



## TIMES OF THE LITURGY

**Sunday** - 7.45am - Lauds | 8.15am - Low Mass | 9.15am - Dominican Rite Mass (Extraordinary Form) | 11am - Sung Conventual Mass | 6pm - Low Mass | 7pm - Vespers.

**Monday - Friday** - 7am - Lauds | 7.30am - Conventual Mass | 6.15pm - Devotions and Meditation | 6.30pm - Vespers. [N.B. First Fridays of the month, Vespers in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament with a period of Adoration from 6.15pm.]

**Saturday** - 9am - Lauds | 9.30am - Conventual Mass | 4.30-6pm - Confessions | 6.15pm - Sung Litany of the Blessed Virgin Mary | 6.30pm - Vespers.

## THIS WEEK

Sun 1 **ADVENT I**

Mon 2 *feria*

Tue 3 S Francis Xavier

Wed 4 S John Damascene

Thu 5 *feria*

Fri 6 S Nicholas

Sat 7 S Ambrose

Sun 8 **ADVENT II**



Lauds, Mass, and Vespers are broadcast daily on Radio Maria.

To listen visit:

<https://radiomariaengland.uk/>

## SUPPORT US

Our ministry relies on the generosity of our friends and supporters. If you would like to support us make a donation in the cloister, visit our website, or speak to or email the bursar, Fr Albert.

[cambridge.bursar@english.op.org](mailto:cambridge.bursar@english.op.org)

The Jean Grove Trust Blackfriars Ethiopia Project will hold their Advent Fair **NEXT SUNDAY Sunday 8 December at noon, immediately after 11 am Mass, in the Library.** Mulled apple and homemade mince pies will be served. There will be a cake stall as usual, and there will also be a book stall this year. Please bring along any secondhand books you wish to donate and leave in the cloister, clearly labelled 'Advent Fair'. Donations to the cake stall should be brought in on the day. If you would like to help set up, man a stall, or tidy up afterwards, please sign up on the JGT board in the cloister.



**THE PRIOR & COMMUNITY INVITE YOU TO OUR**



**GAUDETE SUNDAY PARTY**

**SUNDAY 15 DECEMBER AFTER THE EVENING MASS**

# THE LORD'S PRAYER IN MATTHEW'S GOSPEL

*Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.*

A more literal translation of this phrase would be 'let your will happen, as in heaven also on earth.

The standard translation 'done', rather than 'happen', or possibly, 'come about' is not too far off the Greek, but many sermons I have heard which empathise the doing of the Father's will so that the prayer is about doing God's will, don't have much warrant from the original Greek. 'The will of the Father is to be done', says the preacher but that isn't the word in Greek. The will of the Father is to happen, which certainly involves doing things, but action is only part of what we pray for. In fact, it is only later in the prayer that there is any commitment to action on our part, and that is when we seek forgiveness, as we forgive others. Forgiveness is action of sorts. The Lord's prayer, like all prayer, is asking for something, rather than a commitment to action. We are exhorted to do things in the rest of the Gospel of St Matthew, though we are also told not to do things. We are to visit the sick, the poor and those in prison, but also, we are to avoid unchaste looks, and blasphemous oaths, to give some examples from the Gospel. Prayer helps us to do good and to avoid evil, but when we pray for the will of the Father to happen on earth, we are praying for more than our own actions to be righteous. Now it should be said that three times in the Gospel, we are told to do the will of the Father, 7:21, 12:50 and 21:31. So doing what God wants is important:

***For whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother and sister and mother (Matthew 12:50).***

When we ask for the will of the Father to happen, we are doing this for the whole world, and not just for all human actions but for all the things that we would wish to happen in this world, if we were attuned to the Father's wishes.

In Gethsemane, Our Lord prays in this way,

***Again, for the second time, he went away and prayed, "My Father, if this cannot pass unless I drink it, your will be done" (Matthew 26:42).***

Once again, despite the English standard version translation saying, your will be done, the proper translation should be, may your will happen. We might say that Christ is praying about his own actions but in the Passion, he will be subject to many other peoples will, and to events which are out of his control. Matthew 26:45 See, the hour is at hand, and the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. Betrayed is more literally, 'handed over to the hands of sinners', which shows that Jesus will lose control of his earthly life. So the will of the Father being done involves the actions of many people, apart from Our Lord.

Many of these actions are evil actions but the will of the Father is to bring the greatest good out of these actions, so that the world may be redeemed. In asking that the will of the Father be done, we are not asking for all evil to come to and end. It is only at the end of human history that there may be an end to evil, so that the will of the Father is fulfilled for those in the kingdom.

