

Alleluia! Christ is risen! He is risen indeed! Alleluia!

“But truly God has listened; he has attended to the voice of my prayer. Blessed be God, because he has not rejected my prayer or removed his steadfast love from me!”

Christians pray. That’s something which should be so obvious, but when you think about your life as a Christian, if prayer isn’t a significant aspect of your life in Christ, then, you need to repent and reevaluate things. A theology of prayer boils down to command and promise. God commands you to pray and promises to hear and answer. You are commanded to pray to God and God expects that this will be simply a part of who you are as his children. With this command, God gives his promise that he will hear and answer you as he is your Father and you are his dear children.

Jesus teaches two things about prayer in the Gospel reading today. Only Christians can pray, and Christ promises to answer the prayers of Christians. Jesus says in the Gospel reading, “In that day you will ask in my name, and I do not say to you that I will ask the Father on your behalf; for the Father himself loves you, because you have loved me and have believed that I came from God. I came from the Father and have come into the world, and now I am leaving the world and going to the Father.”

The Large Catechism confesses prayer as, “calling upon God’s name.” That definition roots prayer in God and who he is as his word reveals. More specifically prayer is something that rests solely and completely upon Christ and his work for you. Jesus is teaching you that today and it can’t be stressed enough. He is teaching you what it means to pray to God and invites you to do so. This is a gracious invitation to hear and answer your prayers out of his mercy toward you in what he has accomplished by his obedient life, his atoning death, and his resurrection for your justification.

In this way, then, you see prayer rightly only through the lens of Jesus. To pray in Jesus’s name is to pray in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. He’s not giving you some formulaic phrase that you must use, rather he is teaching you about your identity in Christ who is the Son of God. To ask and call upon him is to pray through the blood of the atonement which has satisfied God’s wrath against you and reconciled you to the Father. You pray to God as you have peace through Christ. It’s no wonder the Gospel reading ends today with Jesus saying what he does about peace because peace is a word of forgiveness, and a word connected with this death of Christ for you on the cross. Jesus said in John 16:33, “I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world.”

Prayer does not depend upon you, then. If it were, then God wouldn’t hear and answer your prayer. Your righteousness is the righteousness of faith, which is a gift of God. Calling upon God in Christ is solely out of God’s grace and mercy toward you in Jesus. God hears you through the mediation of Jesus. Every prayer that you pray in Christ, then, falls upon favorable ears. God promises you that he hears your prayers and answers them. The world would tempt you into placing your trust in prayer to something other than God. You forget the promises of God when you turn prayer into manipulating the name of God rather than calling upon the name of God. You are tempted to think if enough people pray for you, or you pray hard enough you can really get God to hear and answer you. Prayer, though, is never a power. Prayer is speaking to God as children who are talking to their dear Father.

Now, there will be those times when you see what the answer to your prayer is in this life. Sometimes it might not be right away. In the Bible the example is given of the persistent widow. Think also of the Canaanite woman who was, seemingly ignored, then rebuked and called a dog by Jesus. In humility her prayers looked to the promises of God who alone shows mercy in Christ.

In your life there may be prayers you are still praying that don’t seem to be answered yet or the devil is trying to get you to doubt God and think they are falling on deaf ears. That doesn’t mean for one instant that God has stopped hearing and answering your prayers. But you see it’s precisely in these times like this that the Lord places before you these promises like he does in the reading today, “Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full.” So, as you

Sixth Sunday of Easter—Rogate—May 10, 2026

pray, you cling to words and in doing this you fix your eyes on Jesus and see that joy that only he can give for he is crucified for you and is risen from the dead. He is the God who hears and promises to answer your prayers, and he is the God who is risen from the dead and will raise you from your graves too.

The boldness of prayer is the boldness of trusting the promises of God even when the answer to your prayer might be “no.” You look to God who alone is good, righteousness, and knows what you need even before you ask him. Everything rests in him who has created, redeemed, and sanctified you to be his own dear children. As you pray in this way and in this faith the Lord sustains you and strengthens you through his word and sacraments fixing your eyes on Jesus the author and perfecter of your faith and the one who gives you peace and has overcome the world.

Jesus goes on in the Gospel reading to teach you the ramifications. “I have said these things to you in figures of speech. The hour is coming when I will no longer speak to you in figures of speech but will tell you plainly about the Father. In that day you will ask in my name, and I do not say to you that I will ask the Father on your behalf; for the Father himself loves you, because you have loved me and have believed that I came from God. I came from the Father and have come into the world, and now I am leaving the world and going to the Father.”

Those words of Jesus echo the last two weeks where Jesus talks about his work going to the Father, offering up himself, dying to satisfy the wrath of God, rising from the dead, and ascending to the right hand of the Father. Through faith in Christ, you have salvation, and you have access to God as you pray in this life. Jesus goes on further, “His disciples said, “Ah, now you are speaking plainly and not using figurative speech! Now we know that you know all things and do not need anyone to question you; this is why we believe that you came from God.” Jesus answered them, “Do you now believe? Behold, the hour is coming, indeed it has come, when you will be scattered, each to his own home, and will leave me alone. Yet I am not alone, for the Father is with me. I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world.”

