

drinks the cup of the Lord unworthily, will be guilty of the Lord's body and blood. But let each man prove himself and so eat of the bread and drink of the cup; for whoever eats and drinks unworthily, eats and drinks judgment on himself.'

But you receive it worthily if you avoid the yeast of bad doctrine, and so remain unleavened loaves of sincerity and truth; or the other way round, if you retain that yeast of charity which the woman hid in three measures of flour until the whole was leavened. This woman is the wisdom of God, who became mortal flesh through the Virgin; and throughout the whole world, which is like three measures of flour because it has been built up after the flood from the three sons of Noe, she spreads her gospel until the whole is leavened. This is the whole which in Greek is called *holon*, and if you keep the bond of peace in it you will be 'by the whole', Greek *catholon*, from which the Church gets the name Catholic.



### GAMALIEL

Q. I have been having an argument with a friend of mine about the 'Our Father'. I say that it is addressed to God the Father, he disagrees, and says it is addressed to the whole Trinity. Which of us is right?

UNDERGRADUATE

A. Your friend certainly has St Thomas on his side. But St Thomas, as far as I know, never really argues the point; he simply states as something to be taken for granted, as a premise to be used in further argument, what when we say the 'Our Father' we are praying to the whole Trinity. (*Sum. Theol.* Ia, 33, iii, obj. 1; IIIa, 23, ii, sed con.) I do not think you need be frightened out of your own view simply by the authority of St Thomas, because in this matter there has been a certain shift of theological emphasis since his time. And anyhow, need I say it, both of you are right in some respect.

We are given the Lord's prayer in two classic contexts; in the

gospels and in the mass. It is given, in slightly different versions, by both St Matthew and St Luke. St Matthew includes it in the sermon on the mount (vi, 9), in a context in which our Lord is constantly speaking of 'Your Father', 'Your Father in heaven'. The name Father seems to be used here, without much doubt, as a name simply of God, the God of Israel, the one true God, without any overt reference to the distinction of Persons in God. So in the context of St Matthew, I suggest your friend is right, and that the 'Our Father' is addressed simply to God, who is of course, although the doctrine has not arisen in the context, the whole Trinity.

In St Luke the 'Our Father' is given in response to a disciple asking our Lord to teach them how to pray (ch. xi, 1). Here the case is not so simple as in St Matthew, because in the previous chapter (x, 21) the evangelist has already recorded our Lord's prayer of thanksgiving in which the distinction between the divine Persons is fairly plainly intimated, and in which the name Father is presumably applied to God the Father personally. So it looks as if St Luke might be wanting to suggest, by this order of episodes, that our Lord's teaching on how to pray does more than give us a suitable and filial formula for addressing God, which is all St Matthew's context implies; it is also designed to draw us into a sharing in his own personal prayer to the Person of his Father, it is taking our prayer, so to speak, right *into* the Trinity. In the Lucan context then, I think that you are probably more right than your friend.

In the mass the Lord's prayer comes immediately after the canon. Now there is no doubt whatever that the prayers of the canon, as indeed most of the prayers and collects of the mass, are addressed directly to God the Father. The standard form of liturgical prayer is *to the Father through the Son in the unity of the Holy Ghost*. So in this context I am sure it would be anomalous to maintain that the Paternoster is being addressed indistinctly to the whole Trinity and not personally to God the Father.

But let us remember that we cannot *separate* the divine Persons, and so we cannot pray to one in such a way as to exclude the others. When we pray to the Father, we pray through the Son; whether we happen to use that formula or not, that in fact is the way prayer reaches God. Furthermore, the divine Persons do not add up to God, they are each the same God and they are all, taken

together, the same God. So when you pray directly to the Father (or the Son or the Holy Ghost), you are praying indirectly to the Trinity, to God. And on the other hand, when you pray to God indistinctly, directly to the whole Trinity, you are praying indirectly to each of the divine Persons as distinct from each others; again *to the Father, through the Son, in the Holy Ghost*; because that is what God is, three distinct Persons; and if they cannot be *separated*, neither can they be *confused*.

So to conclude, when we pray now just to God, now to the Father, now to our divine Lord, the focus of our minds varies, but the destination of our prayers is the same.

Q. Please explain poverty of spirit fully.

H.M.H.

A. Our Lord began the sermon on the mount by saying 'Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven' (Matt. v, 3). Not 'the poor *of* spirit' but 'the poor *in* spirit'. He certainly was not recommending us to be poor-spirited or pusillanimous.

Indeed he was not, in so many words, recommending us to be anything; he was simply stating how lucky certain sorts of people are. How lucky are the poor in spirit, because the kingdom of heaven belongs to them! To see what is meant by 'poor in spirit', we must first look at St Luke's version of these beatitudes (Luke vi, 20). 'Blessed are you poor, for yours is the kingdom of God.' St Luke gives us the beatitudes as four stark paradoxes, followed by four more in the shape of woes. Our Lord in this context is not prescribing any moral attitudes; he is just standing our usual and natural values on their heads. You are lucky if you are poor, unlucky if you are rich, lucky to be hungry, unlucky to be well-fed, lucky to be crying, unlucky to be laughing. It seems to me that this version given by St Luke is more likely to be nearer to what our Lord actually said than St Matthew's version.

But one can imagine the difficulties that would arise with people whose minds found it hard to digest paradoxes. Is it a sin, they would ask, to be rich, to be well-fed, to be cheerful? Are there not many excellent Christians, sincerely loving God and their neighbours, who enjoy these material blessings? Are they therefore going to forfeit their spiritual fortune?

I suggest that St Matthew's expanded version of the beatitudes

is intended to cope with this sort of difficulty. No, he is saying, Christ never said it was a sin to be rich; he only suggested that it is rather a risk. You don't have to be a pauper to enter the kingdom of heaven—although actual material poverty can be a religious asset, since it can save you the trouble of squeezing into the kingdom like a camel through a needle's eye. Still, even if you are materially well-to-do, there is nothing to stop you being poor in spirit. That means not clutching at wealth or clinging to it; being unreservedly generous in spending it for others, in alms to the poor and to the Church; being sparing in your use of it on yourself; being ready to lose it without too much anxiety, because you have great faith in God and very little in money; in a word it means being the master of your money and not its slave.

In that last sentence I was putting into St Matthew's mouth what was actually St Jerome's way of stating it. To sum up, I would say that being poor in spirit is adopting an attitude to money and what money can buy, that is compounded of three elements; generosity (the exact opposite of poor-spiritedness), self-denial, and confidence in God.



## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

### THE ROSARY DURING MASS

(See *Gamaliel*, LIFE OF THE SPIRIT, April 1959, pp. 467-8.)

DEAR EDITOR:

For over fifty years to my own knowledge plenty of people have 'objected' to the public recitation of the rosary during low mass. Many others, on the contrary, have found nothing in it to object to, save some of us priests when the person leading the devotion has been altogether too close to the priest at the altar.

1. It would be altogether most exceptional for the rosary to be recited during mass on Sundays and holidays of obligation. On other days no one is bound to 'hear' mass or even to be present at it.

2. In olden times in England the faithful were content to hear