



Daily Prayer For Individuals and Families

Adopted from *The Lutheran Service Book* (p. 298)

Our National Day of Thanksgiving – 2020 A.D.

This brief devotion is intended as a simple form of daily prayer for individuals or gathered groups who are unable to attend our Thanksgiving Eve service. When more than one person is present, a leader may read the words in regular type and the others respond with the words in bold type. The Lord's Prayer that is in bold type is to be said by all.

The sign of the cross ✠ may be made by all in remembrance of their Baptism.

Invocation

In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

It is good to give thanks to the Lord,
to sing praise to Your name, O Most High;

Psalm 92:1

To herald Your love in the morning,
Your truth at the close of the day.

Psalm 92:2

For those with access to the internet, you may now play the worship video, located on Bethany's website (www.bethanycr.org) under the Worship Resources tab and then continue with the Explanation to the First Article of the Apostles' Creed. Everyone else may continue the service as printed....

Scripture Lesson

Luke 17:11-19

¹¹ On the way to Jerusalem he was passing along between Samaria and Galilee. ¹² And as he entered a village, he was met by ten lepers, who stood at a distance ¹³ and lifted up their voices, saying, "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us." ¹⁴ When he saw them he said to them, "Go and show yourselves to the priests." And as they went they were cleansed. ¹⁵ Then one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, praising God with a loud voice; ¹⁶ and he fell on his face at Jesus' feet, giving him thanks. Now he was a Samaritan. ¹⁷ Then Jesus answered, "Were not ten cleansed? Where are the nine? ¹⁸ Was no one found to return and give praise to God except this foreigner?" ¹⁹ And he said to him, "Rise and go your way; your faith has made you well."

Sermon – ✠ *Still Thankful* ✠ (A copy of the sermon is included at the end of this guide.)

First Article of the Apostles' Creed and Explanation from the Small Catechism

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.

What does this mean?

I believe that God has made me and all creatures;
that He has given me my body and soul, eyes, ears, and all my members,
my reason and all my senses, and still takes care of them.

He also gives me clothing and shoes, food and drink, house and home,
wife and children, land, animals, and all I have.
He richly and daily provides me with all that I need
to support this body and life.
He defends me against all danger
and guards and protects me from all evil.



All this He does only out of fatherly divine goodness and mercy,
Without any merit or worthiness in me.
For all this it is my duty to thank and praise, serve and obey Him.
This is most certainly true.

Everyone is now encouraged to reflect upon what they are thankful for this year. You may wish to write these things down in a place where you will see them for the next few weeks or share them with others if you are able.

Collect of the Day

Let us pray... Almighty God, Your mercies are new every morning and You graciously provide for all our needs of body and soul. Grant us Your Holy Spirit that we may acknowledge Your goodness, give thanks for your benefits, and serve You in willing obedience all of our days; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

The Lord's Prayer



**Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name,
Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven;
give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass
against us;
and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and
ever. Amen.**

Concluding Prayers

Blessed Lord, You have caused all Holy Scripture to be written for our learning. Grant that we may so hear them, read, mark, learn, and take them to heart that, by the patience and comfort of Your holy Word, we may embrace and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

Let us bless the Lord.

Thanks be to God.



✠ *Still Thankful* ✠

Grace, mercy, and peace to you from God – the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

St. Luke tells us in his gospel that Jesus was on His way to Jerusalem, somewhere along the border between Samaria and Galilee. Verses 12 and 13 of our text say, “*And as He entered a village, He was met by ten lepers, who stood at a distance and lifted up their voices, saying, ‘Jesus, Master, have mercy on us.’*”

In those two verses, we can see the seriousness of their situation. First of all, there were no real medical treatments for leprosy. There wasn’t even a vaccine for the deadly disease. Once one was afflicted, leprosy would progress, attacking the nerve endings, pain would turn to numbness, and the skin would lose its original color, becoming thick, glossy, and scaly. Sores and ulcers would develop, especially around the eyes and ears, and the skin would bunch up with deep furrows between the swelling so that one's face would look similar to that of a lion - not to mention, one's voice would become hoarse and grating. If you had the signs of this disease and tested positive, I mean if you were declared “unclean”, you could no longer live in your community, but were basically left homeless without the support of family and friends. In many cases you were considered to be cursed by God and impure. If anyone came near you, they had to quarantine for 14 days – excuse me, if anyone came near you, you had to tear your clothes, cover your mouth, and cry, “Unclean, unclean.”

