

Father O'Connor's Homily for 27 July 2025
Seventeenth Sunday in Ordinary Time-C

Genesis 18: 20-32
Colossians 2: 12-14
Luke 11: 1-13

A wealthy man had only one child, a 12-year-old son. He gave the boy everything that he wanted, but there was still something that his son longed for more than anything else. He wanted a brother to play with and to share with.

His father finally arranged to adopt a poor boy who was about the same age as his son. Both boys were extremely happy: the birth son because he now had a brother he could call his own, and the adopted son because he now had so many opportunities that he had never enjoyed before.

One day, as they were tossing a football in their yard, the adopted son remarked, "Gee, I wish that Kenny, my friend from where I used to live, could have a football like this one. He really loves football, but his parents can't afford to buy him one."

The birth son replied, "Why don't you ask Dad to get him one?" The adopted boy said that he did not want to impose on someone who had been so good to him already. But the other boy insisted, "Don't forget that my Dad is now your Dad too. He gives me things that I ask for all the time. He will do the same for you. And if he thinks that it's not good for you, he'll say so. Lots of times he gives me something even better. Just ask him." He did, and his friend Kenny got a new football.

Jesus tells us something like that in today's Gospel. "Ask and you will receive. Seek and you will find. Knock and the door will be opened to you."

You and I are the adopted sons and daughters of Jesus' Heavenly Father and, because of this, we are the adopted brothers and sisters of Jesus too.

Generously, the Heavenly Father adopted you and me when we were baptized. Like the adopted child in the story, we are blessed beyond words with our new life as God's beloved children, and as Jesus' brothers and sisters.

But that is not all. Jesus tells us that we can ask for gifts from our Heavenly Father not only for ourselves but also for other people. "Ask and you will receive. Seek and you will find. Knock and the door will be opened to you." Notice how many times Jesus prayed to His Father asking for something for us.

A young man once said to God, “I’ve been thinking about all the things that I want in life.” And he proceeded to give God his list: to marry a tall, blue-eyed, beautiful woman; to live in a big house; to have three sons – one a senator, one a scientist and one a quarterback; to be an adventurer who climbed mountains and drove a red Ferrari; and to have two Saint Bernards.

As it turned out, he injured his knee in high school playing football and could no longer climb trees, let alone mountains. He married a kind woman who was short and had brown eyes. They lived in a New York apartment and traveled by taxis and subways. They had three daughters – a nurse, an artist and a music teacher. And they adopted a fluffy cat.

One day the now-retired man said to God, “Remember when I was young and I told you all the things that I wanted in life? Why didn’t you give those things to me?”

And God answered, “I could have. But I wanted to bless many people through you and make you very happy.”

There was a person who complained to their priest, “I’ve stopped praying because God doesn’t answer my prayers.” The priest responded, “If you treated your friends the way you treat God, they wouldn’t answer you either!”

What do our lives reveal about our staying connected with God?

Jesus teaches us in the Gospel today that God wants to be connected with us. One of His disciples asks, “Lord, teach us to pray just as John the Baptist taught his disciples.” So Jesus taught them the prayer that we call the Lord’s Prayer – the Our Father.

Notice that Jesus doesn’t begin by saying “Almighty God.” He begins by saying, “When you pray, say ***Father***...” That’s personal. That’s family. That’s close.

Jesus is saying “My Father is now your Father. You are connected with Him.”

We need to regularly visit our prayer spots where we can connect with God – like we visit our Wi-Fi hot spots to connect with others. God offers us a relationship with Himself. And God waits for and welcomes our response to Him.

I ask some questions of myself, and I ask you to ask the same questions of yourself: Do I treat God as my closest friend, or as a distant acquaintance? How connected am I right now with God? How much more connected would I like to be?

“No connectivity.” When that message pops up on our devices, it announces that we have no internet access. We are isolated. We are cut off.

We remember that God's connectivity is always on for us. Is mine – is yours, is ours – always on for God?

“Ask and you will receive. Seek and you will find. Knock and the door will be opened to you.” I encourage you today to take a moment and do what Jesus has taught us to do.

First, renew your confidence in Jesus. Tell Him, “Jesus, I trust in you.”

Second, ask Him for something specific. And don't be afraid to ask.

Third, then keep your eyes open and ready to see His answer that, in His divine providence, will benefit you or someone else through your prayer. And His answer may well surprise you.

“Ask and you will receive. Seek and you will find. Knock and the door will be opened to you.”

Jesus, I trust in you.