

Lord, Teach Us



To Pray

Sample Packet

What is included in this sample packet?

1. The introduction to the program, with summary of lessons and explanations for craft.
2. Samples from each level, from 1-4.
3. Sample of sermon outline.
4. Sample of a sermon.
5. Sample of the hymn for the program.

Lord, Teach Us To Pray

Introduction

When the disciples said to Jesus, "Lord, teach us to pray," the Lord did not deny them. Nor did Jesus say, "Pray whatever comes naturally." Or, "Pray whatever comes on your heart." Jesus taught them to pray.

Prayer cannot come naturally, because by nature we do not seek God. (Romans 3: 11) Nor can we trust what will come from our hearts. (Genesis 8: 21; Jeremiah 17: 9) Rather, Jesus in His grace teaches us how to pray, even giving us the words to say. As we confess at the beginning of the prayer offices, "Lord, open my lips."

Throughout the Gospel Jesus teaches many things about prayer. These teachings serve as the content for this program.

This program is meant to be a comprehensive program to be used throughout the Lenten Season. It includes sermons and bulletins for the midweek Vespers service and a shortened version of VBS leading up to Vespers, with chapel, lessons, and craft. It is the hope that the program will increase interest in midweek Vespers, especially among children.

What is in this Program Manual?

In this Program Manual is basic information about the program, instructions for the craft, sermon outlines, and sermons for use during Lent.

What is included on this CD?

On the CD are the following folders and PDF files:

1. Introductory Material (PDF files of Program Manual, Program Cover, Copyright)
2. Sermon Tools (Five full outlines and sermons in PDF format; Sermons are also given in .TXT format for editing purposes on the part of the pastor.)
3. Teachers Editions (PDF files of Teachers Editions for each level of the program)
4. Vespers Materials (PDF files of the Vespers service in various hymnal formats)
5. Workbook Covers (PDF files of covers for workbook materials)
6. Workbook Materials (PDF files of pages for workbooks)
7. Opening Chapel (PDF file of brief chapel service to be used for opening of program)

Program Summary

Congregations typically have a midweek prayer service during the season of Lent. In many cases, attendance has declined at these services. This program was written with the intent of increasing interest in the midweek prayer services. The idea is to have a brief program – perhaps an hour or so – leading into the prayer service. Often, congregations have a soup and sandwich meal prior to the service. If this is so, the program may precede the soup and sandwich meal.

The program has three parts to it: (1) Chapel; (2) Lessons; (3) Craft. The chapel service should take about ten minutes; the lessons should be about a half an hour; and the craft may take 20 minutes. The program may be expanded to an hour and a half to make things less tight. Or, as has been seen to work, the craft time may overlap into the "soup and sandwich" time. The children may work on their craft while eating.

It is recommended to the pastors that they use the Vespers service during Lent. Part of the children's workbook time includes going through parts of this service each week.

Program Theme

There is much to learn about prayer from Jesus. Five main themes will be covered in this material:

Week	Text	Title	Theme
Week 1	Matthew 6: 5-13	"When you Pray"	Praying is not an option. The Lord commands prayer. He also invites us to pray to Him as our Father. He even gives us the words to pray in the Lord's Prayer.
Week 2	John 16: 23-28	"In the Name"	We are granted the awesome privilege of going to our Father in prayer because Jesus has paved the way through His death, resurrection, and ascension. God's ears are no longer shut to us on account of our sins. Because we are justified in Jesus, we pray in Jesus' name.

Week 3	Luke 18: 1-8	"The Persistent Widow"	Faith never gives up praying. The liturgy trains us in persistent prayer, as we see in such prayers as the "Lord, have mercy," prayed during the entire service.
Week 4	Luke 11: 9-13	"Stones, Serpents, and Scorpions?"	The proper gift that we pray for is the Holy Spirit. Prayers for the Holy Spirit and His gifts will never be denied.
Week 5	Acts 2: 32-42	"Receive Our Prayer"	The first church continued in "the prayers," which is the liturgy. Our liturgical prayer for mercy is answered in Holy Communion. The liturgy spills out in our daily lives, as we live each moment in grateful reliance on His grace.

The program tends to focus more on the supplicatory nature of prayer as opposed to such aspects as praise and thanksgiving. This follows from the teaching of the Large Catechism that prayer ought to ask a petition. Nevertheless, the omission is not to deny the importance of praise and thanksgiving in prayer. If we were to pursue this subtle point, we would comment that, insofar as a true supplicatory prayer is "as good as a done deal", the prayer acts at the same time as a supplicatory prayer, a statement of confession, and therewith, a prayer of praise and thanksgiving. To pray "Lord, have mercy," for example, is also to confess "Lord, you are merciful." And to confess the Lord's wonderful works is to praise and thank Him (Psalm 26: 7, 107: 22; cf. Psalm 95).

Also, the program does not hone in on the specific petitions of the Lord's Prayer, as might be expected. While the Lord's Prayer is referenced throughout the program – and one lesson does ask that the children summarize the petitions – the program focuses on the general teachings of prayer outlined above.

Throughout the program, the children will be learning parts of the Vespers service. The part of the Vespers service learned can be loosely connected to the theme for that particular week. They will go over the following parts of the Vespers: (1) Opening versicles; (2) the *Magnificat*; (3) the *Kyrie* as related to Psalm 123; (4) the petitions of the Lord's Prayer; (5) the Collect for Peace.

The Chapel Service

Because the program will ideally be concluded with the Vespers service, the opening chapel service should be abbreviated to a maximum of ten minutes. Included in this program are the masters for a chapel bulletin that may be used during the five weeks of Lent. Each week the children will pray a pared down version of Vespers, including a few verses of a Psalm, the reading, the hymn, the Lord's Prayer, and the Benediction. A short sermon or explanation of the reading may be excluded, as class time will follow immediately after the chapel service.

The hymn was written for the tune, *Gethsemane* ("Go to Dark Gethsemane"). The meter is 7. 7. 7. 7. 7. 7., and it may be used with several other tunes. Congregations are encouraged to use the *Gethsemane* tune, as it is a Lenten classic.

The Program Workbooks

The program workbooks are given as masters in PDF format. Each workbook has a body of 20 pages with one cover page. These may be printed out in the following manner:

- (1) They may simply be printed out in color or in black and white, copied on a copy machine, and bound.
- (2) Ideally, they will be printed out in color in booklet form, if the printer/copy machine has this capability.
- (3) The PDF files may be taken to a copy professional, who will often have capabilities to convert PDF files, with cover, into booklet form. This may cost about \$.50/page, costing about \$10/workbook. However, the price for color copies is coming down, and may be reduced at certain times.

Make sure there is a blank page on the reverse side of the cover sheet, so that page 1 of the material is NOT on the reverse side of the cover. Copy professionals will need to be shown this. The entire sheet on which the cover is printed should be blank, except for the cover, and the entire body of the workbook – both sides – should have printed material on it.

The workbooks come in four levels. Level 1 is for 4-5 year olds. Level 2 is for 6-7 year olds. Level 3 is for 8-9 year olds. Level 4 is for 10-12 year olds. The material is written at a challenging level, so if there is a need to put two groups together, the lower level should be used for that group. Also, Level 4 material could easily be used for junior high groups, or even high school youth.

The program also includes chapel and a craft, and these activities are hoped to be done on what is usually a school night, leading into a Vespers prayer service. Because of the nature of the program, the class time should not exceed 35 minutes. Workbook material will easily occupy this period, and teachers may have to cut out some parts.

