

Luke: Chapter 11

Disciples of Prayer - People of Light

Begin each reflection day in prayer:

Pray Luke's version of the Lord's Prayer:

"Father, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come.

Give us each day our daily bread.

Forgive our sins for we too forgive all whom do us wrong;

And subject us not to the trial. Amen.



DAY 1: (Read Luke 11: 1-4) The Our Father.

Take a moment. Open your hands in prayer. Breathe in deeply. Slowing and deliberately pray the "Our Father" that you have prayed since childhood.

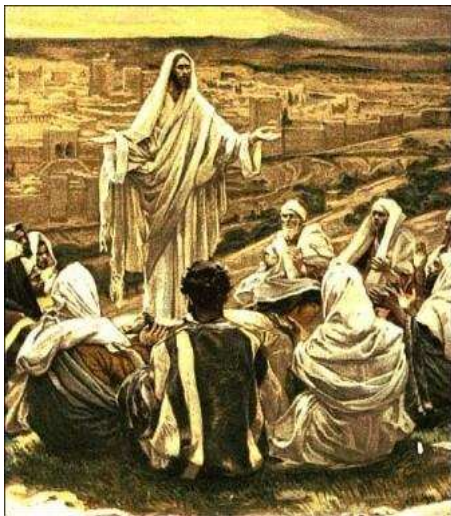
11:1 Now ¹ Jesus ² was praying in a certain place. When ³ he stopped, one of his disciples said to him, "Lord, teach us to pray, just as John ⁴ taught ⁵ his disciples."

11:2 So he said to them, "When you pray, ⁶ say: Father, ⁷ may your name be honored; ⁸ may your kingdom come. **11:3** Give us each day our daily bread, ¹⁰ **11:4** and forgive us our sins,

1. What word, phrase or image does this prayer evoke for you?

2. What does the prayer call you to do this day?

3. In Luke's version of the Lord's Prayer there are 3 petitions or requests. What do they say to you?



Prayer is one of Luke's favorite themes. More than any other gospel writer, Luke presents Jesus as a powerful man of prayer. Jesus is always in communion with God. In Chapter 10 Jesus encourages his disciples to pray. In Chapter 11 the disciples moved by Jesus' example ask him to teach them to pray.

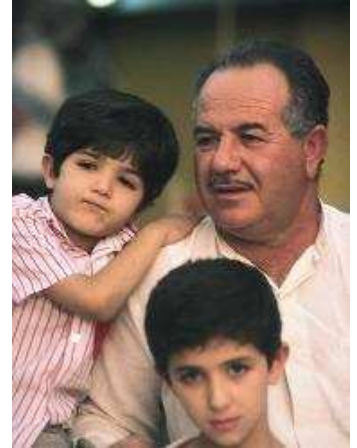
THE LORD'S PRAYER: LUKE 11:1-4.

Jesus teaches his disciples to pray. Traditionally the prayer is called the "Our Father". These are more than words to be repeated. These are more than phrases to identify the followers of Jesus. These are attitudes and truths to be lived by his followers.

The first part of the Lord's Prayer describes God's role and reign:

- **"Father":** in Aramaic, 'ABBA'. in Greek, 'PATER'. In either language it means 'daddy' or 'papa.' 'ABBA' is a word that children used to address their father. This is a new and extraordinary concept that Jesus presents. The Jewish people called God, Father. But it was a very formal and formative title. Jesus reveals an intimate and loving relationship that God has with him and his disciples. Never before was such a word or attitude used to address and describe God. It is a relationship like that of a small child with a loving and caring father.

Jesus teaches the disciples and us to address God as he himself relates to God (Lk 10:21). God is a parent. Jesus uses his own powerfully intimate relationship with God to express God's relationship with a disciple. A Christian is a child of God as Jesus is God's beloved child.



- **"Hallowed be your name."** This is the first goal of the disciple. One prays and lives so that God may be known and praised throughout the world. It is a prayer that gratefully acknowledges God's holiness, greatness and reputation. It moves one to live in God's presence and display His love and holiness in ones own life.

