer. They had observed how Jesus himself spent very long periods in private prayer. Naturally, they expected that he would possibly recite for them that he had said in those extended periods of prayer. Also, at that time daily Jewish prayers were long and involved, comprising as many as eighteen benedictions. The apostles were amazed at the familiar term "Father" with which they were told to address God. It is true that the Jews thought of God as their Father, but in the entire Old Testament, God is referred to as a Father on only fourteen occasions, and the Jews never dared to address him as such in prayer. In the First Reading, we saw how careful even Abraham was in pleading with God to spare Sodom and Gomorrah. Though he was bold in his approach to God, he was cautious not to appear brazen or impudent. Abraham did not use the term" Father" but only "Lord". You can imagine how the apostles must have felt when they were told that they were to be more familiar with God than even the great Abraham was.

The word, however, has more than a psychological implication. It expresses a great truth that God as our Father is the source of all our life, spiritual as well as physical. St. Paul, in the Second Reading today, speaking of baptism wrote, "God gave you new life in company with Christ." In baptism, God truly became our Father. He gave us a share in the same life that his divine Son possesses in fullness from all eternity. And so, when we pray, God sees in us the person of Jesus, and he can say of us, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased.

Whenever we pray especially at Mass, we should realize that we are not praying alone – that Jesus is living and praying within us and that it is he who makes our prayers so pleasing and so effective.

Fr. Leo Alban Asuncion

Mass Intentions for the Week

Tues.	**July 26**	**11:00AM**
Special Intentions		
Wed.	**July 27**	**11:00AM**
Special Intentions		
Thur.	**July 28**	**11:00PM**
Special Intentions		
Fri.	**July 29**	**11:00AM**
Special Intentions		
Sat.	**July 30**	**4:30PM**
Rocky Ty (Thanksgiving/birthday)		
Sun.	**July 31**	**9:00AM**
Special Intentions		
Port Costa		**11:00AM**
People of the Parish		

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