There is little in the way of commentary in the Teacher's Editions. Teachers are encouraged to copy and read the sermons at the end of this Program Manual as the commentary on the lessons.

Each lesson concludes by teaching a part of the Vespers prayer service. Teachers will want to go over this service

a few times to get a handle on it.

The Craft

The craft for this program is a portable kneeler – much like the kneeling portion of a prie dieux – that doubles as a carrying case for church items like the Bible, hymnal, and catechism. Instructions for the craft are given in this manual. The materials for the craft may be purchased at a home improvement store and at a fabric store.

Congregations will be able to produce the craft on their own if among their members they have someone skilled with a table saw. Otherwise, congregations may purchase materials through Pax Domini Press.

Because of the shortened time for crafts each week, only a few things will be done each week such as sanding, staining, screwing, and assembling. There is not a lot of room for creativity, but the children will appreciate the final product nonetheless. Congregations may also include adults in this project.

The craft is a bit more expensive than typical Pax Domini Press crafts. However, it will be noted that the finished product is indeed a piece of furniture. Many churches do not have kneelers for times of prayer and confession. This craft intends to provide a remedy for that need.

The Sermons

Lent is often a busy time for pastors, a situation relieved somewhat by the “clergy rotation” done by pastors in a given circuit during Lent, in which a pastor prepares one sermon and repeats it to a different congregation of the circuit each week.

This program offers five sermons written by a called and ordained minister in the Missouri Synod, Rev. Peter Burfeind, the author of much of Pax Domini Press materials. The sermons are given in several formats, to be used at the discretion of the pastor if he so chooses. Also included are the sermons in Notepad (.TXT) format, so that they may be cut, edited, pasted, expanded, or shortened at the pastor’s discretion.

The Vespers Service

Included on the CD is a folder with materials needed for a Vespers bulletin suitable for *Lutheran Service Book*, *The Lutheran Hymnal*, *Lutheran Worship*, and *Evangelical Lutheran Hymnary*. Files are given in PDF format.

For a half sheet bulletin: (1) print ½ the total bulletins needed from the “Week [#] Vespers” PDF file; (2) flip over and re-insert printed bulletins; (3) print on reverse side; (4) cut in half.

For a bulletin with a cover: (1) print total bulletins needed from the “Week [#] Vespers” PDF file; (2) flip over and re-insert printed bulletins; (3) print cover page in black and white or color on reverse side; (4) fold.

Bulletins are also given in one TXT document. These may be used or edited in any way deemed appropriate. Files are configured so that, when cut and pasted, the tabbed text (page numbers and hymns) will go to where the first tab is in the final document. Thus, the final document should first be set up so that ONE RIGHT TAB is set near the end of the line. When cut TXT text is pasted into the final document, the tabbed text should go to the appropriate place at the end of the line.

Congregations may consider putting all services together in one booklet to be reused throughout Lent, in which case the sermon hymn used for each week would be printed once on the final page, saving some paper. If this is done, edit the bracketed words after the sermon hymn that read “[next page]” to read “[back page]”.

Finally, it should be noted that space is provided on the bottom of the cover page and on the bottom of the “order of service” page for personalized text such as congregation name, service times, preludes, postludes, name of pastor, etc.

Printing the Material

Opening Chapel: The chapel service is loosely based on the Matins service, with versicles, Psalm, hymn, reading, and prayer. The chapel service is in PDF file in the CD, formatted for booklet form. It may take some tweaking to figure out how to print it properly. First, print the ODD pages, then reinsert and print the EVEN pages IN REVERSE.

Program Workbooks: The PDF files of the workbooks may be reproduced in the following manner:

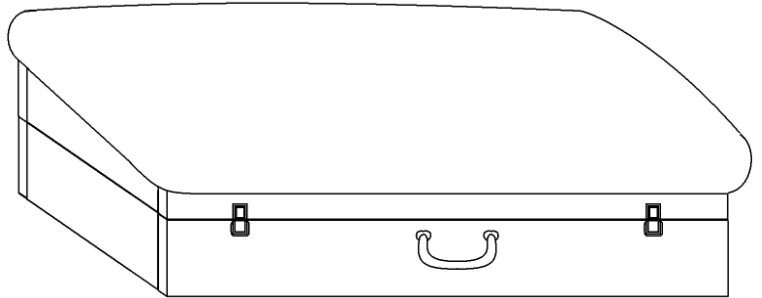
- (1) Print them off and copy them on a copy machine.
- (2) Print multiple copies of them on the printer.
- (3) Print them off and then copy them in booklet form on a copy machine with that capability.
- (4) Print them off and then take them to a copy professional to copy in booklet form.
- (5) Print them directly into booklet form from the PDF format, if copy machine has that capability.
- (6) Take PDF files to copy professional to print of in booklet form.

Any problems or questions, please call Pax Domini Press at (419) 475-6140.

Craft Instructions

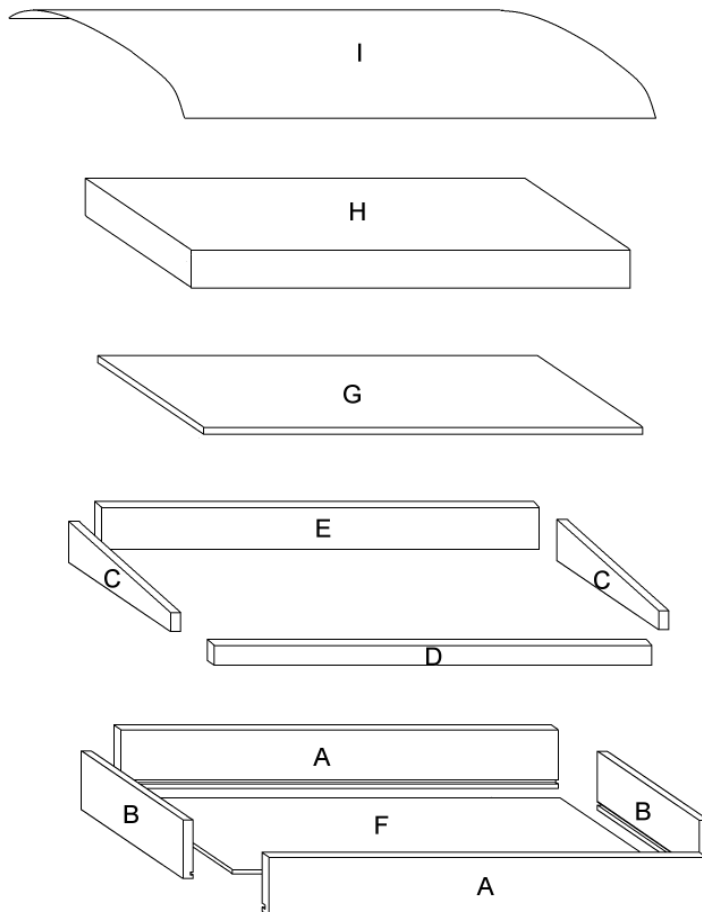
Introduction

The craft for this project is a portable kneeler, like the kneeling portion of a prie dieux (prayer desk). It opens up to hold hymnals, catechisms, and Bibles; and it has a handle. The total cost of materials for each craft – depending on quality of wood, hardware, foam, etc. – will be between \$15 - \$25.



