

Doctrinal Session

APPRENTICES IN FAITH: A Resource for the OCIA
Give Us This Day Our Daily Bread

And do not keep striving for what you are to eat and . . . drink, and do not keep worrying. . . [Y]our Father knows that you need [these things]. Instead, strive for his kingdom, and these things will be given to you as well. Luke 12:29-31

Insight

Janice was in a rush to get to work. It seemed that she was always on the verge of being late. She had to admit that she dawdled in getting out of the house and catching the commuter train.

Today was no different. The train was only about two minutes late getting to her station. Janice read the morning newspaper and sipped her coffee. At the downtown main station, Janice joined all the other commuters in the mad rush to get out of the station and onto the city sidewalks. They all made their way to various high-rise office buildings.

She never really noticed the street people. But today a particularly pitiful-looking young lady caught her attention. This young lady sat up against a newspaper dispenser and asked for coins. Maybe Janice noticed her because this young lady looked to be her own age. Normally Janice would never consider giving money away—who knew how it would be used? Yet this time, she dipped into her purse and handed the young lady a \$10 gift card from a fast food chain. Janice hurried on without another thought as she went on her busy day.

For Reflection . . .

Christians share what we have out of love to help those in need.

What do you think about people who beg for money?

What motivates you to give so that the needs of others, especially the poor, are met?

Additional Background

Catechism of the Catholic Church: 2828–2837

United States Catholic Catechism for Adults: page 487

Compendium—Catechism of the Catholic Church: 592–593

Church Teaching

By praying this petition, we express absolute trust in our heavenly Father. We believe that God, who gives life to his children, will also give us the spiritual and material sustenance required for life. Thus the words “give us” in this petition remind us of the Covenant between God and us.

These Covenant-driven words also remind us that we have a responsibility to one another. We are called to community in solidarity. In this sense, God gives us what we most need: each other.

Daily Sustenance

The expression “daily bread” refers to material substance—the food and drink—we need for living. We ask God for daily sustenance—not an abundant stockpile of food, but what is sufficient for this day. On another level, this phrase is an allusion to the day that centers a believer’s spiritual well-being, the new day of Christ’s Resurrection made present in the Eucharist. So this day is not just of mortal time but also the eternal “today” of God. This new day is known to us in Christ’s sacrifice. Indeed, Christ rises for us every day.

Bread Broken for the World

The Eucharist is the true daily bread of believers. And from the Eucharistic celebration, we go forth to give generously to others. We become bread broken for the world as we feed the hungry and, like leaven, raise up one another into Christ’s kingdom of justice, peace, and love.