

The Prayer of Jesus

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Preface by Pope Francis

NOTES ON PRAYER

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Contents

Preface by Pope Francis	5
<i>Abba</i> , your goodness has clouded my eyes, and from the depths of my heart I bless you	9
<i>Abba</i> , your Word is a torch for my footsteps.....	12
<i>Abba</i> , today I confirmed that I am dreaming your own dreams.....	17
<i>Abba</i> , my mother hastened the beginnings of the Gospel	23
<i>Abba</i> , your providential love embraces everything ...	27
<i>Abba</i> , I ask you to give courage and enthusiasm to those who decide to follow me	32
<i>Abba</i> , I taught them that learning to pray is learning to hope, and therefore learning to live	35
<i>Abba</i> , I bless you, you have entrusted and transmitted everything to me	40
<i>Abba</i> , today I encouraged them to come to me.....	43

<i>Abba</i> , Peter's words stirred my soul	46
<i>Abba</i> , I proclaimed that unless a grain of wheat dies, it remains just a grain of wheat	49
<i>Abba</i> , today I revealed that whoever decides to come after me, after suffering, will see the light	52
<i>Abba</i> , I bless you for confirming my primary mission	56
<i>Abba</i> , the mission entrusted to me is brought to life through prayer.	59
<i>Abba</i> , I shared your wonderful joy	64
Why, <i>Abba</i> , why?	69
<i>Abba</i> , take this cup from me, but not what I will, but what you will	72
<i>Abba</i> , I now understand with my life what I have revealed	75
<i>Abba</i> , I promised the repentant criminal that today he would be with me in paradise	78
Thank you, <i>Abba</i> , for listening to me	81

Abba, your goodness has clouded
my eyes, and from the depths of
my heart I bless you

After thirty years spent in the silence and remoteness of an obscure village in Galilee, Jesus enters the desert and listens to the Baptist, a witness to the truth. John never refers to himself, but to someone greater than himself. The Nazarene comes to John as if he were the last of sinners, and bowing his head in humility he is baptised in the Jordan.

This unique experience of the fatherhood of God, whom he calls: *Abba* – which in his native Aramaic language means: Dad – will mark him forever, transforming his life!

Jesus is filled with the anointing of the goodness of the Spirit. It is a conversation that goes beyond ordinary experiences with his eternal Father, who dialogues with him, unveiling to him the marvellous mystery of his unique filiation:

In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptised by John in the Jordan. And when he came up out of the water, immediately he saw the heavens being torn open and the Spirit descending on him like a dove. And a voice came from heaven, "You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased."
(*Mark 1:9-11*)

Abba, I meet you daily in prayer, where I breathe hope. I have asked myself not only about what you expect of me, about what I must do, for which you have sent me, but also about who I am. Today I experienced a culminating moment in my journey, when I came up out of the water, I saw the heavens being torn apart and the Spirit descending upon me. And I heard you tell me that I am your beloved Son.

What an amazing adventure to be your Son, *Abba*, in whom you are pleased!

The Spirit was the cause of the realisation of this unique and sublime consciousness of filiation, which I heard from your lips, *Abba*.

Abba, I open my heart to you, who are the centre of my life and the source of my existence, in order to understand what you have wished to tell me. I was filled with the Spirit, discovering myself as your beloved child, and the desire to do your will, to carry out your work, was kindled in me.

In an eternal instant, in that marvellous proximity to

you, *Abba*, you have revealed to me the splendours of my divine filiation.

It is in this light that the mission of my life acquires its true dimension and is revealed in its spiritual and human depth: to be the witness of your paternity, and to share what you teach me. I feel consecrated and comforted by you, *Abba*, in this filial intimacy, which at the same time commences my mission.

Oh, *Abba*, your goodness has clouded my eyes, and from the depths of my heart, I bless you.

