

Sermons at All Saints Anglican Church, Luxembourg

Preached by Rev Geoff Read on Sunday 27th July 2027

Bible: Luke 11:1-13

In every family there are chores, jobs we do to contribute to the life of our family

What's the chore you love the most, what is the one you really don't like at all?

Q: If you like, just turn and tell your neighbour your most favourite chore and your least favourite one

For me my favourite and my least favourite are the same – it all depends on two things: how late and what the weather is like

Anyone guess?

Dog walking

On Thursday evening at about 11:00 I pulled on my shoes and dragged a very unenthusiastic Evie up the road – and she didn't even perform

As I approached the front door, I felt in my pocket and realised that I'd forgotten to bring my key

Normally that wasn't a problem but that evening we had two sleeping under fives in the house and our doorbell rings loudly all over the house, on every floor – no way did I want to wake them

So I knocked and knocked, knocked and knocked but no answer – everyone else was behind another door and watching TV

In the end I had to ring the doorbell feeling very unsure about how Marie-Louise would react!

As she opened the door I quickly explained and got away with a rolling of the eyes!

And fortunately, no one woke up

But I was worried – not whether the door would open, but what it would be like when it did!

Jesus takes a story like that – caring about someone else, knocking on a door, and being unsure about what will happen – and uses it to tell us about prayer

- Praying for ourselves – what we now call the Lord's Prayer
- and then praying for others – like a man needing food for a friend, and knowing his neighbour has some, but not being sure how the neighbour will react
- or like a parent who out of love will always try to give their child the best – not frightening them with a snake or a scorpion but giving them the egg or the fish they ask for

We may be like that man, those parents – needing something for ourselves or for others, but unsure whether God will give it, or about how he will give it

But God, says Jesus, isn't anything like the grumpy neighbour who only gets up to stop the man knocking on his door

No: how much more will the heavenly Father give good things or the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!

All of this happens because his disciples have seen something about the way Jesus prays, and they ask him: teach us to pray

I wonder what that was like, watching and hearing Jesus pray?

And as he begins to tell them how to pray and also as he ends telling them, Jesus gives them a name to use that changes everything



It's a name that gives them confidence and expectation, that this is who they are praying to

That promises the good things they need: what Jesus calls "daily bread"

Which is yes, food and all we need for our bodies

But also what we need for our souls – one version of this prayer from the Message puts it like this

Keep us forgiven and forgiving

Keep us safe from ourselves and the Devil

and the name is?

Father or as it was in the original language: Abba

When I was first a Vicar I went into local junior schools to take assemblies and all the children out of school called me Geoff

and our older daughter aged about three or four started doing the same thing

And I said to her – anyone can call me Geoff, but only you and Katya can call me Papa

It's like Jesus is saying: Anyone can call him God, but know that you can call Him Abba

This was revolutionary



Prayer is the way we talk to our Abba

When we stand at the door of prayer: how do you feel?

Do you wonder what sort of welcome you might get, how or whether what you need or want for yourself or someone else might be given

Can I suggest one of the spiritual practices Alison told us about last week, one that allows something wonderful to come to our minds and shape how we come

When you pray, first pause for maybe a minute and allow the very first words of Jesus to sink in, to remember how God looks upon you

When you pray, say, Father, Abba ...

Consciously remember that we come to a loving heavenly Father, delighted to see you, hear from you, the Father who loves to give good gifts, even His Holy Spirit, to those who just ask him!

I wonder: how might that change how or even if we pray?