



Daily Prayer For Individuals and Families

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

February 26th, 2023 A.D.

First Sunday in Lent

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 responses 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 91)

When he calls to me, I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble;

I will rescue him and honor him.

With long life I will satisfy him

and show him my salvation.

Because you have made the LORD your dwelling place—

the Most High, who is my refuge—

no evil shall be allowed to befall you,

no plague come near your tent.

For he will command his angels concerning you

to guard you in all your ways.

On their hands they will bear you up,

lest you strike your foot against a stone.

You will tread on the lion and the adder;

the young lion and the serpent you will trample underfoot.

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 Apostles' Creed. Everyone else may continue the service as printed....

Scripture Lesson

(Matthew 4:1-11)

¹Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. ²And after fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. ³And the tempter came and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread." ⁴But he answered, "It is written,

*“Man shall not live by bread alone,
but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.”*

⁵Then the devil took him to the holy city and set him on the pinnacle of the temple ⁶and said to him, “If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down, for it is written,

“He will command his angels concerning you,’

and

*“On their hands they will bear you up,
lest you strike your foot against a stone.”*

⁷Jesus said to him, “Again it is written, ‘You shall not put the Lord your God to the test.’”

⁸Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. ⁹And he said to him, “All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me.” ¹⁰Then Jesus said to him, “Be gone, Satan! For it is written,

*“You shall worship the Lord your God
and him only shall you serve.”*

¹¹Then the devil left him, and behold, angels came and were ministering to him.

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

Apostles’ Creed

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

**And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord; Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
Born of the Virgin Mary; Suffered under Pontius Pilate, Was crucified, died, and was
buried; He descended into hell; The third day He rose again from the dead; He ascended
into heaven And sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty; From thence He will
come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit; The holy Christian Church, the communion of saints;
The forgiveness of sins; The resurrection of the body; And the life ✠ everlasting. 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

- Persecuted Christians and refugees
- Those suffering after storms and during the pandemic
- Peace in Europe and throughout the world
- Project 24 students, Yvonne and Lorine

Healing

- Karen Swalley - upcoming surgery on 3/2
- Elaine Cook- recovering after hospitalization
- Kathy (Mark Holt's sister) - recovering after lung transplant
- Philip Hackbardt- back pain
- Del Block- health issues
- Chuck Stoelting- recovering at Cottage Grove after fall
- Kim Neuhaus- recovering at home after surgery
- Rick Foreman- recovering at home after fall
- Pat Krekeler- recovering at home after hospitalization
- Deb Heitland- health issues
- Carol Grimminger - recovering at Cottage Grove after surgery
- Ethel Dohrmann - cancer treatment
- Candi Engel - recovering at Heritage Care Center
- Stephen Stepanek - brain cancer treatment
- Abi Clark - health issues

Homebound

- Melba Davison- Terrace Glen Village, Marion

Mourning, friends and family of

- Jerry (father of Missy Gingrich)- died 2/12
- Mike (brother-in-law of Rick Foreman)- died 2/1
- John (brother of Pat Krekeler)- died 1/27

Serving Our Country

- Mitchell & Benjamin (relatives of Schoens & Smiths) - US Navy
- Harrison (son of Siecks) - US Army, deployed to Poland
- Jordan (grandson of Kim Neuhaus) - National Guard, deployed

Collect of the Day

O Lord God, You led Your ancient people through the wilderness and brought them to the promised land. Guide the people of Your Church that following our Savior we may walk through the wilderness of this world toward the glory of the world to come; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

Concluding Prayers

O Lord, keep in remembrance the tempted, the distressed, and the erring; gently guide them and by Your great goodness bring them into the way of peace and truth. Let the light of Your truth shine on those who do not know You that they may be turned toward You and so find peace. Graciously regard all who are in trouble, danger, temptation, bondage to sin, and those to whom death draws near. In Your mercy draw them to Yourself; for the sake of Jesus Christ, our Lord.

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.



✠ Passing the Test ✠

Grace, mercy, and peace to you from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

Today, there are certain jobs, certain vocations, that require those who have them to pass tests to qualify for such positions. For instance, a firefighter may be required to climb a tall ladder while she is carrying a hose or a some other heavy weight. A secretary may have to show that he can type so many words per minute. And it seems that the more responsibility that comes along with the job, the harder the tests are. Some of us may have taken a class that lasts a few hours to be certified in First Aid, but to be a doctor one must go to school for years and pass a sorts of exams and tests.