Materials

- Two 3" X 20" X 3/4" pieces of hard wood (A)
- Two 3" X 7" X 3/4" pieces of hard wood (B)
- Two 2 3/8" X 7" X 3/4" pieces of hard wood (C) (cut at 10 degree angle; see Figure A)
- One 1 1/8" X 20" X 3/4" piece of hard wood (D) (cut at angle; see side view in Figure B)
- One 2 1/2" X 20" X 3/4" piece of hard wood (E) (cut at angle; see side view in Figure B)
- One 7" X 20" X 1/4" piece of plywood (F)
- One 8 3/4" X 20" X 1/2" piece of plywood (G) (with rounded corners)
- One 8 3/4" X 20" piece of foam rubber (H)
- One 15" X 30" piece of vinyl, or some such cloth for the kneeler (I) (size depends on cushion material)
- 10 3/4" X 22" upholstery backing (the material spread over gardens and covered with soil to prevent weed growth is the same material that upholsterers use for backing, and much cheaper)
- 12 wood screws (or nails)
- 12 wood plugs (if used; nails may also be used to fasten piece)
- Wood glue optional
- Two 1 1/2" brass hinges (large enough to hold material)
- Two brass draw bolts (various options available)
- One brass handle
- Stains

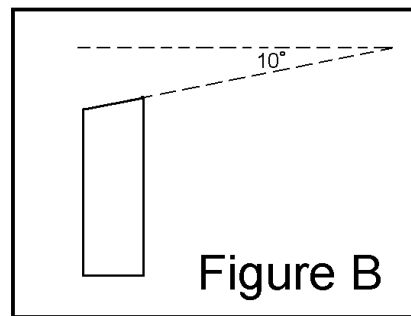
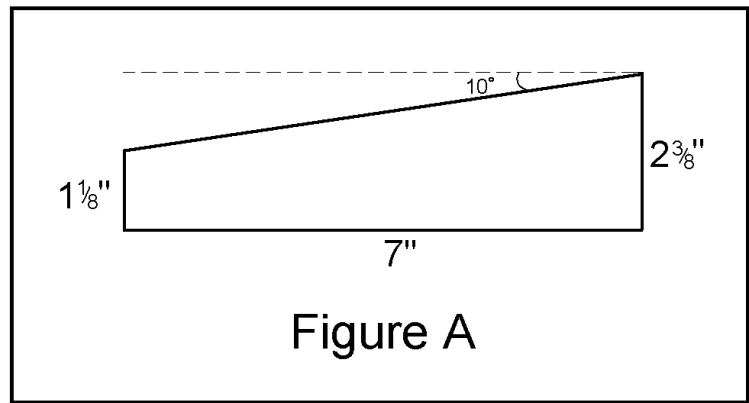


Tools

Table saw
Drill press
Brushes
Router table/Shaper

Directions for Materials

1. Cut wood pieces out according to specifications above, preferably using a hardwood. Follow specifications for angled pieces (Figures A and B) here. Figure B represents the slope suggested for pieces D and E. The heights of these two pieces are different. Piece D angles at a 10 degree angle from 1" to 1 1/8". Piece E angles at a 10 degree angle from 2 3/8 to 2 1/2".
2. In pieces A and B, router a 1/4" groove about 1/4" deep and about 1/4" from the bottom edge. The 1/4" plywood will go in these grooves to form the floor of the bottom piece of the kneeler. Be sure to keep the router from going all the way to the edge in pieces A, or else the end of the groove will show.
3. Cut the 1/4" plywood to size so that it fits in the grooves and pieces A and B fit over it.
4. Cut the 1/2" plywood to size in specifications. As the vinyl cover will eventually go over this wood, it should have curved corners so that they do not puncture or fatigue the vinyl.
5. Various sizes and densities may be used for the rubber foam. Keeping in mind that the user will be kneeling on the material, it should be more dense and thicker.



Assembly

1. Sand all pieces.
2. Assemble bottom of kneeler according to diagram. Fit 1/4" plywood in grooves of side pieces (pieces B) and screw, glue, or nail front and back pieces (pieces A) in. A wood screw with wood plug is recommended, as the hole will be visible. Nails or glue will also work, however.
3. Assemble cover frame next with same fastener used on bottom, wood screw with plug, nail, or glue. One fastener for each connecting point will be enough, as the whole frame will eventually be made tighter once it is fastened onto the kneeling board.
4. Assemble the kneeling board. Set rubber foam on 1/2" plywood board, and stretch vinyl cover over to the back. Staple vinyl about 1/4" from the edge, and cut off excess material. This is a bit tricky and may take a few trials. Ideally, there should need to be no "hospital corners," but the material should stretch over the corners with only slight folding. After vinyl is all stapled, fold over edges of upholstery backing to give a clean edge, and staple about 1/4" from the edge of the back of the kneeling board. This area will be covered by the cover frame, but backing should not be seen from the outside of the kneeler, so it should be stapled about 1/4" in. Use staple gun with short staples.
5. Stain and varnish wood pieces before final assembly.
6. Kneeling board with foam and vinyl cover is now ready to be fastened to the cover frame. Drill four holes from the bottom of the cover frame (one in the middle of each side) into the kneeling board, and fasten with wood screw. Ideally, wood screw will be hidden with a wood plug.
7. Using brass hinges, fasten the kneeler cover to the kneeler bottom. Fasten the brass handle where the kneeler opens. Fasten draw bolts to close tightly.

Craft Schedule Each Week

Very little time is given for the craft according to the schedule that will be typically available. However, children will be able to do some important parts of the assembly. Adults should have the pieces cut and the vinyl stretched over the kneeling board. Children will sand, stain, varnish, and older children will be able to assemble. These steps may be divided over the five weeks as follows:

- Week One: Sand pieces; begin staining.
- Week Two: Finalize staining; 2nd coat may be needed.
- Week Three: Varnish.
- Week Four: Assemble piece; glue.

Week Five: Add hardware.

In addition to these activities, children may work on some other recommended crafts:

- (A) A prayer book with prayers from the catechism.
- (B) Artwork or icons to be placed on the sides of the kneeler. Using a religious piece of art – Jesus praying in the garden, for example – adhere the artwork on the kneeler and gloss with Mod Podge or varnish. Then frame the artwork with popsicle sticks (cut to size) painted with a rich gold. Glue frame pieces on kneeler.
- (C) From a religious supply store or online, purchase wooden crucifixes, or Chi Rhos, with a flat back that may be stained and glued to the sides of the kneeler.

In the Name (Level 1 Sample)

How can we pray to God our Heavenly Father?

In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. He made Adam and Eve, and He set them in the Garden of Eden.

Adam and Eve sinned against God, and God sent them out of the Garden of Eden.



This picture tells the story of how Paradise was closed to Adam and Eve.



The Bible says that God will not hear the prayers of sinners. We are sinners! How can we pray to God our Heavenly Father if we are sinners?

God loves us so much that He wanted to save us from our sins. He sent His Son, Jesus, to die for our sins. Jesus died on the cross for the forgiveness of all our sins.



He rose again...

...and 40 days later He ascended into heaven.

...He now sits at the right hand of the Father.



When we were baptized, we put on Christ Jesus. All our sins were washed away. This means that we can pray to the Father. He hears our prayers again. Through

Jesus, we come right up to the Father, even sitting with Jesus on His throne next to the Father!



Jesus Teaches us to Pray in His Name

Jesus said, “Whatever you ask the Father in My name He will give you. Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full.

“Because you love Me and believe that I came forth from God, the Father Himself loves you.

