



Daily Prayer For Individuals and Families

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

February 16, 2025 A.D. The 6th Sunday after the Epiphany

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 119

I will praise you with an upright heart,
when I learn your just and righteous decrees.

Blessèd are those whose way is blameless,

who walk in the law of the LORD!

Blessèd are those who keep his testimonies,

who seek him with their whole heart.

You have commanded your precepts

to be kept diligently.

Oh that my ways may be steadfast

in keeping your statutes!

Scripture Lesson

Luke 6:17-26

¹⁷[Jesus] came down with them and stood on a level place, with a great crowd of his disciples and a great multitude of people from all Judea and Jerusalem and the seacoast of Tyre and Sidon, ¹⁸who came to hear him and to be healed of their diseases. And those who were troubled with unclean spirits were cured. ¹⁹And all the crowd sought to touch him, for power came out from him and healed them all.

²⁰And he lifted up his eyes on his disciples, and said:

“Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God.

²¹“Blessed are you who are hungry now, for you shall be satisfied.

“Blessed are you who weep now, for you shall laugh.

²²“Blessed are you when people hate you and when they exclude you and revile you and spurn your name as evil, on account of the Son of Man! ²³Rejoice in that day, and leap for joy, for behold, your reward is great in heaven; for so their fathers did to the prophets.

²⁴“But woe to you who are rich, for you have received your consolation.

²⁵“Woe to you who are full now, for you shall be hungry.

“Woe to you who laugh now, for you shall mourn and weep.

²⁶“Woe to you, when all people speak well of you, for so their fathers did to the false prophets.

Sermon

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

It is important for Christians today to hear what Jesus has to say about being a Christian because there are so many opinions out there concerning the topic. Drive around town and you can see numerous churches that all have their own takes and opinions on the topic. Go online and an infinite amount of more opinions about what it means to be a Christian are only a mouse click or a screen tap away. As if this weren't enough, Christians themselves with their sinful natures, like to muddy these waters themselves by picking and choose what they are going to believe and what teachings of Jesus they will follow. We'll forgive others, as long as what they did didn't make me too mad or hurt me too badly. We'll help others, as long as I can still do what I want to do. And we'll follow Jesus to the cross, just as long as I don't have to carry one along the way. I'm afraid all of these factors may have created a Christian Faith among us today in our society that Jesus Himself might not recognize and might not be all that Christian.

So what does Jesus say about all of this to His disciples? In our Gospel Lesson, Jesus lifts His eyes up to His disciples and says: *blessed are the Christians who are poor, hungry, and who weep now. And blessed are you when people hate you, exclude you, revile and spurn you – not because you're acting like a fool – but because you are a disciple of Christ.* And woe to the rich, the full, those who laugh and those who are spoken well of. Amen.

And now may the peace of God that surpasses all understanding keep your hearts and mind forever in Christ Jesus, our Lord....oh wait, should we explain this a little more? Some of you are like, "No...the Daytona 500 is on in a few hours!" Or, "No, I want to go roller skating!" Well regardless, bear with me for another few minutes because I think if we look carefully at what Jesus says, His teaching here might seem to not only go against what we experience, but also Scripture itself.

What I mean is that if you have any experience with genuine poverty, you'll know that it is a humiliating experience. If money is power, then the poor are powerless, and their powerlessness is regularly exploited. Ask any of the world's poverty-stricken if it is a blessed state and see what they say. Likewise about being hungry. This is not like, "I didn't eat breakfast and they don't have my favorite doughnut out by the coffee this morning." This is like, "My body is eating itself and is shutting down and I have no idea where my next meal is coming from." That's hungry and our experience or what we see tells us that this seems to be pretty far from being blessed.

And then Scripturally Jesus' teaching might seem strange, as we also know that God at times gave wealth to Israel as a blessing. When He delivered His people from Egypt, He blessed them with the Egyptians' willing plunder and then he brought them to a land "flowing with milk and honey". By the time of King David and King Solomon, national wealth was seen as a sign of divine blessing. And so what are disciples today suppose to make out of Jesus' blessings and woes?

Well, what we don't do is look at Jesus' teaching here as somewhat of a retirement plan – that is thinking that Jesus wants us to make sacrifices in our lives right now to pay dividends later on. "Be poor, be hungry, and weep" so you can get the good stuff later at some future date. If we should think like this we leave the Kingdom of God where we rest securely in the Gospel of Christ and fall back into the wretched state of living under the Law. Thinking that we must be poor or that we must not laugh to receive the blessings of God once again puts the emphasis on what we

need to do to be blessed, when the Kingdom of God is always first and foremost about what Christ has done.

And speaking of what Christ has done, who has become poorer than the One who left the very throne of heaven to be born a virgin in a stable. Who has been more hungry than He who fasted for 40 days in the desert, when He could have made rocks become bread? Who was hated more than the One for whom the crowds screamed, “crucify Him!”? And who has wept, like the One who has been rejected by Jerusalem and people all over the world, despite having died for them so that they might live? No one! No one has done these things like Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior – the very Son of God. And today, as He sits at the right hand of God, having ascended into Heaven and waits to return to us again, He is truly blessed in every way that we can and even cannot imagine.

“But Pastor” you may say, “you said Jesus’ words were about His disciples. Now it seems you telling us Jesus is speaking of Himself. Which is it?” Well its’ both! For these blessing come to Jesus’ disciples because they have been united with Christ through Faith. St. Paul reminds us in Romans that, *“all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life. For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his.”* The theology of the beatitudes are the theology of the cross and they are about disciples, but always centered on Christ. As Christ Himself has suffered, so too will His disciples in this world. But just as Christ has been glorified, so too will every disciple who has been united to Him through faith alone.

Now, should God bless us with riches and material possessions and a joyful life don’t despair. This doesn’t mean you are cursed or can’t be a Christian. Rather give thanks to God and keep what God has given to you in this life in perspective. So that if we are rich or poor, well fed or hungry, laughing or weeping – we might not only understand what it means to be a disciple of Christ, but rather through our faith in Him, be one and be blessed. Amen.

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 \dagger 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

- Nathan & Sarah Federwitz - Lutheran Bible Translators
- Peace in Europe and throughout the world
- Project 24 students, Yvonne and Lorine

Healing

- Carolyn (mother of Mary Vezina) - health issues
- Colleen (friend of Kroemers) - on life support
- Bernice Stonewall (former member) - recovering after surgery
- Ella (friend of Zimmermans) - recovering after surgery
- Mitch Myers - recovering after surgery
- Harold Schoen - recovering after surgery
- Ron Prescott - recovering after surgery
- Paul LeFevere - recovering after hospitalization
- Tom Larson - health issues
- Everly Zimmerman - knee injury
- Dave Christian - cancer treatment
- John Hamm - recovering at assisted living in Waukee
- Deb Heitland - health issues
- Ethel Doehrmann - immunotherapy treatment

Homebound

- Dorothy Freese - Keystone Place

Mourning, friends and family of

- Charlotte (relative of E Kroemer) - died 1/23

- Kenton Zenor - died 1/4

Serving Our Country

- Aiden (grandson of Foremans) - US Army

- Mallory (friend of Abi Clark) - IA National Guard

- Amber (dght of Ann Balvanz) - US Army, stationed in Germany

- 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, Germany

- Jordan (grandson of Kim Neuhaus) - IA National Guard

Collect of the Day

Let us pray... O Lord, graciously hear the prayers of Your people that we who justly suffer the consequence of our sin may be mercifully delivered by Your goodness to the glory of Your name; 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

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.