

Fourth Sunday of Easter C: May 8, 2022  
“*The Father and I (Who am Mercy Itself) are One!*”

Do you remember that scene between Phillip and Our Lord at the Last Supper the night before Jesus died? Let me remind you of those words. Christ has told His Apostles that in His Father’s house “there are many mansions,” (St. John 14. 2) when Phillip says to Jesus:

“*Lord, show us the Father, and we shall be satisfied.*” Jesus said unto him: *‘Have I been with you so long, and yet you do not know Me, Phillip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father...’*” (St. John 14. 8-9)

Our Lord says these words to His Apostles on the night before He dies, immediately before the Last Supper. These words are really part of a long prayer, often referred to as the Lord’s Priestly Prayer of the Last Supper, which is ratified by Christ’s death and resurrection on the Cross. Or to put it another way, the way we know that Jesus’ words are *really true (that He and the Father are one)* is that He dies for those words and, defeating even death, rises from the dead!

Now, in today’s Holy Gospel (again from St. John) Our Lord tells us again that “*the Father and I are one.*” (St. John 10. 30) In preparing this review, I was asking myself how, exactly, was the most efficient way to attack this mystery.

Several things occurred to my mind all at once.

First of all, we are dealing with a *mystery*. Let me remind you: a *mystery* in the Catholic Church is not a *mystery* in the ordinary sense of the word, that is to say, a *whodunit*. In the ordinary sense of the word, ‘mystery’ means that we have a problem, which, after following many clues, an answer may be found. In the Church, when we are presented with a *true mystery*, this means that we are presented with a reality that is utterly beyond us; however, with the grace of God, by way of prayer and/or sacramental rites, we can enter into that reality and be changed both in time, and, if we persevere, in eternity. The best way to demonstrate the working of the word mystery is to show its application in the Eucharist, which we can see if we look briefly at the new *Compendium of the Catechism of the Catholic Church*.

280. In what way is the Eucharist a *memorial* of the sacrifice of Christ?

The Eucharist is a *memorial* in the sense that it makes present an actual the sacrifice which Christ offered to the Father on the Cross, once and for all on behalf of mankind.... The sacrifice of the Cross and the sacrifice of the Eucharist are *one and the same sacrifice*. The priest and the victim are the same, only the manner of offering is different: in a blood manner on the Cross, in an unbloody manner in the Eucharist.” (*Compendium of the Catechism of the Catholic Church*)

294. Why is the Eucharist a “pledge of future glory”?

The Eucharist is a pledge of future glory because it fills us with every grace and Heavenly blessing. It fortifies us for our pilgrimage in this life and makes us long for eternal life. It unites us already to Christ seated at the right hand of the Father, to the Church in Heaven and to the Blessed Virgin and all the saints. (*ibid.*)

In short, the Eucharist, according to the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, is a memorial of the passion, death, and resurrection and ascension of Christ, and, when we received the Eucharistic Lord in the state of grace, a pledge, or promise

of future glory. St. Augustine once wrote in his famous *Confessions* a spiritual conversation between the Lord and himself concerning the Eucharist containing this famous sentence: “I am the bread of the strong... Thou wilt not convert (change) Me into thee, as the food of the flesh, but thou shalt be converted (changed) into Me.” (St. Augustine, Bishop and Doctor of the Church, 354-430) Thus, this mystery of the Eucharist takes us back to the very Cross of Christ, changes us into Him if only we let Him, and will, with the aid of sanctifying grace, literally take us to the very gates of Heaven. How’s that for entering into a *mystery*?

Now, the text, “*the Father and I are one,*” cited throughout the Holy Gospel of St. John, among other places in the New Testament. Well, there are many books we can study. There is the Book of Sacred Scripture, and, as the Church Fathers used to say, there is the Book of Nature. There is also another Book which, perhaps, we do not study enough. Which Book is that?

That Book is the Book of our Liturgy, the book of prayer. An old adage that guides prayer in the Church is: *lex orandi, lex credendi*. And it works the other way around, too: *lex credendi, lex orandi*. What do those words mean? *Lex orandi*: the law of praying = *lex credendi* = the law of believing and *lex credendi*, the law of believing = *lex orandi* = the law of praying. In simple language, the way we pray reveals what we believe, and what we believe is demonstrated by the way we pray. Get it? Remember that the next time you make the Sign of the Cross?!\*!

In this article, rather than going into a long theological argument about how the Father is revealed by the Son, etc., I would rather like to keep everything very simple. In fact, I want to remind you of two points.

First of all, we spent all of Lent focusing on *Divine Mercy*. The passion, death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus is *nothing* if it is not the perfect incarnation of Christ’s *divine mercy*! Now, in this Eastertide, we ought to be preparing for the feast of Pentecost, begging Our Lord, Our Lady, and Our Heavenly Abba-Father to send us the Paraclete Spirit of Loving Mercy in order that our hearts may be changed from “*hearts of stone into hearts of flesh.*” (Ezekiel 36. 26). Secondly, we can learn in more than one way. By way of liturgy, by way of prayer, the Spirit can teach us in new ways – often in silence – beautiful things we may never have dreamed possible!

