

Simone Weil on the Lord's Prayer:

“The *Our Father* contains all possible petitions; we cannot conceive of any prayer not already contained in it... It is impossible to say it once through, giving the fullest possible attention to each word, without a change, infinitesimal perhaps but real, taking place in the soul.”

IN ONE OF HER LETTERS , she recounts memorizing the Greek text of the prayer:

“The infinite sweetness of this Greek text so took hold of me that for several days I could not stop myself from saying it over all the time. The following week, I began the grape harvest. I recited the *Our Father* in Greek every day before work, and I repeated it very often in the vineyard. Since that time I have made a practice of saying it through once each morning with absolute attention. If during the recitation my attention wanders or goes to sleep in the minutest degree, I begin again until I have once succeeded in going through it with absolutely pure attention.

“Sometimes it comes about that I say it again out of sheer pleasure, but I only do it if I really feel the impulse. The effect of this practice is extraordinary and surprises me every time, for, although I experience it each day, it exceeds my expectation at each repetition. At times the very first words tear my thoughts from my body and transport it to a place outside space where there is neither perspective nor point of view. The infinity of the ordinary expanses of perception is replaced by an infinity to the second or sometimes the third degree. At the same time, filling every part of this infinity of infinity, there is silence, a silence which is not an absence of sound but which is the object of a positive sensation, more positive than that of sound. Noises, if there are any, only reach me after crossing this silence. Sometimes, also, during this recitation or at other moments, Christ is present with me in person, but his presence is infinitely more real, more moving, more clear than on that first occasion when he took possession of me.”

Πάτερ ἡμῶν ὁ ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς,

ἀγιασθήτω τὸ ὄνομά σου,

ἐλθέτω ἡ βασιλεία σου,

γενηθήτω τὸ θέλημά σου ὡς ἐν οὐρανῷ καὶ ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς.

τὸν ἄρτον ἡμῶν τὸν ἐπιούσιον δὸς ἡμῖν σήμερον

καὶ ἄφες ἡμῖν τὰ ὀφειλήματα ἡμῶν, ὡς καὶ ἡμεῖς ἀφίεμεν τοῖς ὀφειλέταις ἡμῶν.

καὶ μὴ εἰσενέγκῃς ἡμᾶς εἰς πειρασμόν, ἀλλὰ ῥῦσαι ἡμᾶς ἀπὸ τοῦ πονηροῦ.

ὅτι σοῦ ἐστὶν ἡ βασιλεία καὶ ἡ δύναμις καὶ ἡ δόξα εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας ἀμήν.