

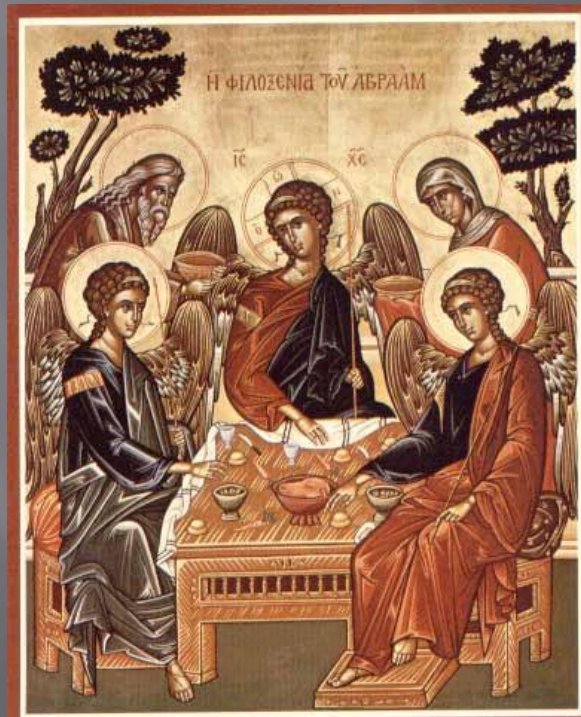
The Lord's Prayer

The “Father” is only depicted in Orthodox iconography as a *hand*. After the schism in 1054, the Roman Catholic Church depicted the Trinity in such a way as to emphasize that the Holy Spirit proceeded both from the Father AND the Son – as below.

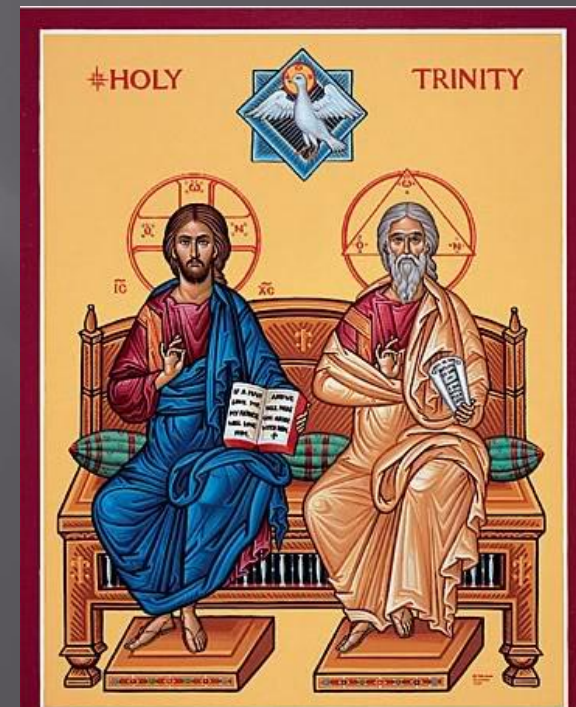
The hand of God



The Trinity (Orthodox)



The Trinity (Western)



And make us worthy, Master, with confidence and without fear of condemnation, to dare call You, the heavenly God, FATHER and to say:

“Since then, there can be no confidence in relationship with God unless we have prepared our approach to Him by vow and the offering of gifts, vow must precede prayer.” (Sermon 2, Gregory of Nyssa, *On the Lord's Prayer*, p. 37)“

- ❖ **The *Vow* that is understood to have already been made is the promise to consecrate one's life to God. We can only approach God through prayer after having made this vow.**

Confidence Before God

“In patristic teaching confidence before God is closely related to freedom from sin and to sanctity in general; it was the characteristic of Adam and Eve before the fall.” (Hilda Graef, Translator & Annotated, *The Lord’s Prayer*, by St. Gregory of Nyssa, note # 26)

“In a very special way it is the quality of the martyrs who confess their faith with confidence before men and hence have confidence also before God which makes their intercession particularly efficacious.” (St. John Chrysostom)

Our Father

“What spirit a man must have to say this word -
what confidence, what purity of conscience.”
(Gregory)