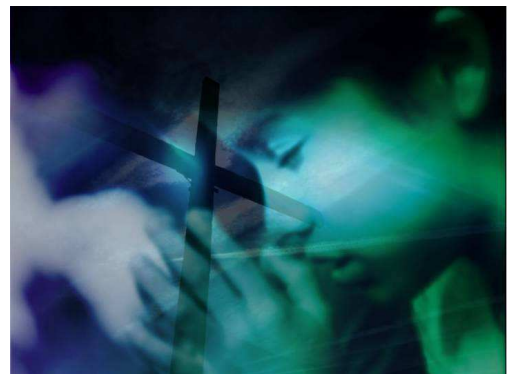
- **"Your Kingdom Come."** The prayer acknowledges God's powerful mission to transform this world. The Kingdom comes as the reign of God extends itself into the lives of people through their obedience to the Father's will. As Fr. James O'Bryan states, "*Each disciple is a little bit of this earth into which the reign of God must be extended. And when it does, a little bit of heaven is established upon this earth.*" (Meditations of the Gospel according to St. Luke).

The second part of the Lord's Prayer presents three petitions of the disciple. They are based on a faith relationship to the Father.

- **"Give us each day our daily bread."** Jesus teaches his disciple to depend day-by-day upon the Father for all things. The focus on bread recalls the Exodus journey through the desert and how God provided for the Israelites by daily giving them manna to eat. God sustains His people. Likewise, early Christians will link the image of bread to the Eucharist (the breaking of the bread).

- **"Forgive us our sins for we too forgive all who do us wrong."** This second petition acknowledges that even as children of the Father, Christian disciples sin and are sinned against even at times by other disciples. It speaks to the reality of life and the all-encompassing mercy of the Father.

Likewise, the petition recognizes that the Father's forgiveness cannot be expected if human forgiveness is withheld. It proclaims that God's intimate fatherhood brings about a new bond of human brother and sisterhood.



- **"Subject us not to the trial."** In Luke's Gospel the trial or temptation is related to apostasy. Apostasy means to repudiate or deny Jesus, his mission and his Church. Apostasy was a key problem in the first 2 1/2 centuries of the Christian Church. Mainly because of persecution and fear, many Christians would deny their faith in Jesus.

Jesus will caution his apostles about leaving and denying him. *"Pray that you may not be put to the test.* (Lk 22:40) and *"Wake up, and pray that you may not be subjected to the trial."* (Lk 22:46). The apostles will leave Jesus when he is arrested.

The Lord's Prayer that we have memorized and pray with frequency is found in Matthew's Gospel. Many hold that Luke's version is closer to Jesus' original teaching. However, both versions express the same image of God as 'Abba' and the same petitions.

PRAY!!! LUKE 11:5-13.

11:5 Then ¹³ he said to them, "Suppose one of you ¹⁴ has a friend, and you go to him ¹⁵ at midnight and say to him, 'Friend, lend me three loaves of bread, ¹⁶ **11:6** because a friend of mine has stopped here while on a journey, ¹⁷ and I have nothing to set before ¹⁸ him.' **11:7** Then ¹⁹ he will reply ²⁰ from inside, 'Do not bother me. The door is already shut, and my children and I are in bed. ²¹ I cannot get up and give you anything.' ²² **11:8** I tell you, even though the man inside ²³ will not get up and give him anything because he is his friend, yet because of the first man's ²⁴ sheer persistence ²⁵ he will get up and give him whatever he needs. **11:9** "So ²⁶ I tell you: Ask, ²⁷ and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and the door ²⁸ will be opened for you. **11:10** For everyone who asks ²⁹ receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks, the door ³⁰ will be opened. **11:11** What father among you, if your ³¹ son asks for ³² a fish, will give him a snake ³³ instead of a fish? **11:12** Or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? ³⁴ **11:13** If you then, although you are ³⁵ evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit ³⁶ to those who ask him!"

DAY 2: (Read Lk 11:5-13) Parables of Prayer.

1. What do you think is the point of the parable of the man tucked into bed and the man outside?

2. What do you ask of the Father today?

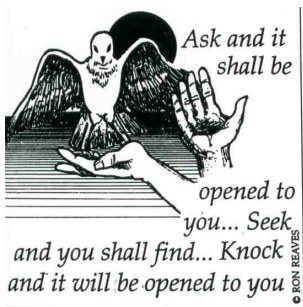
3. What does Jesus say you will receive in prayer from the Father?