What wonderful words of Jesus to hear this morning as you see who you are in Christ. Even though he tells the disciples they will be scattered and leave him alone, Jesus will not be alone for he is with the Father. And for you this means that you stand before the throne of God as one who is in Christ, hidden in him, and clothed with him. In this world, then you have peace because Jesus is the one who overcame the world. Prayer realizes this and lives in it because you know you have deliverance from the tribulations of world and look forward to the life to come. When you pray to God you are praying as his children. You are praying as those who bear the name of the Holy Trinity and made clean by the blood of Christ.

When you pray there is great confidence and boldness in your prayer. To pray the Lord’s Prayer and call God, “Our Father” to call him, your Father is nothing insignificant. And not everyone can call God their Father. Only those who are in Christ can pray the Lord’s Prayer rightly and with confidence. That’s you. You are in Christ, and you have the boldness to pray “Our Father” and it’s a wonderful thing before God. It’s sweet incense before his throne because your prayers are carried through Christ crucified, the one in whom the Father is well pleased. When you pray, you are heard as children, dear beloved children of God. And God cares for you. Whatever is going on in your life being times of trial, trouble, suffering, thanksgiving, and/or great joy the Lord hears you. There’s nothing insignificant in your life that God doesn’t care for you or not listen to your prayer. A little kid thanking God for his dog and for the Lord to keep it safe is just as heard as the congregation who prays together for the country. All these things are heard because all are prayed in Christ who is the mediator between God and man, the one who is your Redeemer.

Consider what this means as you pray. There is a freedom to pray and freedom in prayer. Prayer for you, the Christian, is living in the freedom that comes with salvation in Christ. You are free to approach the throne of God because you belong to Jesus. No prayer is too great or too small to bring before your Father. It’s sweet incense before his throne because your prayers are carried through Christ crucified, the one in whom the Father is well pleased. When you pray, you are heard as children, dear beloved children of God. And God cares for you. Whatever is going on in your life being times of trial, trouble, suffering, thanksgiving, and/or great joy the Lord hears you. There’s nothing insignificant

Sixth Sunday of Easter—Rogate—May 10, 2026

in your life that God doesn't care for you or not listen to your prayer. A little kid thanking God for his dog and for the Lord to keep it safe is just as heard as the congregation who prays together for the country. All these things are heard because all are prayed in Christ who is the mediator between God and man, the one who is your Redeemer. You have the freedom to pray, and you have God's promises that he hears and answers you along with the promises that he knows what you need even before you ask and that God himself prays for you. The Son prays for you and Romans 8 even mentions the Holy Spirit intercedes for you with groanings too deep words.

There is a final thing to consider about prayer this morning as well. God's word guides you who you should pray for in your life. God teaches you in the Epistle reading, "First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people, for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way. This is good, and it is pleasing in the sight of God our Savior, who desire/s all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth." What does this look like then? You are pray for all those in authority over you. Notice it doesn't say, "just the ones you like or just the ones you voted for." No, all those in authority and with that all people. Pray for your leaders. Pray for your bosses. Pray for your pastors, your teachers, your coworkers, your friends, and for you family. Pray for those who persecute you. Pray as Jesus prayed. Pray for all people.

Prayer lives in the new person God has created you to be in this life and for eternity. Prayer combats the old sinful flesh too. When you are angry with someone, for example, stop what you are doing and pray for that person or people. Pray that God would show them mercy, strengthen their faith, and watch and keep them in his care. Then after you do this, pray for yourself. Pray that your anger would depart and God would give you grace and mercy to care for your neighbor. Is this hard to do? For your old sinful nature it is. This is why it's called "crucifying the old man" or daily dying to sin. You are called to a better life as a Christian. Prayer is one of those exercises and aspects of the Christian life where God teaches and guides you is the new godly life you are to live in relationship to your neighbor.

And there's something practical here and now in this too. When you start to pray for those who you are angry with or those who have hurt you, you start to see and experience something. You see that God takes your burdens onto himself. You see that your anger is redirected and reworked into a godly heart and action. Prayer is a weapon against the devil, temptation, and sin.

Jesus said, "In that day you will ask nothing of me. Truly, truly, I say to you, whatever you ask of the Father in my name, he will give it to you. Until now you have asked nothing in my name. Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full."

Thanks be to God today, then, for the gift of prayer. Christians pray. Dear Christians on this Rogate Sunday pray to your Lord. Pray this day and every day. Teach your children, grandchildren, friends, and all who call upon him to pray to Jesus as beggars who look to the Lord in his mercy. Pray boldly and confidently knowing that God commands you to pray, and he promises to hear you. Behold Jesus crucified and risen and know this all most certainly true.

The Son of God, true God, and true man is yours and that means everything. In Christ you have it all as God commands you to pray and promises to hear you. And hear you he does now as you pray and on that final day into eternity where your faith ends, and you see him face to face just as Jesus is risen from the dead and lives and reigns to all eternity.

Alleluia! Christ is risen! He is risen indeed! Alleluia! Amen.