

Today's Gospel has Our Lord teaching his disciples to pray through the prayer which we know as the "Our Father."

In the liturgy, this prayer is introduced by the priest with the words:

*At the Savior's command, and formed by divine teaching, we dare to say.*

Perhaps awkward sounding still, after a couple of years with the English translation the phrase "*we dare to say*" may stick in our head ... and cause us to pause.

This phrasing is not unique to the Roman Rite, but is found in Eastern liturgies as well.

The Greek word is *parresia*, which means "confidently, boldly, openly, publicly, courageously" ... and with all of these nuances, perhaps "*dare*" isn't such a bad way to translate it.

Madeline L'Engle was an American writer whose works reflect both her Christian faith and a strong interest in modern science. She is perhaps best known for her young adult fiction especially "A Wrinkle in Time" and its sequels.

In a collection of poetry by L'Engle's titled "Lines Scribbled on an Envelope" has a poem whose title is: "We make bold to say ..."

In this poem, she alternates memories of her childhood experiences with her own father and the joy of that time, with darker experiences of adulthood. The last verse reads:

*O father of fathers  
who takes from me the strength of words  
and the comfort of images  
I am alone in the dark and afraid.*

L'Engle's poem reflects on the true confidence and openness she experienced as a child with her biological father, and the alternating verses a fear and darkness she sees as an adult.

And I would propose that the difficulty arises in her ... and perhaps our own relationship with God as Father.

Jesus says, elsewhere in the Gospels, that we must become like little children ... and if we are to approach God with boldness, courage, and confidence ... then we need to put aside our baggage and our pride ... and truly receive the grace of God without reservation.

As we approach this altar to receive the Sacred Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity of Jesus Christ, let us pray for that grace ... let us pray boldly and be prepared to receive it with a radical openness. Let us dare to approach God as Father, and let us dare to trust Him with all of our needs, wants, and desires.