



Daily Prayer For Individuals and Families

Adopted from *The Lutheran Service Book* (p. 294)

The Second Sunday after Pentecost – June 6th, 2021 A.D.

This brief service is intended as a simple form of daily prayer for individuals and families. When more than one person is present, the Psalm and other parts of the service may be spoken responsively, with one person reading the words in regular type and the others responding with the words in bold type. The Creed and Prayers that are in bold type are 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.

Psalm *From Psalm 28*

[P] Blessèd be the LORD!

[C] **For he has heard the voice of my pleas for mercy.**

The LORD is my strength and my shield; in him my heart trusts, and I am helped;

my heart exults, and with my song I give thanks to him.

The LORD is the strength of his people;

he is the saving refuge of his anointed.

Oh, save your people and bless your heritage!

Be their shepherd and carry them forever.

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

Scripture Lesson – Mark 3:20-35

²⁰Then [Jesus] went home, and the crowd gathered again, so that they could not even eat. ²¹And when his family heard it, they went out to seize him, for they were saying, “He is out of his mind.”

²²And the scribes who came down from Jerusalem were saying, “He is possessed by Beelzebul,” and “by the prince of demons he casts out the demons.” ²³And he called them to him and said to them in parables, “How can Satan cast out Satan? ²⁴If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. ²⁵And if a house is divided against itself, that house will not be able to stand. ²⁶And if Satan has risen up against himself and is divided, he cannot stand, but is coming to an end. ²⁷But no one can enter a strong man's house and plunder his goods, unless he first binds the strong man. Then indeed he may plunder his house.

²⁸“Truly, I say to you, all sins will be forgiven the children of man, and whatever blasphemies they utter, ²⁹but whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit never has forgiveness, but is guilty of an eternal sin”— ³⁰for they had said, “He has an unclean spirit.”

³¹And his mother and his brothers came, and standing outside they sent to him and called him. ³²And a crowd was sitting around him, and they said to him, “Your mother and your brothers are outside, seeking you.” ³³And he answered them, “Who are my mother and my brothers?” ³⁴And looking about at those who sat around him, he said, “Here are my mother and my brothers!” ³⁵Whoever does the will of God, he is my brother and sister and mother.”

Sermon – ✠ *Accusations* ✠ (A copy is included at the end of this service.)

The Nicene’ Creed

**I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth and of all things visible and invisible.
And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God,
begotten of His Father before all worlds,
God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God,
begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father,
by whom all things were made;
who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary and was made man;
and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate.
He suffered and was buried.
And the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures and ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of the Father.
And He will come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead, whose kingdom will have no end.
And I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified, who spoke by the prophets.
And I believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church,
I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins,
and I look for the resurrection of the dead
and the life ✠ of the world to come. 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.**

Bethany's Prayer List

Entrusting into God's Care

- Those suffering after the storm and during the pandemic
- The homeless & the unemployed
- Workers in the Church, here at Bethany and throughout the World

Healing

- Marcia (friend of Carol Edwards) - hospitalization
- Shirley (sister of Donice McDonald) - cancer
- John (brother of Donice McDonald) - cancer
- Nancy Owens - recovery after surgery
- Jeannine Robinson - health issues
- Darlene Eckert - recovering at Cottage Grove after surgery
- Kyle Kraft - recovering after surgery
- Kim Neuhaus - health issues
- Elaine Cook - recovering after surgery
- Dale Stonewall - recovering at home after surgery
- Faye Sieck - health issues

Shut-Ins

- Del Block - Summit Pointe, Marion

Mourning

- Family and friends mourning the death of Al Bachman 5/23
- Loved ones mourning the death of Rev. William Riley on 5/17
- Bev Munson - mourning the death of husband, Blaine on 5/15
- Lehrman family mourning the death of Amanda on 5/15

Serving Our Country

- Tailor & Charlie (grandsons of Kim Neuhaus) - serving in U.S. Armed Forces
- Harrison (son of Rob & Faye Sieck)- serving in U.S. Armed Forces

Collect of the Day

Let us pray... Almighty and eternal God, Your Son Jesus triumphed over the prince of demons and freed us from bondage to sin. Help us to stand firm against every assault of Satan, and enable us always to do Your will; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

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.

Together we pray... **I thank You, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Your dear Son, that You have kept me this night from all harm and danger; and I pray that you would keep me this day also from sin and every evil, that all my doings and life may please You. For into Your hands I commend myself, my body and soul, and all things. Let Your holy angel be with me, that the evil foe may have no power over me. Amen.**

Let us bless the Lord.

Thanks be to God.



