

Gospel and Sermon Transcript -7th Sunday After Pentecost - July 27, 2025

Join in the singing of the Gospel Acclamation found on page 205.

Page 205, The Gospel Acclamation.

Alleluia, Lord and Savior,

O men, now you will say the word,

Let it burn like fire within us,

Speak and tell all that astray,

O alleluia, Lord we sing,

For the good news that you bring.

The Holy Gospel, according to St. Luke, the 11th chapter.

Glory to you, O Lord.

Jesus was praying in a certain place,

and after he had finished, one of his disciples said to him,

Lord, teach us to pray as John taught his disciples.

So Jesus said to them,

When you pray, say,

Father, may your name be revered as holy.

May your kingdom come.

Give us each day our daily bread.

And forgive us our sins, for we ourselves forgive everyone indebted to us,

and do not bring us to the time of trial.

And then Jesus said to them,

Suppose one of you has a friend,

and you go to him at midnight,

and you say to him,

Friend, lend me three loaves of bread,

for a friend of mine has arrived,

and I have nothing to say before him.

And he answers from within,

Do not bother me, the door has already been locked,

and my children are with me in bed.

I cannot get up and give you anything.

I tell you, even though he will not get up and give him anything out of friendship,

at least because of his persistence,

he will get up and give him whatever he needs.

So I say to you,

Ask, and it will be given to you.

Search, and you will find,

A knock, and the door will be opened for you.

For anyone who asks receives.

And everyone who searches finds,

and for everyone who knocks,

the door will be open.

Is there anyone among you who,

if your child asked for a fish,

would give a snake instead of a fish?

Or, if the child asked for an egg,

would give a scorpion?

Well, if you then,

who are evil know how to give good gifts to your children,

how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit

to those who ask Him?

The Gospel of our Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Grace and peace to you from the one from whom every good and perfect gift comes.

The Sermon

Some of you know that once upon a time,

I was Roman Catholic,

was brought up in that tradition.

And so that meant we went to confession each week

in preparation for Mass.

Well, part of the process of making right

is prayer.

And so the priest would often say,

he would say, "Well, okay,

you need to pray the Lord's Prayer,
or the our Father, three times,
and two Hail Marys."

Well, I developed an art form where I could jet to the altar,
I could blow through those penitential prayers in record time,
and be on time at first base to play baseball with the Ghaulia brothers.

Rain or shine?

Well, I'm going to do the arithmetic real quick.

50 some years later, 55 years later,

I find that sometimes as I'm reading the daily office,
and we get to the Lord's Prayer,

I sing it kind of in my head,

but I have a feeling that it's a lot faster in my head
than it would be if I sang it out loud.

Are the words enough to the Lord's Prayer?

I would say they are.

But I think that the priest who recommended that I pray the Lord's Prayer
was really hoping I would do that with some deliberateness
so that the words would get where they needed to go.

And that was in me.

I think that's what Jesus is telling his followers too,
by telling the stories he tells.

I mean, they ask, "Teach us to pray the way John taught his followers."

Because you pray as your Rabbi prays,

but you also live as your Rabbi lives.

You copy, you imitate.

And so Jesus says,

"It is these words, but it is a pattern of living

that I'm inviting you into."

And I have to say,

it is one of great resistance

against whatever the powers that we are this week, this month, this millennium.

It wasn't long ago.

We talked about how had Caesar overheard Jesus talking about the kingdom of God,

wouldn't have taken that very well.

The same is true with the Lord's Prayer.

And I would invite you, if you would like to visit the website,

there's a little more expanded comments on some of this.

So I'm going to abbreviate to say

that our prayers to God, in whom we depend for our well-being

and whose will we ask to be done,

is a contrast, a counterpoint,

and even a bit of resistance against governments,

and you can name anyone you like,
that would ask us to worship them instead of worshiping God
or giving our ultimate allegiance to them.

And it is about a pattern of life.

A couple of examples.

In a couple of hours from now,
in the US, the evangelical Lutheran Church in America will be gathering in
convention.

And they, like us, will be selecting a new presiding bishop.

Bishop Elizabeth Eaton has been tireless and faithful

and a tremendous bishop

and is now going to get a little time just to rest.

In fact, if you're really web-savvy,
find your way to the living Lutheran, I think it's called,
which is the publication that comes from the ELCA.

There's a tribute there written by the bishop's daughter that is just lovely
and I think would be worth reading if you like.

But the other reason that the church gathers in convention, particularly this time,
and because of their particular situation,

the big question is how do we respond in faith and hope

and how do we respond to the problem that's divided and in one where there is so
much conflict

and so much injustice.

Now, our bishop, Bishop Susan,

and our ascended bishop Carla recently petitioned the prime minister

and they were joined by some other churches including the Anglican Church in Canada.

They petitioned the prime minister to speak to or communicate with the prime minister of Israel

and say that the bombing in Gaza, particularly where it was affecting hospitals and food supplies,

that needs to end.

I would say that when we dig out the catechism and we say things like,

"Thy kingdom come, thy will be done,"

Luther himself has a line about how we are resisting the evil schemes

and if you're systematically starving people,

I'm sorry, that can't be good.

It's also true that the Episcopal Church in the United States

is developing a series of interventions plus petitioning of their government

asking that the bombing cease.

It sounds like that we have more of a listening ear here

but I would say that that's part of living into the Lord's prayer.

And as I spoke of Bishop Susan, we tried to include, I think Bob got this done for us, so thank you,

the sermon that she provided for churches that wanted to hear it today

or churches where the pastor is on vacation or something.

We thought we should have that alongside whatever else we do today.

But Susan is a prayer.

I mean, she's a powerful person when it comes to prayer

and it is a very deep and integral part of who she is.

And I hope you read her sermon. It is tremendous.

But she talks about how prayer needs to be like our business.

I think we're drawing on Luther, I guess, that he said, you know, we have shoemakers, we have builders.

Well, praying is a business too.

That requires our diligence.

And so we are called to pray.

And I think we are also called to live the pattern of the prayer we pray.

In which we recognize God's goodness, our interdependence on each other, and the yearning for God to set things straight.

And if somehow we can be part of that, that is to the glory of God.

I am going to tell a bit of a story maker reference that didn't work well at 9.30.

I don't know if it's because I didn't tell it right, but I'm going to try it again.

Do you remember the TV show Hill Street Blues?

Oh, good. I got total blanks at 9.30. I don't know.

Maybe they liked another channel.

But do you remember at roll call when the sergeant would go through all of the duty assignments

and the things happening in the streets?

This is quiz time.

Does anybody remember what he said at the end every week?

"Be careful out there."

Yeah, I imagine you resonated with that, didn't you, when that was on TV?

"Be careful out there."

Yeah, I think we need to be careful out there.

And I'm going to riff on Sergeant Esther House a little bit if I might,

and say we also need to be prayerful out there.

And it's not just the words. It's the pattern.

May it be so that God's rule and realm be on earth as in heaven.

Amen.