“I came forth from the Father and have come into the world. Again, I leave the world and go to the Father.”



Jesus was lifted up to God's right hand.
Mary sang how God lifted her up. God lifts us up too.



My soul magnifies
the Lord

The Persistent Widow (Level 2 Sample)

Memory Verse

1 Thessalonians 5: 17

Pray without ceasing.



Introduction

We are learning about prayer. We have learned two special things about prayer.

First, God is our Father. He loves us. He wants us to pray to Him as His true children.

Second, we pray in Jesus' name. Jesus died for our sins, and He sits at the right hand of the Father. We were baptized His brothers and sisters. This is why we pray in His name.

Today, we will learn something new. We learn to pray without ever stopping. We learn to never give up praying. We learn to be persistent. *Persistent* means to never give up.

Write *persistent* down here: _____

Now write what persistent means: _____

Listen to Luke 18: 1-7 and answer the following questions:

Fill in the blanks. Why did Jesus teach this parable?

(1) Because men always ought _____.

(2) So that men do not _____.

Discuss the following questions:

1. What is the judge like?
2. For what exactly did the woman pray?
3. Why did the judge finally answer her?
4. Will God always answer our prayer? Will He always answer them right away?



The Persistent Widow

Jesus teaches us to never give up praying. We pray again and again and again. We may think that God does not hear us, but we keep on praying. We never give up.

God will always answer our prayers. He may make us wait, but He will always answer.

Read the following stories about persistence in prayer. Answer the questions that follow:



1. Matthew 15: 22-28

One day, a woman prayed to Jesus. She prayed, “Have mercy on me, O Lord, Son of David! My daughter is not well.”

Jesus did not answer her. Even the disciples said to Jesus, “Send her away. She’s bothering us!”

Jesus then said to her, “I was not sent for you.”

The woman prayed again, “Lord, help me!”

Jesus said to her, “It is not good to take the

children’s bread and throw it to the little dogs.”

The woman prayed again, “Yes, Lord, but the little dogs at least get the crumbs that fall from the table.”

Jesus said, “O woman, great is your faith! Your prayer is answered.”

The woman’s daughter was then healed.

Did the woman give up when Jesus did not answer her?

Did the woman give up when the disciples tried to send her away?

Did the woman give up when Jesus called her a little dog?

2. Matthew 20: 29-34

Jesus left a city, and a crowd followed Him. Two blind men were sitting by the road. They heard Jesus come by.

Suddenly, they said, “Have mercy on us, O Lord!”

The crowd told them to be quiet. Then the blind men cried louder, “Have mercy on us, O Lord!”

Jesus stopped and said, “What do you want me to do?”

The blind men said, “To open our eyes.”

Jesus had mercy on them. He touched their eyes, and they could see. Then they

followed Jesus.

What did the blind men do when Jesus did not answer?

What exactly did the blind men pray to Jesus?

3. What do we pray in church that is like what the woman and the blind men prayed?

4. Will Jesus answer this prayer we say in church? How?



Under His Feet

We have many enemies. Here are some enemies:

Sin is an enemy. We do bad things that hurt others. People do bad things that hurt us. We do not want to sin. We wish others did not sin. We hate sin! Sin is an enemy!

Death is an enemy. One day, all people will die. Many people are sick. Many people are dying. It is sad when people die. Death is an enemy!

The devil is an enemy. The devil tempts us to sin. The devil does not want us to believe in Jesus. The devil wants us to die and go to hell. The devil is an enemy!

Write out the three enemies here:



We pray that Jesus will get revenge on these enemies. We pray that Jesus will crush these enemies under His feet. Because of these enemies, we pray “Lord, have mercy.” This prayer is called the *Kyrie*. We pray this prayer many times in church.

Jesus answers this prayer. He is at the right hand of the Father. All things are under His feet. He will answer our prayer. He will crush sin, death, and the devil under His feet for us!

Stones, Serpents, and Scorpions? (Level 3 Sample)

Memory Verse

Luke 11: 9

So I say to you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you.

Introduction

On day 1, we learned that Jesus invites us to pray. We are God's children, and He is our Father. Our Father has many promises for us, and He wants us to call upon His name in every trouble, to pray to Him, to praise Him, and to give thanks to Him.

On day 2, we learned that Jesus is sitting at the right hand of the Father. He is the Lamb of God Who takes away the sin of the world. We pray in Jesus' name, and He receives our prayer.

On day 3, we learned to be persistent in prayer. God promises to answer, and we should never give up praying. We pray "Lord, have mercy" always, and God hears us.

Today, we learn that God will most certainly give us what we pray for. We will learn what good things God will give us.

Read Luke 11: 9-13. Discuss the questions below:

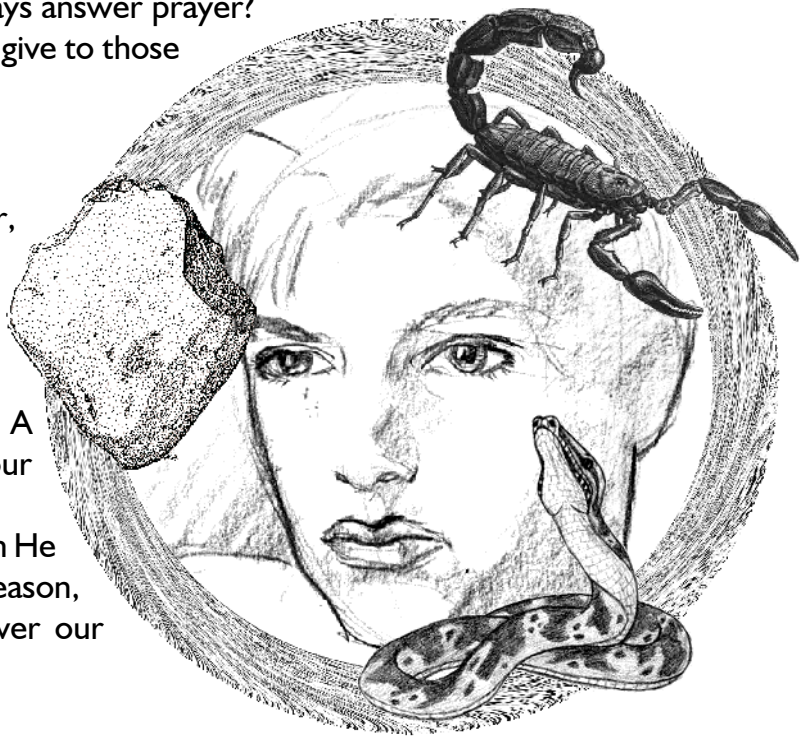
1. What does Jesus promise about prayer in verses 9-10? Is there any doubt that God will answer prayer?
2. How does Jesus show that God will always answer prayer?
3. What exact thing does Jesus say God will give to those who ask Him?

Stones, Serpents, and Scorpions

Let's imagine if we said to our father, "Dad, I'm hungry. Can you please make me a sandwich." Would our father say, "Sure! Close your eyes and open your hands." And then would he put a crayfish in our hands?

What kind of father would do that? A very mean father might do that, but is God our Father mean to us?

No way! Our Father loves us so much He sent His Son to die for all our sins. For this reason, Jesus teaches us that our Father will answer our prayers. Jesus leaves us in no doubt.



In the following sentences, circle which one Jesus teaches us:

(1) “Knock, and the door *might*, just *might*, be opened for you.”

