



Daily Prayer For Individuals and Families

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

September 17, 2023 A.D.

The 16th Sunday after Pentecost

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 *Psalm 143*

Deliver me from my enemies, O LORD!

I have fled to you for refuge!

Hear my prayer, O LORD; give ear to my pleas for mercy!

In your faithfulness answer me, in your righteousness!

Enter not into judgment with your servant,

for no one living is righteous before you.

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

(Genesis 50:15-21)

¹⁵When Joseph's brothers saw that their father was dead, they said, "It may be that Joseph will hate us and pay us back for all the evil that we did to him." ¹⁶So they sent a message to Joseph, saying, "Your father gave this command before he died, ¹⁷'Say to Joseph, Please forgive the transgression of your brothers and their sin, because they did evil to you.' And now, please forgive the transgression of the servants of the God of your father." Joseph wept when they spoke to him. ¹⁸His brothers also came and fell down before him and said, "Behold, we are your servants." ¹⁹But Joseph said to them, "Do not fear, for am I in the place of God? ²⁰As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good, to bring it about that many people should be kept alive, as they are today. ²¹So do not fear; I will provide for you and your little ones." Thus he comforted them and spoke kindly to them.

Sermon – ✠ *Forgiveness* ✠ (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

Thanksgiving

- Doreta Bogner - employment found
- Jordan (grandson of Kim Neuhaus) - returned from deployment
- Prudy Petersen - recovered after fall

Entrusting into God's Care

- Andrea - (relative of Steggalls) teaching in Bulgaria
- David - (friend of Angela Yuza) cancer
- Rachel - (Bethany neighbor) cancer
- Students and staff as they return to school
- Michelle Hedtke - employment search
- Those in nursing homes/care centers
- Persecuted Christians and refugees
- Peace in Europe and throughout the world
- Project 24 students, Yvonne and Lorine

Healing

- Rick Foreman - recovering after surgery
- Craig (relative of Dawn Thomas)- cancer
- Cherie Miller - recovering after surgery
- Donna Stranathan - recovering after surgery
- Philip Hackbardt - recovering after surgery
- Dale Stonewall - recovering after fall
- Ethel Doehrmann - immunotherapy treatment
- Tom Stock - health issues
- Doug Knutson - immunotherapy treatment
- Deb Heitland - health issues
- Abi Clark - health issues

Homebound

- Candi Engel - Heritage Care Center

Mourning, friends and family of

- Francis (friend of Larsons) - died 8/18

Serving Our Country

- Ben (son of Kroemers) - IA National Guard
- Devin (friend of Kroemers) - IA Army National Guard
- Mitchell & Benjamin (relatives of Schoens & Smiths) - US Navy
- Harrison (son of Siecks) - US Army, stationed in TX

Collect of the Day

O God, our refuge and strength, the author of all godliness, hear the devout prayers of Your Church, especially in times of persecution, and grant that what we ask in faith we may obtain; 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.



✠ *Forgiveness* ✠

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

Sometimes, it's very difficult to forgive someone who's hurt you. We're tempted to respond with avoidance at best, or hatred and revenge at worst. A co-worker takes credit for your work and paints you in a bad light with your boss. Later on, that same co-worker struggles with a project that you could easily help with. What do you do?

A fellow student in your class bullies you all of the time. Later, he's accused of cheating on a test, but you know that he's innocent. What do you do?

Your sister talks your aging mother into giving her a precious family heirloom that was promised to you, and then she sells it to take a vacation. Now your sister needs a loan to buy groceries. What do you do?

Forgiving others who've hurt or offended you is an unnatural response to unbelievers, and it's often difficult for Christians. The world tells us, "Don't get mad, get even!" Yet God shows

us in the story of Joseph and His Brothers why and how we can forgive those who hurt us, even intentionally.

Our text today is actually the very end of a long story in Genesis. As the 11th of 12 brothers – and the favorite of his father – Joseph was given a colorful coat by Jacob and told dreams that made his brothers hate and envy him. Joseph spied on his brothers for his father, so his brothers plotted to kill him by throwing him into cistern. Instead, Joseph was sold as a slave and taken to Egypt, where he was sold to Potiphar, the captain of Pharaoh's bodyguard. Joseph's brothers covered up their treachery by dipping his coat in goat's blood and bringing it to their father. Jacob imagined that Joseph had been eaten by wild beasts and he grieved for his son.