“If he has any sense, he would obviously not dare to call God by the name Father since he does not see the same things in himself as he sees in God. For it is physically impossible that He who is good by essence should be the Father of an evil will, nor the Holy One of him whose life is impure. . . If therefore on examining himself a man finds that he still **needs to be purified** because his conscience is full of vile stains and sores, he cannot insinuate himself into the family of God until he has been purged from all these evil things. . . *For the word Father indicates the cause of what exists through Him. . . Therefore it is dangerous to dare use this prayer and call God one's Father before one's life has been purified.*” (Sermon 2, Gregory of Nyssa, p. 39-40)

Hallowed be Thy Name

“The prayer says in effect, let the Name of His dominion which I invoke be hallowed in me, that men may see your good works and glorify your Father who is in Heaven (Matt 5:16). Who would be so absurdly unreasonable as not to glorify God if he sees in those who believe in Him a pure life firmly established in virtue?” (Gregory, The Lord’s prayer, Homily 3, p. 49)

Description of a Virtuous Person

- ❖ The virtuous partake of the requirements of life only as far as necessary, they are in no way softened by the luxuries of the body and are utter strangers to revelry (noisy partying, to take intense satisfaction) and laziness as well as to boastful conceit.
- ❖ They touche the earth but lightly with the tips of their toes ... They are above all deceit that comes by the senses.
- ❖ They count the possessions of virtues the only riches, familiarity with God the only nobility.
- ❖ Their only privilege and power is the mastery of self so as not to be a slave of human passions.

Thy Kingdom Come

“I would be a stranger to corruption and liberated from death; would that I were freed from the shackles of sin and that death no longer *lorded* it over me. Let us no more be *tyrannized* by evil so that the adversary may not prevail against me and make me his captive through sin. But may Thy Kingdom come to me, so that the passions which still *rule* me so mercilessly may depart from me, or rather may be altogether annihilated.” (Gregory, The Lord’s prayer, Homily 3, p. 51)

The Army that comes with God's Kingdom

- ❖ Brings an end to the war of the flesh against the spirit
- ❖ The body no longer harbor the enemy of the soul
- ❖ Angelic Powers: Let them appear, the royal force, the angelic band, the thousands of rulers, the myriad's of those who stand at Thy right hand that a thousand warriors may fall on the front of the enemy.
- ❖ The passions cease to be troublesome when *dispassion* (*apatheia*) has appeared
- ❖ Death is undone and corruption is no more
- ❖ When life and incorruption reigns in us unopposed.

Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven

“Now the Will of God is the salvation of men. If therefore, we prepare to say to God: Thy Will be done also in me, it is absolutely necessary first to *renounce* what was contrary to the Divine Will and to give a full account of it in *confession*.” (St. Gregory, Homily 4, p. 59.)

“... human nature, being once debilitated by evil, is weak to do the good ... if we feel an impulse to do evil we need no help; for evil accomplishes itself in our will. But if there is an inclination towards something good, we *need God* to carry the desire into effect. ” (St. Gregory, Homily 4, p. 60.)

Give us this day our daily (essential) bread

“Our daily bread. . . A man who gives but nature its due and does not let his vain thoughts stray after things *outside his needs* is *not far* below the angelic state: he imitates their need of nothing - by being content with little. Therefore we have been commanded to seek only what is sufficient to preserve our physical existence.” (St. Gregory, Homily 4, p. 63.)

“I am the bread of life; the *one who cometh to Me in no wise shall hunger; and the one who believeth in Me in no wise shall thirst at any time.* [Jn. 6:35]

Forgive us our debts, as we also forgive our debtors. {The ultimate method of imitating God}

“Do you want your debts forgiven by God? Forgive them yourself and God will confirm it. For your judgment of your neighbor which is in your power, whatever it may be, will call forth the corresponding sentence upon you ... do Thou the same as I have done. I have forgiven the debts, do not Thou demand them back; I have had regard to him who petitioned me, I have sent my debtor away rejoicing, may You do likewise.” (St. Gregory, Homily 5, p. 73)

And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from the evil one

- ▣ “. . .temptation and the evil one mean one and the same thing. . . That we should be separated from the things that belong to this world; as somewhere else he says to the disciples: *the whole world is seated in wickedness*. Therefore if a man desires to be free from wickedness, he will necessarily separate himself from the world. For temptation finds no opportunity for touching the soul unless this preoccupation with worldly things be held out to greedy men like a bait on the hook of evil.”
(St. Gregory, Homily 5, p. 83)