“Knock, and it *will* be opened to you.”

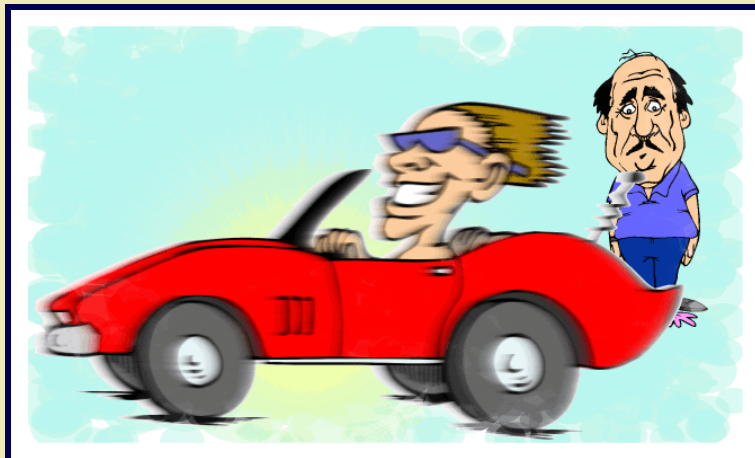
(2) “Everyone who asks receives.”

“Everyone who asks *might* receive.”

Maddie’s Daddy asks for a Caddy

Maddie’s daddy wanted a caddy, a shiny new Cadillac. When Maddie’s daddy was a laddie, he dreamed one day of having a caddy. But Maddie’s daddy wasn’t getting his caddy. He stood on the side of the road watching caddies drive by...but none of them belonged to him.

Maddie’s daddy began praying for a caddy. He prayed, “Dear God, Jesus says you’re like my daddy. Please give me a caddy!”



But Maddie’s daddy never got his caddy. So he prayed again. He said, “Dear God, Jesus says I should be persistent. Lord, give me a caddy! Christ, give me a caddy! Lord, give me a caddy! Pleeeeeease!! In Jesus’ name, please, please, please give me a caddy!”

Maddie’s daddy still did not get his caddy.

Didn’t Jesus say, “Ask, and it will be given to you”?

Was Jesus lying since Maddie’s daddy did not get his caddy?

Read Luke 11: 13 again. What exactly did Jesus say the Father will give to those who ask Him?

The gift of the Holy Spirit

Jesus does say, “Ask, and it will be given to you.” But he’s not talking about things of this world. He’s talking about the Holy Spirit.

Read the following passages and follow the instructions after each verse:

Psalm 119: 37 – Turn away my eyes from looking at worthless things, And revive me in Your way.

Underline what we should not ask for.

What does the Bible call a shiny new Cadillac?

James 4: 3 – You ask and do not receive, because you ask [wrongly], that you may spend it on your pleasures.

When will we not get what we ask for?

Matthew 6: 31-33 – “Therefore do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.”

What are the things that gentiles seek?

Underline what we should seek first.

Do the multiple choice below:

- 1.) Jesus promises to give us _____.
 - a. Some of the things we ask for in His name.
 - b. All of the things we ask for in His name.

- 2.) Which of the following is NOT true about bikes, cars, video games, cell phones, MP3 players, and clothes.
 - a. The Bible calls them “worthless things.”
 - b. God does not want us to have any of these things.
 - c. These things are more about our pleasures than about the kingdom of heaven.
 - d. These are the types of things that gentiles seek. God will take care of our earthly concerns.

- 3.) What is NOT true about how God will answer prayer?
 - a. He will give everything we ask for in Jesus’ name.
 - b. He will abundantly give the Holy Spirit to us.
 - c. He will not give us things for us to use on our pleasures.
 - d. If we don’t get the things we want, it’s because we’re not praying hard enough.



Activity: What ought we to pray for?

After the *Kyrie* in Vespers, we pray the Lord's Prayer. Look up the article on the Lord's Prayer in the Small Catechism. Write down a summary of what we pray for in each petition: (The petitions may be split among the students.)

First Petition

Second Petition

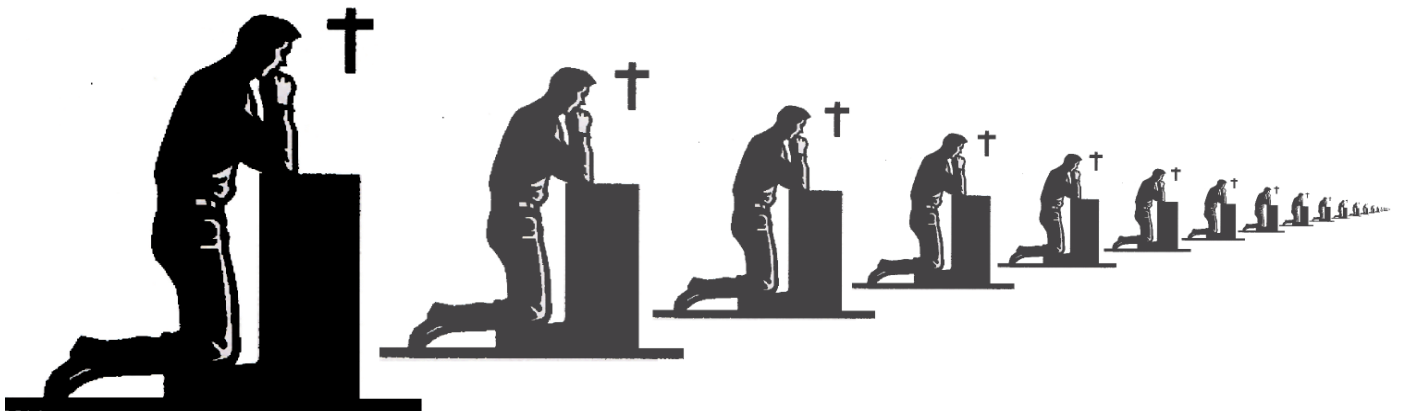
Third Petition

Fourth Petition

Fifth Petition

Sixth Petition

Seventh Petition



Receive our Prayer (Level 4 Sample)

Memory Verse

Acts 2: 42

And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in the prayers.

Introduction

We have learned that Jesus invites us to pray because God has many promises for us. He is our Father, and He loves us as His dear children. He tenderly invites us to call upon His name.

We have learned that, because we pray in Jesus' name, our sins do not close God's ears to us. Jesus is the Lamb of God Who has died for all our sins and is sitting at the right hand of the Father. He receives our prayers. He intercedes for us.

We have learned to be persistent in prayer. We should never give up but endure in our prayer, even if it seems that God is not listening. He will always answer us.

Finally, we have learned what we should pray for. We should not pray for worthless things that mean nothing. God wants us to pray for His Holy Spirit. He will never deny our prayers for the Holy Spirit. The Lord's Prayer has seven petitions that pray for things of the Holy Spirit.

"When You Pray..."
(The Father wants us to pray to Him.)

"In the Name"
(We pray in Jesus' name.)

"The Persistent Widow"
(We never give up praying.)

"Stones, Serpents, and Scorpions"
(God will always give us the Spirit's gifts.)

Today we learn where this all comes together. In the liturgy every week at church, Christ's church gathers together. We gather together because we have been called out of this sinful world.

We have been redeemed by the blood of Jesus. We have been washed clean in Holy Baptism. We come to church as God's precious and holy children, and He loves to see us gather around His throne to receive His gifts. This is what we learned on the first day.