✠ *Accusations* ✠

In the Gospel lesson for today, there are two accusations made against Jesus. The first is made by His family - His mother and brothers, perhaps some sisters as well. The second accusation against Jesus is made by the Scribes, religious leaders and experts in the Law at that time. The first accusation is quite blunt. His family said that Jesus was “out of His mind”. This might sound a bit harsh to modern ears - today, Jesus’ family might have said that He was suffering from mental illness. But don’t be too hard on Jesus’ family, for who knows the kinds of things that we might have said ourselves 2000 years ago!

Regardless, Jesus’ family believes that He is suffering from burn out, fatigue, or some other sort of mental illness and the Scribes are saying that He is possessed by a demon and working with Satan. They believe Jesus is not just some poor demon

possessed victim, but that now He is actively working with or for Satan – they are actually saying that Jesus, and all that He has been doing, is evil.

Maybe we can relate to this. Many people today sort of have the same reaction to Jesus' followers, or Christians and His message of the Gospel. I believe that all of us are by now aware that Christians are often portrayed in a negative light in popular culture and media today. People may think that we are foolish for believing that the Bible is God's Word, or say that we pray to "imaginary friend in the sky". Simply put, the world teaches that there must be something wrong with people who follow Jesus.

Or, like the accusation of Jesus performing miracles with Satan's help, there are some people just believe that Christians and what they say and do are evil. So, when Christians say that abortion is sinful, many people claim the Church is trying to suppress women's rights or exert control over their bodies. When we speak out against sexual sins of all types, we are looked upon as evil - labeled intolerant or bigots or hate mongers.

So, how do we respond to such criticism today? Well, look at how Jesus responded to this criticism. Without saying that whatever Jesus did, we should do as well, after all – none of us are Jesus – what He does, and here in our Gospel Lesson, what He teaches, does provide some insight for His followers today.

First, He says, "*Truly, I say to you, all sins will be forgiven the children of man, and whatever blasphemies they utter.*" To blasphemy is to say outrageous things about God, or in this case, the Son of God – Jesus Christ. This is His response to His family when they say that He is out of His mind. He says that they will be forgiven, because at this point in Mark's Gospel, they don't understand just who Jesus is, or the work that He is doing. It's sort of ambiguous at this point. But should they come to know Jesus as their Savior and seek forgiveness from God, then it will certainly be there. We know this because Jesus prays on the cross for those who are killing him when He cries out, "*Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.*" And history shows that some at the cross and many in Jesus' family were indeed, some of the first to believe that Jesus is the Son of God who died and rose for our forgiveness, proving that those who say offensive or shocking things about Jesus can be forgiven.

This is different, however, from what Jesus says next. He says in Mark 3:28b, "*Whoever blasphemies against the Holy Spirit never has forgiveness, but is guilty of an eternal sin*"! This addresses what the Scribes are accusing Jesus of. They are not only mistaken of Jesus' identity, they are saying that His proclamation of the forgiveness of sins by faith and the miracles that He is performing are evil. This is a sin against the Holy Spirit because Jesus does these things with the Holy Spirit in Him. As Dr. Voelz from our seminary in St. Louis writes, "*If the evidence of the identity and character of Jesus carries with it a continuing ambiguity, there is no*

such...ambiguity in the work of the Holy Spirit in this same Jesus, as He heals, frees people of their bondage to evil spirits, and brings the Good News of the gracious reign and rule of God. Those who see such work as evil, as do the scribes, [align] themselves with the evil one and with him stand condemned.”

Today, even in the midst of persecution, we as Christians must be forgiving for those who say outrageous things about us, the Church, or even Jesus. But, we must also be clear that we call a thing what it is, and help others do the same. We must call evil – evil, and what is good – good, so that we and others will not be found guilty of an eternal sin against the Holy Spirit.

This is challenging work, and indeed, Martin Luther calls it the mark of a true theologian. But I believe God tells us through our Gospel Lesson this morning, and in the rest of the Scriptures, that we as Christians must be forgiving and patient, but also call evil - evil and good – good. So we maintain God’s Law, and out of love for God and our neighbor show people their sin in a kind and gentle way so the Spirit may lead them to repentance and faith in Christ.

We must not expect anyone to do this, other than Jesus’ disciples. Jesus says, apart from Him we can do nothing. But if we do this, not only are we glorifying God and living as He would have us, then maybe some of that ambiguity that’s out there about Jesus might start to clear up a bit. If we truly live as His disciples, who have been justified freely by grace through faith, then we have every reason for the Holy Spirit to work among us so that more and more people may come to Jesus as their Lord and Savior. Amen.

