

Rogate
St. John 16:23b-30
May 14th, 2023
St. Bartholomew Evangelical Lutheran Mission, UAC
Fort Myers, FL
All Saints Evangelical Lutheran Mission, UAC
Pawleys Island, SC
Pastor Jerald Dulas

Pray to the Father

In Nomine Iesu!

In the Name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

Sermon Text:

“In that day ye shall ask in My Name: and I say not unto you, that I will pray the Father for you; for the Father Himself loveth you, because ye have loved Me, and have believed that I came forth from the Father. I came out from the Father, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go unto the Father.”

Prayer in Pulpit before Sermon:

Lord God, our Heavenly Father, who by Thy Son hast promised to give us whatsoever we shall ask in His name, We beseech Thee, grant us the power of Thy Holy Spirit, that we may make known our requests unto Thee in faithful prayer, and desire of Thee that which is well-pleasing to Thee and profitable for us, lifting up holy hands without wrath or doubting, and being firmly assured that Thou wilt hear our prayer; through Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord, Who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, ever One God, world without end. Amen.

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

Hallelujah! Christ is risen! He is risen indeed! Hallelujah! And because the Christ is risen indeed, we now have an Intercessor for us Who sits at the right hand of the Father. But our Lord + Jesus tells us a wonderful thing today! He tells His Apostles in the Gospel reading from the Apostle and Evangelist St. John that because He had come from the Father, and became man—because He has dwelt among us in the flesh—we now have access to the Father. Our Lord has paved the path for us poor, miserable sinners to pray directly to the heavenly Father. The Lord + Jesus has come down from Heaven to this Earth, and has now returned back into Heaven, and sits on the right hand of the Father as our Intercessor—as a gateway for us to ask our petitions of the heavenly Father.

What wonderful news! We now can pray directly to the Father. For as He loved His Only-Begotten Son, He also loves all those who are in His Son. Through Holy Baptism we have put on the Christ. We bear His righteousness. So that just as the Lord + Jesus can plead on our behalf to the heavenly Father, we who are in the Christ, can also take our prayers to the heavenly Father.

This is why we pray the way that we do. It is why we teach ourselves and others to pray in this way. We pray to the heavenly Father, in the Name of the Son, with the assistance of the Holy Ghost. This is why our Collects and ecclesiastical prayers all begin and end pretty much the same way. We begin our prayers, for the most part, addressing the heavenly Father. We pray, “Almighty God” or “Heavenly Father” or “Lord God, Heavenly Father”, and the like. We conclude our prayers by addressing the entire Holy Trinity, for just as our salvation is accomplished by the entire Trinity, so too are our

prayers to be directed to the entire Trinity. We conclude our prayers, for the most part, by saying, "through Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord, Who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, ever One God, world without end. Amen."

We can pray this way because of what our Lord and Savior + Jesus, the Christ, has done for us. He has restored the rift that man created between him and the Lord God by his falling into sin. Our Lord has paid the penalty of that sin, and all sins, and has restored us back to the Heavenly Father. We can now pray to the Father, in the Name of the Son, by the assistance of the Holy Ghost. And our Lord + Jesus tells us another wonderful thing today! He says that anything we ask of the Heavenly Father in His Name, the Name of the Lord + Jesus, the Father will give us.

So then, why does it seem to us that at times our prayers go unanswered, or our prayers are clearly rejected with a "No!?" The answer, my dear friends, is that the Lord God, our Heavenly Father, His Only-Begotten Son + Jesus, and the Holy Ghost, would have us pray for things that tend to His glory and our welfare. The world, and sadly, many Christians, want to treat the Lord God as the great vending machine in the sky. One puts in his request and the machine is supposed to spit it out. Sadly, many people blame the Lord God when their prayers go unanswered, or they do not get what they want. A person can pray all day for a million dollars and a huge mansion, for we know that we have a gracious and giving Lord God, but one has to ask himself, does such a prayer tend to give glory to the Lord God, and does it promote our welfare.