By our prayers, we open our lives to the Father. In so doing, we make ourselves ready and able to receive from Him. Luke presents two of Jesus' parables that instruct his disciples to be persistent in prayer. The parables emphasize that prayer will be heard by his Father.

The first parable about Prayer: Lk. 11:5-8.

Jesus is a creative teacher who uses storytelling to instruct his listeners. The first of his parables about prayer presents a realistic situation. A man approaches a friend on behalf of another friend who needs help at night. Although the initial reaction of the sleeping friend may be reluctance, the final response will be gracious and plentiful because the one making the plea does so with persistence. He will not take 'No' for an answer. The persistence moves the sleeping neighbor to effective action, regardless of friendship.



In reality, Jesus' parable presents a surprising first reaction from the sleeping friend who does not want to be bothered. In the culture of Jesus' day hospitality was a high priority and way of life. Under very few circumstances would the neighbor leave his friend's request without an answer. So the parable implies, "Can you imagine such a thing happening?" It leads to a conclusion that even if the selfish and insulting neighbor is moved by persistence, how much more will the Father respond to the persistent petitioner.

Jesus' instruction then brings home the point of the parable:

"Ask and you shall receive; Seek and you shall find; Knock and it shall be opened to you."

The teaching communicates a posture that petitioners should have when they pray. They should be "expectant." Those who make a request should do so with conviction, knowing that indeed they will be given what they need and as much as they need.

The second parable about prayer. Lk 11:11-13.

This teaching compares the heavenly Father with an earthly parent. Just as a parent will give what is good to his child who seeks something good, how much more will the Father give to those who seek what is good.

The greatest gift of the Father to his son's disciples is the Holy Spirit. The Father looks for opportunities to give the Holy Spirit. The disciple must be an active and persistent friend who asks for the Holy Spirit.



KINGDOM OF LIGHT - KINGDOM OF

DARKNESS: Luke 11:14-53



Jesus has taught his disciples to pray for the arrival of Kingdom of God. Now he is faced with those who prefer to remain in darkness.

Jesus and Beelzebul: Luke 11:14-26.

11:14 Now ³⁷ he was casting out a demon that was mute. ³⁸ When ³⁹ the demon had gone out, the man who had been mute began to speak, ⁴⁰ and the crowds were amazed. **11:15** But some of them said, "By the power of Beelzebul, ⁴¹ the ruler ⁴² of demons, he casts out demons." **11:16** Others, to test ⁴³ him, ⁴⁴ began asking for ⁴⁵ a sign ⁴⁶ from heaven. **11:17** But Jesus, ⁴⁷ realizing their thoughts, said to them, ⁴⁸ "Every kingdom divided against itself is destroyed, ⁴⁹ and a divided household falls. ⁵⁰ **11:18** So ⁵¹ if ⁵² Satan too is divided against himself, how will his kingdom stand? I ask you this because ⁵³ you claim that I cast out demons by Beelzebul. **11:19** Now if I cast out demons by Beelzebul, by whom do your sons ⁵⁴ cast them ⁵⁵ out? Therefore they will be your judges. **11:20** But if I cast out demons by the finger ⁵⁶ of God, then the kingdom of God ⁵⁷ has already overtaken ⁵⁸ you. **11:21** When a strong man, ⁵⁹ fully armed, guards his own palace, ⁶⁰ his possessions are safe. ⁶¹ **11:22** But ⁶² when a stronger man ⁶³ attacks ⁶⁴ and conquers him, he takes away the first man's ⁶⁵ armor on which the man relied ⁶⁶ and divides up ⁶⁷ his plunder. ⁶⁸ **11:23** Whoever is not with me is against me, ⁶⁹ and whoever does not gather with me scatters. ⁷⁰ **Response to Jesus' Work 11:24** "When an unclean spirit ⁷¹ goes out of a person, ⁷² it passes through waterless places ⁷³ looking for rest but ⁷⁴ not finding any. Then ⁷⁵ it says, 'I will return to the home I left.' ⁷⁶ **11:25** When it returns, ⁷⁷ it finds the house ⁷⁸ swept clean and put in order. ⁷⁹ **11:26** Then it goes and brings seven other spirits more evil than itself, and they go in and live there, so ⁸⁰ the last state of that person ⁸¹ is worse than the first."