So, when Jesus told them, “Go, get tested”, I mean, “Go and show yourselves to the priests”, that specific biblical procedure was necessary in order for them to be declared clean. And Luke tells us as they started on their way, they were healed of that awful disease. And maybe it's even appropriate to say they were healed and freed from a death sentence.

That's why Luke describes in his account how they all turned back, praising God, with a loud voice, saying, “Thank you, thank you, thank you!” Oh, wait a minute. That's not correct. Luke doesn't describe it that way. The fact of the matter is, only one of the former lepers turned back to praise God and thank Jesus, and that person was a foreigner, a Samaritan, one who was regarded as outside the bounds of the chosen people of Israel.

But all ten were cleansed. Their flesh was restored, to be like that of a youth-all of them. They could once again participate in their community, have a house and a home; be surrounded by their family and friends. If there were restaurants in their village, they wouldn't have to order

take out. And there were no longer any kind of rules about covering their faces! Basically, they could live again - all of them. And yet, only this one turned back to say thank you for his healing and to praise God. And the one who turned back even worshiped Jesus as he fell facedown at His feet, giving Him thanks.

As our nation prepares to celebrate this national day of Thanksgiving unlike any we ourselves have experienced, I still don't think it is unreasonable to believe that our Lord is asking, "Where are the millions? Were not all cleansed by my death and resurrection? Why are not all giving thanks?" And searching our hearts, as only our Lord can do, He may even say to you, "Why has your heart not always been filled with thanksgiving, love, and praise toward me?" Might He echo Martin Luther's explanation to the Apostles' Creed and say, "Didn't I make you and all creatures? Didn't I give you your body and soul, your eyes, ears, and all your members? Your reason and all your senses? Don't I still take care of them? Haven't I given you clothing and shoes, food and drink, house and home, spouse and children, land, animals, and all you have? Don't I richly and daily provide you with all you need to support your body and life? Don't I also defend you against all danger, guard and protect you from all evil?"

"And haven't I redeemed you, a lost and condemned person, purchased and won you from all sins, death, and from the power of the devil; not with gold or silver, but with my holy, precious blood and with my innocent suffering and death, that you may be my own and live under me in my kingdom and serve me in everlasting righteousness, innocence, and blessedness, just as I'm risen from the dead, living and reigning to all eternity?"

"And haven't I called you by the Gospel, enlightened you with my gifts, sanctified and kept you in the true faith; just as I call, gather, enlighten, and sanctify the whole Christian Church on earth and keep it in the one true faith? In this Christian Church, won't I daily and richly forgive all your sins and the sins of all believers and raise you and all the dead, giving eternal life to you and all believers in Christ on the Last Day?"

All of this is why we can truly relate to those lepers of Jesus' day with the same words, "*Jesus, Master, have mercy on us*". And just as He did with them, so to does He do with us. Thanks be to God that He is merciful, patient, and loving toward us - even when we forget at times how much He truly gives us and what He has accomplished for us. Thanks be to God that Jesus willingly went to that cursed tree, dying and rising for us, so that sin, death, and Satan would have no power over us. Thanks be to God that He continues to prepare our hearts through the Word and Sacraments so that angels, archangels, and the whole company of heaven will be a reality to us and for us. And yes, thanks be to God that Jesus also had you and me in mind when He said, "*Rise and go your way; your faith has made you well*". In midst of all suffering, pain, and evil (even our own) we can always thank God that salvation is truly ours because of Jesus!

This Thanksgiving is very different than what many of us are used to. Yet what hasn't changed, is that we still have many things to be thankful for in this world. We can still be thankful like the one leper who turned back to praise Jesus; like Abraham Lincoln when he solidified a day of thanksgiving as a federal holiday during the Civil War in 1863; just as we were taught as a child when we received something. Yet, the ultimate reason we Christians give thanks and praise to our living God is that He has accomplished our salvation - enabling us now and forever to live in His peace as His faithful disciples. As we do that, we can be sure to have a truly happy Thanksgiving.

And now may the peace of God that surpasses all understanding keep your hearts and minds forever in Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.