Yesterday I found a Litany of the Father that I thought you might find interesting, and, more importantly, an insight into the love of Our Heavenly Father. Let this Litany teach you about the Father Who is the reflection of the Son (since, as Jesus says “*the Father and I are one.*”) As you do this, ask the Holy Spirit to guide you in this prayer, to fill you with the Spirit of Wisdom and Understanding, and with the fire of Love. Do all of this in the Hearts of Jesus and Mary, Whose Hearts are forever united as one. Then see how your love of the Triune God grows, as well as your love of neighbour and your love of self.

The Litany of God the Father  
(For Private Use Only)

Lord, have mercy on us.  
*Christ, have mercy on us.*  
Lord, have mercy on us. Christ, hear us.  
*Christ graciously hear us.*

God the Father of Heaven, have mercy on us.  
God the Son, Redeemer of the world, have mercy on us.  
God the Holy Spirit, have mercy on us.  
Holy Trinity, One God, have mercy on us.

Father, First Person of the Most Blessed Trinity, have mercy on us.

Father of the Only-begotten Son, have mercy on us.  
Father and Son, from Whom proceeds the Holy Spirit, have mercy on us.  
Father of the Immaculate Virgin Mary, have mercy on us.  
Father of Her most chaste Spouse, have mercy on us.  
Our Father in Heaven, have mercy on us.

Father eternal, hallowed be Thy Name.  
Father, infinite majesty, hallowed be Thy Name.  
Father, infinite holiness, hallowed be Thy Name.  
Father, infinite goodness, hallowed be Thy Name.  
Father, infinite happiness, hallowed be Thy Name.  
Father, all-powerful, hallowed be Thy Name.  
Father, all-knowing, hallowed be Thy Name.  
Father, present everywhere, hallowed be Thy Name.  
Father, all-just, hallowed be Thy Name.  
Father, all merciful, hallowed be Thy Name.

Father, creating Heaven and earth, Thy kingdom come.  
Father, promising a Saviour, Thy kingdom come.  
Father, revealed by the Son, Thy kingdom come.  
Father, willing the Passion of Jesus, Thy kingdom come.  
Father, accepting the Sacrifice of Calvary, Thy kingdom come.  
Father, reconciled with mankind, Thy kingdom come.  
Father, sending the Paraclete, Thy kingdom come.  
Father, in the Name of Jesus, Thy kingdom come.  
Father of Nations, Thy kingdom come.

Father of Love, cherish us.  
Father of Beauty, protect us.  
Father of Wisdom, direct us.  
Father, Divine Providence, watch over us.

Father of the poor, Thy Will be done.  
Father of orphans, Thy Will be done.  
Father of widows, Thy Will be done.  
Father of the exiled, Thy Will be done.  
Father of the persecuted, Thy Will be done.  
Father of the afflicted, Thy Will be done.  
Father of the infirm, Thy Will be done.  
Father of the aged, Thy Will be done.

Father, we adore Thee. Father, we love Thee. Father, we thank Thee. Father, we bless Thee.

In joy and in sorrow, may we bless Thee.  
In sickness and in health, may we bless Thee.  
In prosperity and in adversity, may we bless Thee.  
In consolation and in desolation, may we bless Thee.  
In life and in death, may we bless Thee.  
In time and in eternity, may we bless Thee.

Father hear us. *Father, graciously hear us.*

Lamb of God, well-beloved Son of the Father, *spare us, O Lord!*  
Lamb of God, commanding us to be perfect as the Father, *graciously hear us, O Lord!*  
Lamb of God, Our Mediator with the Father, *have mercy on us!*

*Let us Pray.*

Our Father Who art in Heaven, hallowed be Thy Name; Thy kingdom come; Thy Will be done on earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil. *Amen.* (1)

In the very early Church, there lived a bishop by the name of Marcion, (born c. A.D. 110), who had great difficulties with the God of the Old Testament. Without going into all of the doctrinal subtleties, let us say that his idea of the Father was certainly not that of the Father Whom Jesus presents to us in the Gospel today, nor is He the Father we find in this beautiful litany of prayer.

Do you, yourself, recognize your Heavenly Father in this litany? Or, perhaps, is your Heavenly Father more distant? Or, worse still, do you think of the Father as a God of justice alone, a God of punishment? A punishing father is not the Father with Whom Jesus says "*He is one,*" nor is that Father the One we find in the prayer I am showing you. Perhaps we are all in need of conversion concerning our understanding of the *Father* of Jesus Who is also *Our Father!*

I hope this prayer, along with the Holy Gospel, will introduce Our Father-God to you in a new and deeper way so that you can say with Our Divine Lord: "*The Father and I are one.*" (St. John 10. 30) If this seems impossible, go to the Heart of Mary, Suffering and Immaculate, She Who is the Daughter of God the Father, Mother of God the Son, and Spouse of God the Holy Spirit, will accomplish everything for you!

(1) Litany from internet site: [www.catholictradition.org](http://www.catholictradition.org)