In the liturgy, we learn over and over again about the Holy Trinity. We learn that Jesus died on the cross

for our salvation, and He has ascended to the right hand of the Father. We learn that He is the Lamb of God Who takes away the sin of the world. Because He is at the right hand of the Father, He receives our prayer. This is what we learned on the second day.

We learn persistence in the liturgy. How often do we pray "Lord have mercy" in the liturgy? How often do we pray? We persistently pray the *Kyrie* over and over again. This is what we learned the third day.

Finally, in the liturgy we pray for the Holy Spirit. We confess our sins and ask for His gift of absolution. We call upon the name of the Lord, and ask for His presence. We pray on behalf of the congregation, for the sick, the shut-ins, and others. Just before Holy Communion, we pray for the Lord's mercy. This is what we learned the fourth day.

At church we gather together to pray. At church we learn to pray.

Read Acts 2: 32-42 and answer the following questions:

I. To where has Jesus been exalted?

2. Now that Jesus is exalted to this place, Who has been poured out from the Father?

3. After the people were cut to the heart, what did Peter tell them to do?

4. What would the people receive after repenting and being baptized? (Also, to whom is this promise given exactly?)

5. What four things did the people continue to do after being baptized?
 - (1)
 - (2)
 - (3)
 - (4)

6. Where do these four things happen still today?

Apostles' Doctrine, Fellowship, Breaking of Bread, and the Prayers

Look at the summaries of each of these four activities:

Apostles' Doctrine	This is the teaching of the apostles. It includes everything we learn about the Gospel based on the Word of God.
Fellowship	When people share something in common, it is a fellowship. Whenever Christians join together around something they have in common, they have fellowship. Whenever they share something in common, they have fellowship. Whenever they confess their faith together or sing together, they have fellowship.
Breaking of Bread	This is another way of saying <i>Holy Communion</i> .
The Prayers	These are the prayers that we pray during the service. Anytime we call upon God's name, call upon His mercy, praise Him, or give Him thanks, we are joining in the prayers.

Now, look at the following activities or words of the liturgy. Using the code below, match up the above activities to the activities we do in the liturgy. Some of the activities will have more than one answer:

- A. Apostles' Doctrine F. Fellowship B. Breaking of bread P. The Prayers

1. A, F The congregation joins together to confess the Nicene Creed or the Apostles' Creed.

[Not only do the creeds confess what the apostles taught, but they are something that all the people share together as one.]

2. _____ The minister gives Christ's Body, saying "Take, eat, this is My Body."

3. _____ The pastor reads the Gospel from Matthew, Mark, Luke, or John.

4. _____ The congregation prays the Collect, the prayer that "collects" all the prayers of the people together into one.

5. _____ The preacher preaches the sermon, teaching the Gospel based on the readings for the day.

6. _____ The congregation sings or says "Lord, have mercy upon us" throughout the service.

7. _____ The congregation begins by calling upon the name of the Lord, "In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit."

8. _____ The congregation sings, "Glory to God in the highest...we worship You, we give You thanks, we praise You for your glory." They also sing, "Holy, holy, holy."

9. _____ The church sings hymns during the service. (Think carefully on this one!)

10. _____ The minister consecrates the bread and wine for Holy Communion.



The 12 disciples receive the Holy Spirit on the first Pentecost.

Our Whole Life is a Prayer!

As we did this exercise, most of it was pretty easy. But if we really think about some of the activities, we might get confused. So many of them overlap! When we sing, "Holy, holy, holy," this is something the people share as one (fellowship). It is also a prayer. And it also teaches us the apostles' doctrine.

When we hear the Gospel, we are hearing the apostles' teaching, but aren't we also meditating on the words as if they were a prayer?

When we receive Holy Communion, we receive the breaking of bread. We share something in common with the other people (fellowship). We hear the teaching of the apostles. And we also pray while



receiving it!

The point is, the whole liturgy is a prayer! Prayer is simply being directed toward the Lord in order to receive His gifts. Prayer is where we, by faith, open our ears and mouths to receive the Lord's gifts. He offers His gifts to us, and our prayer is where we say, "Amen! Gift received! Thank you, dear Lord!"

The same is true in our lives. Every day we live by God's gifts. We cannot eat, drink, and walk without God's gifts. The sun shines, the rain pours, and the animals exist all by God's gifts. Our talents are all gifts from God.

As Christians, we know that the Lord gives all these gifts out of His love. For the same Lord Who sent His Son Jesus to die for us also gives us the sun, the rain, our lives, and

all our talents. As Christians, we direct ourselves toward the Lord in humble thanksgiving for all His gifts.

We may not know we are praying all the time, but the Holy Spirit prays in us always. This is why we have joy about God's gifts. This is why our whole life is a prayer.

Activity: Vespers

Vespers ends with the Collect for Peace and other collects. What are collects? Collects may have five parts (and always at least three). Study the five parts of a collect and diagram the Collect for Peace:

The 5 parts of a Collect (the parts with the star are not always in a collect):

1. The Address The name of God that is being used.
2. *The Ascription A phrase that describes something about God that we want to call upon. (Usually beginning with a "W" word like *Who* or *Whose* or *from Whom*.)
3. The Petition The actual thing that we ask for in the prayer. (Often begun with some word like *grant*, *give*, *bestow*, or *provide*.)
4. *The Result The reason why we are praying the petition. (Usually beginning with *that* or *so that*.)
5. The Closing The end of every collect: Through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, etc....

Address _____

Ascription _____

Petition _____

Result _____

Closing _____

Sample of Sermon Outline and Sermon

First Week: Lord, Teach us to Pray

Text: Matthew 6: 5-13

Introduction: Lord, Teach us to Pray

- A. That Jesus must teach us how to pray shows that prayer is not natural.
- B. Our doctrine of original sin teaches us that by nature we do not want to seek God or pray. (cf. Romans 3: 11)

Summary of Sermon: Three Teachings from the Sermon on the Mount

- (1) "When you pray..." (Prayer is not an option.)
- (2) "Our Father..." (Jesus teaches us that God is our Father, and we are His children.)
- (3) The Lord's Prayer (Jesus gives us the words to say.)

I Part One: "When you pray..." (Prayer is not an option.)

- A. Jesus did not say, "If you pray" but "When you pray."
- B. Second Commandment: How do we correctly use God's name? By calling upon it in every need.
 - Luther from the Large Catechism: "It is our duty...to pray if we want to be Christians."
- C. Prayer is faith in action
 - 1. False prayer arises from false faith.
 - a. Mere intellectual faith: Believes a God exists but not that this God has any power to answer our deepest needs.
 - b. Hypocritical faith: More interested in showing off piety – getting rewards from others – than in truly going to God for our deepest needs.
 - 2. True prayer rises from true faith.
 - a. True faith begun when the Law crushes us and we see our deepest needs.
 - Like St. Peter sinking
 - Like all the "save me" Psalms (eg. Psalm 6, 31, 54, 69, 72, 109)
 - b. True faith rooted in the trust that God will save us.
 - He has saved us through the death of Christ.
 - He claimed us as His own in Holy Baptism.
 - 3. The words of the Sermon on the Mount might lead us to despair did Jesus not give us those three little words, "When you pray...", reminding us that we may approach our Father's throne with boldness.
 - Luther quote: "If He did not intend to answer you, he would not have ordered you to pray."