In our Gospel lesson this morning we find Jesus facing a type of exam or a test. And being tempted in the wilderness by Satan, all of creation will see if He is qualified for the task that He came into our world for.

St. Matthew writes that the temptation of Jesus took place immediately following the baptism of Jesus. Chapter three of Matthew's Gospel ends with the newly baptized Christ coming up out of the Jordan River. The water drips off of Jesus onto the dry ground, the Holy Spirit

descends upon Him in the form of a dove and voice from heaven proclaims, “*This is my Son, whom I love, with Him I am well pleased.*” Jesus was baptized to show that He was set apart for a very specific purpose: to be the Savior of the world. To be the One who would restore a sinful and fallen creation back to God. And when Spirit came down upon Jesus and the Father spoke from Heaven, creation was reassured that Jesus really is the Savior God has chosen for the world.

But will it work? Will Jesus not just be the world’s deliverer, but will He do it in the right way, the way that it has to be done? Matthew says that immediately the same Spirit that landed on Christ at His baptism, led Him out into the desert to be tempted by the Devil. The fact the Holy Spirit is leading Jesus shows us that, however unpleasant the experience might seem to be at first, there is a divine purpose for what will happen.

By now you know that after Jesus fasted for forty days and forty nights, much the same way that Israel wandered the desert for 40 years, the Devil approached Him. He brings three temptations: turn stones into bread; jump off of the temple and let the angels catch Jesus; and bow down and worship him. These tests may seem rather odd, or even silly, that is until we realize that they are not about bread or angels or kneeling. Rather Satan, the great deceiver, is trying to lure Jesus away from being the kind of Savior that we need, to one that we would want or expect.

If we need someone to rescue us in our lives we want someone who is strong, powerful, and smart. That’s why we make sure firefighters can climb ladders and doctors can pass anatomy tests. But Jesus doesn’t save us from our sins by being powerful or wise according to worldly standards. Rather it is in Christ’s weakness and humility that we find our salvation. This Lenten season we remember how Christ humbled Himself in order to save us. He was God in Heaven, God of God, light of light, very God of very God, begotten not made, one substance with the Father with all the power and glory that belonged to Him as such. But for all of us, and for our salvation, He came down from Heaven and was made a simple man, who becomes tired, thirsty, hungry, and even dies. It doesn’t sound very heroic, does it?

But this is exactly what God had chosen Jesus to do. This is what it meant to be God’s Messiah or Christ and it is exactly what we and the rest of the world that sins so desperately need. But Satan says, “Come on Jesus, I know you’re hungry so turn these rocks into bread and use your power to serve your own needs.” He says, “Jesus, show everyone how powerful you really are and all the miraculous things you can do by throwing yourself off of the temple and having angels come down and save you. That would really impress the people.” And finally, “You know where you’re going Jesus, your going to the wickedness of the cross where you will be forsaken by God. Let’s strike a deal, worship me and you’ll have your precious creation back.” The temptation of Christ is not merely a test to see if Jesus will sin, it is a test to see if He will go to the cross to die for sinners – go to the cross for you, me, and the rest of the world. And it is a test He passed with flying colors because of His love for each one of us.

This same love today calls us through our own weaknesses and struggles in life, to the One who lives and reigns in Heaven with all power and glory. The devil is always tempting us to flex our own muscles. To say that death and loss are natural parts of life. That if God loved you, He wouldn’t let this or that happen. But facing the devil’s temptations, whatever they may be, we know that Christ has already defeated Satan and gives His victory to us. So now, we use that joy, and that love, to live as His forgiven and His free, and his victorious people.

The temptation of Jesus was the ultimate test. But by passing it, Jesus showed that He was ready for the job that had the ultimate responsibility: saving the world. He would go on to do this the only way it could be done, by His death on the cross. This is what was written in the Scriptures, the same Scriptures Jesus used to show Satan why He would die humbly, and not glorify Himself.

Today, God continues to invite all people to share in His victory. To remember that through our weaknesses we may become strong in Christ when we trust in Him alone. And that through His own weakness on the cross, Jesus Christ became our Lord and Savior, the One who lives and reigns with all the power and glory in heaven forever and ever, so that we might be His own. Amen.

