

17th Sunday of Ordinary Time

Genesis 18:20-32
Psalm 138:1-3,6-8
Colossians 2:12-14
Luke 11:1-13

Monday July 25 St. James

2 Corinthians 4:7-15
Ps 126:1bc-6
Matthew 20:20-28

Tuesday July 26 Sts. Joachim and Anne

Jeremiah 14:17-22
Ps 79:8,9,11,13
Matthew 13:36-43

Wednesday July 27

Jeremiah 15:10,16-21
Ps 59:2-4,10-11,17,18
Matthew 13:44-46

Thursday July 28

Jeremiah 18:1-6
Ps 146:1b-6ab
Matthew 13:47-53

Friday July 29

Sts. Martha, Mary, Lazarus

Jeremiah 26:1-9
Ps 69:5,8-10,14
John 11:19-27
or Luke 10:38-42

Saturday July 30

Jeremiah 26:11-16,24
Ps 69:15-16,30-31,33-34
Matthew 14:1-12

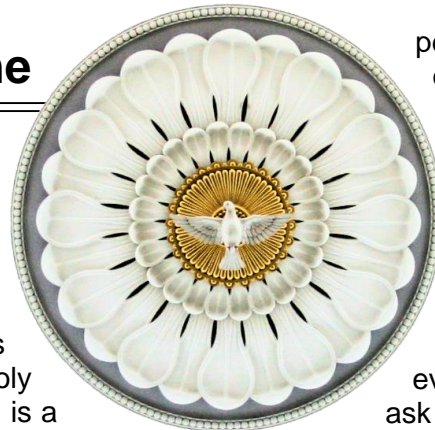
In Luke 11:1-13, Jesus teaches us how to pray with faith. The "bread" that runs as a theme in this scripture is the life of holiness. The "Bread of Life" is Jesus. The gift of the Holy Spirit, the Giver of Life, is a *holy* life.

Notice also that the visitor in the parable is a friend of God, not a stranger, who wants to share the bread with another friend. This represents a baptized Christian who wants to share the friendship of God ("three loaves" – the Trinity) with others, but he or she is inadequate for the task.

When we knock on the door to God's heart seeking help for our inadequacies, the Father gives us his fully adequate Holy Spirit. And that's not all we get! Whenever we pray, this Holy Spirit connects us to the Father and to Jesus. Therefore, every prayer increases our holiness, brings us closer to God and empowers us to be more like Jesus. But holiness does not come quickly nor easily. We must

be persistent in our prayer lives. We must continually rely on God's Spirit in order to resist temptations and grow in faith.

No matter what we ask God to share with us, including the material things that we need or desire, God wants to use it to nourish our souls. This is what we ask for when we pray, "Give us this day our daily bread." Be



persistent. Receiving God's bread takes time (we're slow learners).

It's the devil who says we can have everything we ask for as fast as

we want it. New Age and occult practices are fast-food spiritualities that are riddled with the dangerously unhealthy fat of false beliefs. They lack the growth in holiness that we can only receive from the Holy Spirit. Many people turn to the occult because they don't have the desire to do the hard work of holiness.

The supernatural adequacies of the Holy Spirit are ours for the asking, because we already received the Holy Spirit during baptism. However, to live in God's supernatural power, we have to pray persistently, identify our sins and repent, and humbly open ourselves to the holiness of the Holy Spirit.

Reflect & Discuss:

1. How much do you rely on the Holy Spirit's help in your daily life?
2. How often do you humble yourself before the Lord in prayer and ask for an increase of holiness?
3. Describe your prayer life. How does it help you become holier in your daily activities?
4. How has the Holy Spirit purified you?