II. Part Two: "Our Father..." (Jesus teaches us that God is our Father, and we are His children.)

- A. Words from Small Catechism on Introduction: The Father tenderly invites us to pray...etc.
- B. Jesus shares with us what He possesses: His status as the Son of God.
 - 1. Jesus uses the expression "your Father" or "your heavenly Father" 14 times throughout the Sermon on the Mount (the greatest concentration of these words in all of Scripture).
 - 2. Jesus is sharing with us what He had just been given in His baptism, namely, the declaration, "You are My beloved Son, in Whom I am well pleased."
 - a. We first receive this gift in baptism, when we become well-pleasing to God through the forgiveness of our sins.
 - b. Jesus "baptizes" us in His words, wrapping us up in the truth that God is our Father.
 - c. Jesus introduces the familial relationship as a basis for understanding why we should pray: Will a father abandon his own child? [More on this in a future sermon.]

III. Part Three: The Lord's Prayer (Jesus gives us the words to say.)

- A. Two things implied by Jesus giving us the words to pray:
 - 1. We have no idea what we should pray for.
 - Left to our own devices, we would pray for earthly pleasures (cf. James 4: 3)
 - 2. Jesus will "open our lips" to what our true needs are, as the opening versicles to Vespers say.
- B. The 7 petitions teach us what our true needs are.
 - 1. 6 of them are spiritual needs: God's name, kingdom, and will; forgiveness, strength in temptation, deliverance from evil.
 - 2. Even the "worldly" need – for daily bread – is a spiritual concern, because it involves what we look to for our daily providence.

Conclusion: The Lord would not teach us to pray for things that will not be answered. As surely as Jesus has taught us to pray the Lord's Prayer, we may know that its 7 petitions will be answered.

Review of last week's theme:

- A. God commands us to pray; prayer is not an option.
- B. God is our Father, and we are His children.
- C. Jesus gives us the exact words to pray in the Lord's Prayer.

Introduction: How can we pray? How can we claim the right to call God "Father"?

- A. Let us not take the casual attitude of our contemporary age that going into the throne-room of God is like going over to talk to a benevolent old neighbor.
- B. The Scriptures reveal God's throne-room and presence as a terrible and terrifying place to be. (eg. The Book of Revelation; Isaiah 6; the Transfiguration)

I. Part One: Adam and the Presence of God

- A. The Gospel of Luke calls Adam, the "son of God."
 1. He was created in the image of God. (Genesis 1: 26-27)
 2. The image of God is Christ. (Colossians 1: 15; Hebrews 1: 3)
 3. Even in the beginning, Christ shared what He possessed (being God's Son) with humanity.
 4. All of humanity was intended to be in God's presence and enjoy His Fatherly providence.
- B. Adam and Eve sin.
 1. Humanity is cut off from God's presence; the gates to the Garden of Eden are shut.
 2. Heaven is closed to humanity; God's ears are shut to their cries.
 - Psalm 66: 18 – If I regard iniquity in my heart, The Lord will not hear.
 - Isaiah 1: 15 – "Even though you make many prayers, I will not hear."
 - Isaiah 29: 2 – "Your iniquities have separated you from your God; And your sins have hidden His face from you, So that He will not hear."
 3. But the Lord promised mercy.
 - Isaiah 41: 17 – "I, the LORD, will hear them; I, the God of Israel, will not forsake them."

II. Part Two: Jesus Restores Us into God's Presence

- A. Jesus is a "Second Adam" (I Corinthians 15: 45-50)
 1. He is God in human flesh and blood; humanity shares what the God's Son possesses in perfect unity.
 2. He did not sin.
 3. In Him heaven is no longer shut to humanity.
 - The shepherds saw heaven opened when Jesus was born.
 - Heaven was split open (like the curtain in the temple at His death) when Jesus was baptized.
- B. Jesus' death opened up heaven for us.
 1. He died for our sins, ending the curse of Adam.
 2. He ascended to the right hand of the Father, providing for access to God's throne-room for all humanity.
 3. In Him, we sit on His throne (Revelation 3: 21).
 4. This is why we can call God "Father," and why we can pray to Him before His throne.

III. Part III: The Gospel from John 16: 23-28: Praying in Jesus' name

- A. Jesus is going back to the Father.
 1. "In that day" (His ascension) we will pray in His name to the Father.
 2. Jesus will not pray for us, but we ourselves will pray to the Father, and He will hear us through faith in Jesus' name.
- B. The liturgy plays out these truths.
 1. We come to church, as it were, with heaven closed to us because of our sins.
 2. Through Holy Absolution in Jesus' Blood, we are granted entrance (Introit) into God's throne-room.
 3. The *Gloria in Excelsis* and the *Sanctus* are angelic hymns that testify that we are in God's throne-room.
- C. The *Gloria in Excelsis* especially teaches the things we've meditated upon tonight.
 1. Jesus, the Lamb of God, the Son of God, Who takes away the sins of the world has mercy on us.
 2. Jesus is sitting at the right hand of the Father. He hears our prayer.

Conclusion: In the liturgy we pray that God would "hear our prayer." Because Jesus has ascended to the Father, we know for certain that He most certainly will.

Sermon for the First Midweek Lenten Service

Text: Matthew 6: 5-13

Theme: "When you Pray..."

In the name of Jesus. Amen.

Our theme for this Lenten Season is prayer. Lent is traditionally a time of increased devotion and meditation, so it is a good time to learn about prayer. Our meditations during this Lenten Season will be coinciding with what the children are learning during the Lenten Season as well.

You might ask, "Do we really need to learn about prayer?" Isn't prayer just "talking to God"? Isn't prayer something that comes naturally, as natural as talking to your children, your parents, your spouse, or your friend?

Actually, no it is not. Prayer is not natural. First, remember that prayer is an outgrowth of our faith, and second, remember what we teach about original sin and faith. That is, by nature we are sinful and unclean. By nature we are children of wrath. By nature we do not receive the things of the Spirit. As St. Paul says concerning the results of original sin: "No one seeks God." So, *No!* Prayer is most certainly *not* something we do by nature.

Rather, it is only by the Holy Spirit's calling, gathering, and enlightening by the Gospel that we are ever to know exactly how to pray. Think, for example, what it means that even the disciples of Jesus, the Twelve, went to Jesus and said, "Lord, teach us to pray." The simple fact that the disciples asked this request shows that prayer is *not* something that comes naturally. They needed to learn about from the Teacher. And notice Jesus' answer, not what He answered, but what He did *not* answer. Jesus didn't say, "What a foolish request! Don't you know that you should just pray what comes naturally?"

So let us know from the outset that our task during this Lenten Season is a worthy one: *Lord, teach us to pray!*

And He does, doesn't He! We heard in the Gospel before His teaching on prayer. There are three points that emerge from this Gospel that we will meditate upon this evening. And those of you who have read the Large Catechism – not the Small Catechism but the *Large* Catechism – will recognize that these three points coincide with the three points that Dr. Martin Luther teaches us there. We will be referring to the Large Catechism throughout this sermon.

Jesus' teaching comes from His Sermon on the Mount. Mountains in the Bible – think Moses! – are signs that something divine is going on. Of course, Jesus Himself is most certainly "something divine going on," because He is God in human flesh. And so we receive His teaching as the teaching of God Himself.

Jesus teaches three points that we will meditate upon tonight: First, He teaches that praying is not an option, but a command of God. Second, He teaches us that God is our Father who invites us to pray as His own dear children. Third, He teaches us what to pray, the Lord's Prayer.