We do wish in this prayer to share in the fulfilment of that will by our prayer. This section of the Lord's prayer has to be seen as an eschatological wish, a yearning that passes through the future of the life of humanity on earth. When we pray these words, we are both shaping the events which will lead up to the final victory of God, because all prayer makes a difference to the future, but we are also accepting what will happen, for good or for bad. The history of the world from which has passed since the Resurrection and which is yet to be played out is a playing out in time of our many decisions. One Earth many will refuse to do the will of the Father but will still be governed by that ultimate purpose of the Father. We can look at our world and see heaven as the place of order above the world that we live in, a place where there is order, where all joyfully and freely obey the will of God. Both the joy and the freedom come from the grace of God which fulfills not just his will but our will too. We will have what we truly wish, if we enter into that kingdom. Yet the Earth will be a place of seeming chaos, of confusion and conflicting desires not just between human beings but within the complex being of each one of us. We are divided in our own self. The prayer of the Our Father is to seek unity, both internally and externally, as best we can while we live on earth. This will still involve evils, because the end is not yet. Heaven and earth might seem to be divided during this period, but we have this quotation from near the end of the Gospel of Matthew.

***And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me (Matthew 28:18).***

You see how the Lord's prayer looks forwards to this moment when the risen Christ appears to his apostles. The authority of Christ unites heaven and earth, but it is not an authority that forces obedience on us, at least not while the history of the world has yet to finish its course. Throughout history it will remain true that Matthew 20:28 "even as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many." In praying that the will of the Father should happen, we are readying ourselves for whatever we must endure, but we are also praying for grace to begin again in the service of the Father. When we fall away from that willing service which Christ calls us to give to him and to each other, then it may be that an earlier saying of this prayer may be what saves us. This prayer helps us to go forward in our life. It is a prayer of hope. It is also, I would say, an advent prayer since it looks forwards to what is to come. There will be an end to human history. It could happen at any time, and it will not be because the end times are obvious. Christ makes clear that it will be sudden and unexpected, so that one is taken, and one is left, (Matthew 24:40-41). This is why we are told so often in the Gospel to stay awake, since we do not know the hour. Nonetheless the hour will come.

***Then will appear in heaven the sign of the Son of Man, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory (Matthew 24:30).***

Only then will this petition of the Lord's prayer be fully answered.

# ST JOHN OF DAMASCUS - 4 DECEMBER

Born in Damascus in about the year 657. Although the city was already Muslim, his father, though a Christian, was Chief of the Revenue and was the principal representative of Christians in the city. In 716, John, by then well-educated in science and theology, became a monk at the abbey of St Sabas near to Jerusalem and later was ordained priest there. He became a prolific writer of theological works and of hymns. His summary of the teachings of the Greek Fathers, called *De Fide Orthodoxa*, proved an immense influence in the Church in the following centuries, in both east and west. He died on 4 December 749.

*O Lord, you led me from my father's loins and formed me in my mother's womb. You brought me, a naked babe, into the light of day, for nature's laws always obey your commands.*

*By the blessing of the Holy Spirit, you prepared my creation and my existence, not because man willed it or flesh desired it, but by your ineffable grace. The birth you prepared for me was such that it surpassed the laws of our nature. You sent me forth into the light by adopting me as your son and you enrolled me among the children of your holy and spotless Church.*

*You nursed me with the spiritual milk of your divine utterances. You kept me alive with the solid food of the body of Jesus Christ, your only-begotten Son and our God, and you let me drink from the chalice of his life-giving blood, poured out to save the whole world.*

*You loved us, O Lord, and gave up your only-begotten Son for our redemption. And he undertook the task willingly and did not shrink from it. Indeed, he applied himself to it as though destined for sacrifice, like an innocent lamb. Although he was God, he became man, and in his human will, became obedient to you, God his Father, unto death, even death on a cross.*

*In this way you have humbled yourself, Christ my God, so that you might carry me, your stray sheep, on your shoulders. You let me graze in green pastures, refreshing me with the waters of orthodox teaching at the hands of your shepherds. You pastured these shepherds, and now they in turn tend your chosen and special flock. Now you have called me, Lord, by the hand of your bishop to minister to your people. I do not know why you have done so, for you alone know that. Lord, lighten the heavy burden of the sins through which I have seriously transgressed. Purify my mind and heart. Like a shining lamp, lead me along the straight path. When I open my mouth, tell me what I should say. By the fiery tongue of your Spirit make my own tongue ready. Stay with me always and keep me in your sight.*

*Lead me to pastures, Lord, and graze there with me. Do not let my heart lean either to the right or to the left, but let your good Spirit guide me along the straight path. Whatever I do, let it be in accordance with your will, now until the end.*

*And you, O Church, are a most excellent assembly, the noble summit of perfect purity, whose assistance comes from God. You in whom God lives, receive from us an exposition of the faith that is free from error, to strengthen the Church, just as our Fathers handed it down to us.*

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## THE PRIORY OF ST MICHAEL THE ARCHANGEL

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