In Egypt, Joseph rises from being a slave and being thrown into prison to becoming the second most powerful man in the land. This rise to power happens because he interprets the dreams of Pharaoh, saving Egypt from a horrible famine. Meanwhile, back in his homeland, Joseph's family is facing famine as well. So Jacob sends ten of his sons to Egypt to buy grain. They found Joseph, who recognized them, but they didn't know who he was. After two trips, Joseph revealed himself to his brothers. So they went back and brought Jacob and all seventy members of his family to Egypt. Jacob was reunited with Joseph, and all of them lived seventeen years in Egypt before Jacob died.

With that background, our text today begins, "*When Joseph's brothers saw that their father was dead, they said, 'It may be that Joseph will hate us and pay us back for all the evil that we did to him'*".

For over 20 years, those ten brothers had lived in guilt about what they had done to Joseph and their father. Every time they saw their father cry or hang his head grieving for Joseph, they knew that they were to blame.

Now Jacob and all 12 of his sons, with the whole family, had lived together in Egypt for 17 years. But somehow in that time, there had been no reconciliation between Joseph and the ten brothers who had sold him off. While their father was alive, the brothers felt secure. But now that Jacob was dead, they believed that Joseph would now have his revenge.

Sometimes, instead of talking in our families and other relationships, we have the idea that past hurts and sins will just go away if we don't bring them up. And so they are never actually confessed or forgiven, they are just forgotten...for awhile. But if the topic ever does resurface, it opens an old wound and the bleeding starts begins as bad as ever. Nothing has been healed and nothing has changed.

To save their own skin, the ten brothers of Joseph make up a story. "So they sent a message to Joseph, saying, 'Your father gave this command before he died: "*Say to Joseph, 'Please forgive the transgression of your brothers and their sin, because they did evil to you'*". And now, please forgive the transgressions of the servants of the God of your father". It seems unlikely that Jacob had actually said this. If he was worried about Joseph's attitudes towards his brothers, he had plenty of time to talk to him about it himself. And so it would not be surprising to find the brothers being deceitful once again to save their own skin.

But, after the brothers sent that request for Joseph to forgive them, "Joseph wept when they spoke to him". Joseph was deeply hurt that his brothers still thought he might want to harm them. Joseph had forgiven his brothers long ago and wasn't under the burden of hate or revenge. Although his brothers didn't sound too repentant, Joseph forgave them anyway.

"*Joseph said to them, 'Do not fear, for am I in the place of God?'*" By now, Joseph had had years of watching the mysterious ways of God unfold into many great blessings, and who was he to question God's methods? "Vengeance is mine, I will repay," says the Lord. As Jesus'

parable Matthew 18 of the Unforgiving Servant teaches us, we can and must forgive the sins of anyone who hurt us, because we are the servants who have had many sins forgiven ourselves by God.

Joseph explains to his brothers that God had a purpose in allowing evil things to happen to him. He says, *“As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good, to bring it about that many people should be kept alive, as they are today”*. Joseph virtually repeats what he told his brothers when he first revealed himself to them 17 years ago, but they had either forgotten or doubted. Earlier he had said, *“Do not be distressed or angry with yourselves because you sold me here, for God sent me before you to preserve life...So it was not you who sent me here, but God”*.

Joseph saw God’s hand for good in the many years of hurt that he endured. God turns evil around to make good come from it, always for God’s purposes. Paul says in Romans 8:28, *“And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to His purpose.”*

Those who hated and killed Jesus meant it for evil, but God meant it for good, the saving of an untold number of souls. All the evil that was done to Jesus by His brothers – the rejection, the persecution, the having His clothes taken away, being left in the prison of the grave and emerging on the third – it was all a part of God’s greater plan of ultimate good for you and me! Our sins are no more.

When we confess our sins to God and one another and hear the words “I forgive you,” we know the sins are truly gone! Baking a cake for someone we have hurt is a nice gesture, but it doesn’t clearly articulate the wrong or declare the forgiveness. But hearing the words of absolution from the pastor in church, or any other Christian privately, as well as remembering our baptismal grace and receiving Christ’s body and blood “for the forgiveness of our sins,” is nothing short than hearing God Himself forgive us through the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross.

And it is there, in our own sure and certain forgiveness through faith in Christ, where we find the strength to truly forgive others who have sinned against us. Amen.