First, point one. Jesus teaches us that praying is not an option. We know this because Jesus starts off the section by saying, "When you pray...". He doesn't say, "If you pray...", but "When you pray...". That's an important point. As Luther says, "It is our duty...to pray if we want to be Christians."

As we confess in the meaning to the Second Commandment, "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain." What is the proper use of God's name? That we "call upon it in every trouble."

Prayer is faith in action. A faith that does not pray is not faith, or if it does pray, it's a false prayer. These are the kinds of faith that Jesus warned against, the faith of the pagans and hypocrites. Luther warned against this kind of faith in his own day as well, the faith of the monks. This is the sort of faith that is merely intellectual, or merely for a show.

Some people say they know that God exists, but they don't pray. By not praying, they are basically saying, "Yeah, I believe God exists, but I don't really think He either hears me or has any power to do anything." That's not faith.

Or some people say they believe in God, but their belief is not directed toward God, but toward others. They seek their rewards from men, not from God. They want everyone to see how pious they are. They may babble on and on, howling and growling so that everyone says, "Oh, what piety!" But that's not faith either.

We properly understand faith when we understand how it is created. It is created when God's Law crushes us down to dust and ashes, so that, "in the hour of utmost need, we know not where to look for aid." And like St. Peter sinking into the waves, we cry out "Lord, save me!" And Jesus reaches out His hand to save us. Notice how faith is related to prayer,

and both are related to our deepest needs. When we're sinking in our sins, in our diseases, in the curse of death upon all humanity, we cry out to the Lord for help in our greatest need. That's prayer, and it's rooted in the faith that God will reach out His hand to us and save us.

This is why Luther says that we must "feel our need [and] distress" if we are to understand prayer. This point is all the more powerful in the context in which Jesus teaches it. Because if there's one thing you become absolutely aware of as you sit at Jesus' feet while He teaches from the mount, it is your need. Have you ever listened to a full reading of the Sermon on the Mount? Be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect. Anger is as bad as murder. Lust is as bad as adultery. Do not get divorced. Love your enemy. Don't sue. Do not judge others. Don't worry about food and clothing.

These teachings, so much more demanding than anything Moses proclaimed from *his* mountain, would drive us away in fear and despair did Jesus not add those three little words: "When you pray...". That is, the Lord expects us to run to Him at times of need and despair, and if His words drive us to our knees, good! That's where He wants us. As Luther says, "If He did not intend to answer you, he would not have ordered you to pray."

So that's point number one. Prayer is faith in action; prayer is to call upon God in every need.

Point number two: God is our Father who invites us to pray as His own dear children. This relates to the words from the Small Catechism on the Introduction to the Lord's Prayer: "With [the words 'Our Father'] God tenderly invites us to believe that He is our true Father and that we are His true children, so that with all boldness and confidence we may ask Him as dear children ask their dear father."

One of the most powerful, but quite hidden, glories of the Sermon on the Mount is how often Jesus uses the expression, "your Father." 14 times Jesus uses the expression "your Father" or "your heavenly Father." This is far and away the greatest concentration of these two words in the entire Scriptures.

Think how wonderful this truly is. Remember, Jesus had just been baptized. And when He was baptized, the Father declared, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." What Jesus is doing by the repetition of this phrase, "*your* Father" and "*your* heavenly Father" is sharing what He has with us. He is God's Son, so strictly speaking, only He should be able to call God "Father." But in the Sermon on the Mount – 14 times – He embraces you into what He alone possesses. He gives you what He has.

This He first did for you when you were baptized. Jesus embraced you into His own baptism, so that you share what the Father said of Jesus, "This is my beloved child, in whom I am well pleased." And so your sins are forgiven by Christ's death. And here in the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus baptizes you with His words, a fountain of words – "your Father" or "your heavenly Father" – that flow over you, comforting you by the Holy Spirit, tenderly inviting you to approach your Father in boldness and confidence.

Here again, by Jesus bathing us in these words, He reassures us that our Father will not cast us off. We are His children. In the coming weeks, we will probe this truth more deeply.

Point number three: Jesus teaches us what to pray, the Lord's Prayer.

The fact that Jesus teaches us what to pray indicates two things: First, we have no clue what we should pray for on our own; and second, He will tell us what our truest needs are.

No, we don't have the foggiest clue of what our true needs are, which is why, if left to our own devices, our prayers would be exactly what Jesus describes: "Bla bla bla bla bla bla bla. God, give me a new car. God, I want more money. God, strike my enemy dead." Empty words! Words of vanity! Words that are more about our vain pleasures than about our true needs. And surely, that is how God hears our prayers when we focus on our earthly pleasures: *Bla bla bla*.

The same is true when we turn prayer into our daily diary, or our daily blog. Prayer becomes something like our personal therapy time with our higher power. That sort of prayer can slip into self-absorption, one of the hallmark sins of our day.

So thank God Jesus gives us the words to say. Just like we begin the Vespers service, "Oh Lord, open my lips," because if I were to open them on my own, vain foolishness would come out! And the Lord answers even this prayer, opening our lips with His prayer, the Lord's Prayer.

Notice that all but one petition is about our spiritual needs, about the Kingdom of God and His righteousness. Six of the petitions specifically ask for spiritual things: God's name, kingdom, and will. Forgiveness, strength amidst temptation, and deliverance from evil. These petitions spell out clearly that our truest needs are spiritual needs, and notice that our spiritual

needs are related to sin. Sin is our deepest problem creating our deepest need. Jesus does not let us forget that.

One petition we would call an earthly need – Give us this day our daily bread – but even here, as we see in the Gospels, bread means so much more than mere bread. Bread symbolizes God's daily providence, "all we need to sustain this body and life." And there is a spiritual dimension to that, because the question is, *as we live each day, to Whom or what do we look for our daily providence?* This petition reminds us that we look to our Father in faith.

The most beautiful thing about Jesus giving us the Lord's Prayer is that, He would not have us ask things that He doesn't promise to answer. Do you hunger and thirst – in the depths of your soul – for holiness, for God's kingdom to triumph over this world of evil, for God's will to be done? Do you hunger and thirst for forgiveness, for escape from temptation, for deliverance from evil? Do you worry that your daily needs will be provided for?

Know that all these needs are most certainly answered. Jesus would not have given us the Lord's Prayer if it were not so. In this way He has taught us to pray.

In Jesus' name. Amen.

Program Hymn

Jesus Taught Us How to Pray

(To the tune *Gethsemane*, "Go to Dark Gethsemane";
7. 7. 7. 7. 7. 7.)

Jesus taught us how to pray
To our Father every day.
When we pray we need not fear
That the Lord our prayers will hear.
He invites us tenderly.
Let us come on bended knee.

Though our sins shut heaven's door
All our sins Christ Jesus bore.
Rose on high to God's right hand.
In His grace we ever stand.
All His gifts we now may claim.
Let us pray in Jesus' name.

That our hearts may never fail
Jesus taught the widow's tale.
Hear her long enduring sigh,
Like the blind man's steadfast cry.
"Lord, have mercy" was their plea.
Let us pray this ceaselessly.

When we're hungry to be fed
Our own fathers give us bread.
So does God our Father give
All we need fore'er to live.
Gifts by God's good Spirit poured.
Let us pray Your grace, O Lord.

Christ the Lamb receives our prayers,
Comforts us in all our cares;
In His Body and His Blood,
Answers in the crimson flood.
Each and every single day,
Let us go to Him to pray.