Our Lord would have us pray things that do not just tend to our earthly welfare. He would rather have us pray for all such spiritual blessings that are necessary for our salvation. He would have us pray without condition for forgiveness of sins, for life eternal, and for redemption and salvation from our spiritual enemies. He has promised us that He will provide for all our earthly and spiritual needs. And because the Lord + Jesus has come from the Heavenly Father and dwelt among us in our flesh, we now have access to ask the Heavenly Father for all things that tend to His glory, are well-pleasing to Him, and profit us in such a way that leads us closer to faith in Him and in His works and merits.

For prayer has been established by the Lord God for us to bring our petitions before Him and to offer up praise and thanks to Him for all the good things He has given to us. Especially should we thank Him for bringing us into the Christian faith. This same prayer can be made on behalf of our neighbors; thanks for bringing them into the Christian faith, and for those who are outside the faith, or who struggle with their Christianity, prayers for the Holy Ghost to enlighten their hearts and minds, that they may hear the Word of the Lord God with joy and that they may cling in faith to the Lord God as even we do.

Prayer is a conversation with our Lord God. But too often we treat prayer as lecture, and not as a conversation; our conversation is only one-sided. We do all the talking, but none of the listening. This is why study of the Word of God, must always accompany prayer. Our Lord God speaks to us through His holy Word. He has His say through the written and preached Word of God. When we know our Lord's side of the conversation it is easier for us to pray for the things that tend to His glory and promote our welfare.

For the Scriptures declare to us the things that our Triune Lord God did for us in order to create, redeem, and sanctify us. He created us to be His people. He redeemed us from the sin and death into which we fell. He draws us to Himself through the means of grace, in order that He may make us holy in His sight. We have all of this on account of the Son of God, our Lord + Jesus.

Today, He tells His Apostles, and us, that we now have access to the Heavenly Father, because He has come down from Heaven, and took upon Himself our flesh, and fulfilled the Law perfectly, and has gone to the tree of the cross and paid the penalty of our sins. He has ascended to the right hand of the Heavenly Father, and intercedes for us poor sinners to the Father. He has opened up the path

for us to the Heavenly Father. We can now ask anything in the Name of the Lord + Jesus, and our Heavenly Father will grant it to us. For we who were once estranged from the Father on account of sin, have been restored by the works of His Only-Begotten Son, + Jesus Christ. So that just as He loves His Son, He also loves all those who are in His Son. We who have been baptized have put on the Christ. We are in the Son, and He is in us. We now have access to the Heavenly Father, so that we can pray to the Father, in the Name of the Son, with the assistance of the Holy Ghost.

Therefore, my dear friends, let us pray for all those things that tend to the glory of the Lord God and promote our welfare. Let us pray for all spiritual gifts, especially for forgiveness, life and salvation. Let us pray for our neighbors that they may be strengthened in their faith. Let us pray for our enemies that they may cease their enmity against us, and join us peace and harmony. Let us pray for all spiritual and temporal gifts, for our Lord God Heavenly Father has promised to give us all things which we pray for in the Name of His Son + Jesus. For His Son has suffered and died, and risen again to bring us back to the Heavenly Father, all so that we may be His people, and He may be our Lord God. Hallelujah! Christ is risen! He is risen indeed! Hallelujah! In the Name of our Lord + Jesus, the Christ. Amen.

Prayer in Pulpit after Sermon:

Almighty God, be pleased to accompany Thy Word with Thy Holy Spirit and grant that Thy Word would increase faith in us; bring into the Way of Truth all such as have erred; turn the hearts of the unrepentant; and for sake of Thy Name grant succor to all heavy hearts and those who are heavy-laden, that they may through the mercy of the Lord Jesus Christ be relieved and preserved so that they succumb not to the temptation of despair but rather that they gain the victory over the world, the flesh, and the devil; through the same Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord, Who liveth and reigneth with the Thee and the Holy Ghost, ever One God, world without end. Amen.

The Votum:

The peace of God, which passeth all understanding, keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Amen.

Soli Deo Gloria!