BEELZEBUL. Lk 11:15: Sometimes referred to as 'Baalzebub.'

Baal - Zebul was the title for the Cannanite god, 'Prince Baal.'

The hebrews belittled the title and called the false god Baal-Zebub,

meaning 'Lord of the flies.' The name came to be used for the prince of demons.

DAY 3: (Read Lk 11: 14-26) Jesus and Beelzebul.

1. How does this situation of the deaf mute describe the attitude of the unbelievers?

2. (Re- Read Luke 11: 24-26). Jesus compares men to houses and unclean spirits to parasites. What does this passage mean to you?

3. What kind of house do you see yourself as today?

Jesus was casting out an evil spirit that made a man mute. The first miracle of his public ministry was the healing a man of an unclean spirit. (Lk. 4: 33-37). This present gospel account is more than another miracle story. It symbolizes the Pharisees' and Jewish peoples' disbelief in Jesus as the Messiah. They are displaying moral deafness, dumbness and blindness. They are like the man possessed by the evil spirit. Jesus has the power to save them if they would only repent and believe.

They do not deny Jesus' power. But instead of acknowledging it as the work of the Holy Spirit they attribute it with Satan.

Jesus challenges the unbelievers who associate his powers with Satan. He draws upon a rich image from their history, "the Finger of God." This image refers to the power that God displayed through Moses in liberating His people from Pharaoh's kingdom. When Pharaoh's magicians saw Moses overpowered their craft, they reported to Pharaoh: "*this is the finger of God*" (Exodus 8:15). Likewise, when Moses presented the 10 Commandments to the Israelites at Mount Sinai "*the stone tablets were inscribed by God's own finger.*" (Ex. 31:18.) It was a term to represent God's personal and astonishing power that was given to Moses. Just as Pharaoh remained obstinate and would not listen so also, the Pharisees would remain obstinate towards God's power that flowed from Jesus.

The Sign of Jonah: Lk. 11:29. Two great signs portrayed Jonah's mission. He spent 3 days in the belly of a fish until God miraculously "resurrected him." The other great sign is that the entire nation of Nineveh responded to his preaching, repented and believed in God's way.

Solomon's Wisdom: Lk. 11:31. The pagan queen Sheba journeyed immense distances to listen to Solomon. He was filled with God's wisdom

At the final judgment the Gentiles of Nineveh and the Sheba' kingdom will condemn the Jewish nation of Jesus' generation for not reforming their lives.

Three examples of Jesus' source of power. Lk. 11:17-26.

1. Lk. 11:17-20. "*A divided kingdom cannot stand.*" Satan would not allow his power to be used against himself. His kingdom would collapse. (Abraham Lincoln will use this same passage to call for a unified nation during the Civil War.)
2. Lk. 11:21-23. "*A stronger man comes and overpowers.*" Jesus is stronger than Satan. He has begun a fight against Satan's presence in this world. He will overcome Satan's power for us and establish God's Reign. This Jesus accomplished through his victorious death and resurrection.
3. Lk. 11:24-24. The empty house. Jesus portrays his listeners as houses and unclean spirits as parasites. One cannot be neutral towards God's power in Jesus. The choice is clear. Believe in God's way and become a temple of the Holy Spirit or leave yourself open to become a corrupted house of darkness and destruction. What spirit does the listener want?

DAY 4: (Read Lk 11: 27-36) People of Light.

