

*“Jesus’ Prayer and Ours”*  
*7th Sunday of Easter*  
*(John 17: 11b-19)*  
*May 16, 2015*

If you ask Jesus to pray the table prayer, you need to be ready to keep your eyes closed for a long time; at least if he prays like he did in [John 17](#).

Jesus’ table prayer goes on for twenty-six verses! This isn’t “God is great. God is good. Let us thank God for our food. Amen. Let’s eat.

” Besides, when Jesus prays in John 17, they’ve already eaten the meal! This chapter is often called Jesus’ high priestly prayer.

His prayer concludes a lengthy time around the Passover table that began back in [chapter 13](#) with Jesus washing the disciples’ feet.

That image of Jesus bending down needs to be remembered as we listen to Jesus' prayer, which can sound very mystical, almost otherworldly.

### **A tender, motherly prayer**

“Holy Father, protect them in your name that you have given me, so that they may be one, as we are one.”

Jesus is praying to his Father, but this is also a very tender, motherly prayer.

Jesus is concerned about his closest friends on earth. He knows this will be his last meal with them.

What will happen to them when he is gone?

When Jesus prays, “that they may be one, as we are one,” most scholars agree that “they” are his disciples, not everybody in the whole world.

“I am not asking on behalf of the world,” he prays, “but on behalf of those whom you gave me, because they are yours.”

The gospels show us that Jesus – according to His human nature – was a man of continual prayer.

He felt it important (essential) to be in frequent contact with His Heavenly Father.

He often “pulled away” from the crowds to be in prayer.

Early in the morning, when the disciples were still asleep,

He could be found in prayer. In the Garden of Gethsemane He was fervent in His prayer concerning His impending passion.

In the gospel reading for today we also see Jesus in conversation with God the

Father, this time praying for His disciples and followers.

“I will remain in the world no longer, but they are still in the world... Holy Father, protect them by the power of Your name... My prayer is not that You take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one.” (John 17: 11, 17)

Jesus loved His disciples – those early followers and all those who He knew would believe in Him throughout the history of the world... including you and me! Out of the depth of His love, He prayed for our protection, power and purpose.

He prayed that we would be **protected** by “the shield of faith, with which [we] can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one.”  
(Ephesians 6:16)

His prayer was that His Father, and ours, would cover us with His care and keep us safe from our enemies of sin, death and the power of the devil.

And His prayer covers us still today!

Millions of His followers, today, live in fear of persecution, torture and even death **because** they dare to faithfully and courageously profess Jesus as their Lord and Savior.

There are hostile areas around the world where Christians can expect persecution and retribution for their faith in Jesus.

There are still other areas which restrict Jesus' disciples from possessing Bibles or other Christian literature.

In these countries it is expected that modern-day followers of Christ may give up

their lives (be martyred) for the sake of their love and faith in Jesus. Jesus was praying for their protection too!

Jesus also prayed that we would have “the **power** of God’s name – the name God gave Him – so that we may be one as He and the Father are one.” (Paraphrase of John 17: 11)

There is power in the name of Jesus because “salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved.” (Acts 4: 12)

The Father has “exalted Him to the highest place and gave Him the name that is above every name that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of

God the Father.” (Philippians 2: 9-11)

He promises and provides us power through His Word and the sacraments.

In these, there is power that brings us to repentance; power which brings us forgiveness; and power which emboldens our profession of Jesus as Lord!

And finally, Jesus prayed for our **purpose** – that we would be one (united) as He sends us into the world to share our witness.

Last Thursday as we celebrated the Feast of the Ascension we were reminded that Jesus entrusted us with His Kingdom. He entrust each of us who are baptized with the mission to be His presence in the World and to be His hands and Feet, and bring the

message of the Good News to those we meet each day.

That is our purpose, that is our mission as a Baptized Catholic as we try to live out the Gospel each day.

Through Jesus' prayer, we are strengthened and encouraged to pray for ourselves and for all our brothers and sisters in Christ around the world.

May God graciously grant us His blessing for our protection, power and purpose, in Jesus!

*"Stuff you need to Know"  
Some thoughts shared by Holy Cross Church and of course some by myself through the power of the Holy Spirit.*