⁸² **11:27** As ⁸³ he said these things, a woman in the crowd spoke out ⁸⁴ to him, “Blessed is the womb ⁸⁵ that bore you and the breasts at which you nursed!” ⁸⁶ **11:28** But he replied, ⁸⁷“Blessed rather are those who hear the word of God and obey ⁸⁸ it!” The Sign of Jonah **11:29** As ⁸⁹ the crowds were increasing, Jesus ⁹⁰ began to say, “This generation is a wicked generation; it looks for a sign, ⁹¹ but no sign will be given to it except the sign of Jonah. ⁹² **11:30** For just as Jonah became a sign to the people of Nineveh, ⁹³ so the Son of Man will be a sign ⁹⁴ to this generation. ⁹⁵ **11:31** The queen of the South ⁹⁶ will rise up at the judgment ⁹⁷ with the people ⁹⁸ of this generation and condemn them, because she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon – and now, ⁹⁹ something greater ¹⁰⁰ than Solomon is here! **11:32** The people ¹⁰¹ of Nineveh will stand up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it, because they repented when Jonah preached to them ¹⁰² – and now, ¹⁰³ something greater than Jonah is here! Internal Light **11:33** “No one after lighting a lamp puts it in a hidden place ¹⁰⁴ or under a basket, ¹⁰⁵ but on a lampstand, so that those who come in can see the light. **11:34** Your eye is the lamp of your body. When your eye is healthy, ¹⁰⁶ your whole body is full of light, but when it is diseased, ¹⁰⁷ your body is full of darkness. **11:35** Therefore see to it ¹⁰⁸ that the light in you ¹⁰⁹ is not darkness. **11:36** If ¹¹⁰ then ¹¹¹ your whole body is full of light, with no part in the dark, ¹¹² it will be as full of light as when the light of a lamp shines on you.” ¹¹³



1. What is the source of true happiness? _____

How is Mary truly blessed?

2. In what way is Jonah a symbol of Jesus?

3. What can you do to enable Jesus' message to enlighten your life even more?

True Happiness. Lk. 11: 27-28.

To call a person's mother blessed was an eloquent and gracious way of praising the person, even more than the mother. Of course, Mary was blessed. But the fullness of her blessing came from more than being Jesus' mother. It came from receiving God's word and keeping it. This is what blesses every disciple.

An Evil Age: Lk. 11:29-32.



Jesus delivers a serious state of the nation. Israel is becoming spiritually bankrupt.. They are embracing darkness and are becoming an evil age. The deny and reject God's power that flows from Jesus. Jesus contrasts them to gentile pagans who repented and believed in God's salvation.

Parable of the Light: Lk. 11:33-37.

Jesus again compares the message of the Kingdom to light. But here he is talking about his audience's perceptivity. Jesus has been openly preaching the word and performing signs by the Spirit of God. The light of God is shining all around them! Yet his audience falls to perceive it or they choose to reject it.

The House of Israel: The six woes: 11:37-54.

11:37 As he spoke, ¹¹⁴ a Pharisee ¹¹⁵ invited Jesus ¹¹⁶ to have a meal with him, so he went in and took his place at the table. ¹¹⁷ **11:38** The ¹¹⁸ Pharisee was astonished when he saw that Jesus ¹¹⁹ did not first wash his hands ¹²⁰ before the meal. **11:39** But the Lord said to him, “Now you Pharisees clean ¹²¹ the outside of the cup and the plate, but inside you are full of greed and wickedness. ¹²² **11:40** You fools! ¹²³ Didn’t the one who made the outside make the inside as well? ¹²⁴ **11:41** But give from your heart to those in need, ¹²⁵ and ¹²⁶ then everything will be clean for you. ¹²⁷ **11:42** “But woe to you Pharisees! ¹²⁸ You give a tenth ¹²⁹ of your mint, ¹³⁰ rue, ¹³¹ and every herb, yet you neglect justice ¹³² and love for God! But you should have done these things without neglecting the others. ¹³³ **11:43** Woe to you Pharisees! You love the best seats ¹³⁴ in the synagogues ¹³⁵ and elaborate greetings ¹³⁶ in the marketplaces! **11:44** Woe to you! ¹³⁷ You are like unmarked graves, and people ¹³⁸ walk over them without realizing it!” ¹³⁹ **11:45** One of the experts in religious law ¹⁴⁰ answered him, “Teacher, when you say these things you insult ¹⁴¹ us too.” **11:46** But Jesus ¹⁴² replied, ¹⁴³ “Woe to you experts in religious law as well! ¹⁴⁴ You load people ¹⁴⁵ down with burdens difficult to bear, yet you yourselves refuse to touch ¹⁴⁶ the burdens with even one of your fingers! **11:47** Woe to you! You build ¹⁴⁷ the tombs of the prophets whom your ancestors ¹⁴⁸ killed. **11:48** So you testify that you approve of ¹⁴⁹ the deeds of your ancestors, ¹⁵⁰ because they killed the prophets ¹⁵¹ and you build their ¹⁵² tombs! ¹⁵³ **11:49** For this reason also the wisdom ¹⁵⁴ of God said, ‘I will send them prophets and apostles, some of whom they will kill and persecute,’ **11:50** so that this generation may be held accountable ¹⁵⁵ for the blood of all the prophets that has been shed since the beginning ¹⁵⁶ of the world, ¹⁵⁷ **11:51** from the blood of Abel ¹⁵⁸ to the blood of Zechariah, ¹⁵⁹ who was killed ¹⁶⁰ between the altar and the sanctuary. ¹⁶¹ Yes, I tell you, it will be charged against ¹⁶² this generation. **11:52** Woe to you experts in religious law! You have taken away ¹⁶³ the key to knowledge! You did not go in yourselves, and you hindered ¹⁶⁴ those who were going in.” **11:53** When he went out from there, the experts in the law ¹⁶⁵ and the Pharisees began to oppose him bitterly, ¹⁶⁶ and to ask him hostile questions ¹⁶⁷ about many things, **11:54** plotting against ¹⁶⁸ him, to catch ¹⁶⁹ him in something he might say.

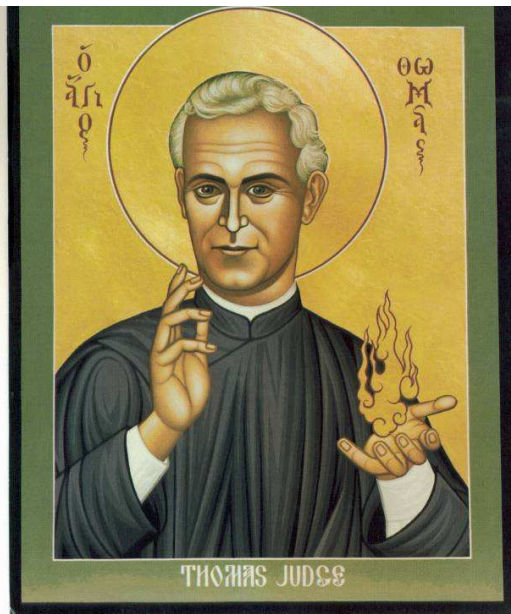
DAY 5: (Read Lk 11: 37-53) Woe to those who pretend to live in the light.

1. Jesus denounced the Pharisees for being clean on the surface but filthy inside. How do you become and remain cleaner on the inside?

2. Why is Jesus justified in his outrage of the Pharisees and Scribes?

Just as Jesus gave the parable about the empty house that is corrupted by evil spirits he now emphatically points out how corrupt the House of Israel has become! He singles out the leadership; Pharisees and Scribes. He names six degrees of corruption: 1. Greed. 2. Infidelity. 3. Hypocrisy. 4. Mercilessness, 5. Murder and 6. Deception. The number six in the Jewish scriptures represents imperfection and corruption. The number seven represents perfection and completion. Jesus can cleanse the House of Israel if only the leadership would repent and believe.

Fr. Judge and the Spirit of Prayer:



“Keep before your mind the work to which God calls you; it is a supernatural work, and you must make yourselves supernatural men and women; Therefore you must become men and women of prayer and charity. When I ask God to make you men and women of prayer I ask every blessing for you, because it is through prayer that God is moved to bless us.

Long ago the prophet Zacharias announced, ‘And it will pour out upon the house of David and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of prayer.’ (Zach. 12:10). Meaning that upon the Church, God would bestow one of His greatest favors. This promise we see begun to be realized when the Blessed Virgin, the Apostles and disciples in the Cenacle after the Ascension of our Lord in constant, assiduous prayer awaited the coming of the Holy Spirit. This promise was completely realized on Pentecost Sunday by the descent of the Holy Spirit.

Two properties are attributed to the Holy Spirit; He is the Spirit of Grace and the Spirit of Prayer. He is the Substantial Grace that unites the Father and Son in the Holy Trinity. He is the Master and Giver of all graces, which He pours into souls when justifying them and endowing them with the infused virtues and gifts. He is the Spirit of Prayer because He above all attracts us to prayer as to one of the most indispensable exercises of the Christian’s life.”

Letter to Pioneer Cenacle Members- May 17, 1912.