**The Lord’s Prayer**

**Our Father who art in heaven**

When the disciples asked Jesus to teach them to pray, Jesus responded with what we know as the Lord’s Prayer. The fact that the disciples requested a model for praying shows us that we don’t have to feel guilty when we don’t understand prayer and need help with it.

Jesus responds to the disciple’s deep hunger to know God and feel connected to God. But with the very first words of the prayer he signals a basic truth: prayer and the spiritual life are not about rules but about relationship- always relationship.

Jesus tells us to begin our praying with, “Our Father who art in heaven: That first word reminds us that we are not alone, that we are linked through God to one another as one family. The spiritual journey is a communal journey. As we come close to God, we are drawn into closer relationship with one another. And by telling us to call God “father”, Jesus moves us from images of a remote God to an image of God as one who is with us constantly, one whose likeness we bear at the deepest levels of our being.

Now let us meditate on, Our Father who art in heaven

**Hallowed be Your Name**

Then we are to pray “Holy is Your Name” acknowledging God’s holiness. This may seem a contradiction, to acknowledge that we are family and then immediately to acknowledge God’s holiness, in contrast to our lack of it. But “holy is Your name” reminds us that the basic posture of prayer is awe- awe that grows from seeing God’s greatness and yet knowing that one who is so holy yearns for relationship with us. That is why we pray: to deepen the relationship. This is the essence of prayer: being with God as we are and naming God as God is. This encounter changes us, degree by degree, and allows us to experience freedom.

Now let us meditate on Hallowed be Your Name

**Lord Hear Our Prayer**

**Your Kingdom Come,**

**“**Your kingdom” asks that the world be transformed into a place where God reigns, where things are done by God’s standards. Think about what that would mean for your life and your town. We know that our ways are not God’s ways, nor our thoughts God’s thoughts. In Mary’s song quoted in Luke, Mary praises God as one who lifts up the lowly and scatters the proud, who feeds the hungry and sends the rich away empty. This reverses the usual human order where those who have the gold make the rules; when we pray the Lord’s Prayer , this reversal is what we ask for. We ask for all of the cosmos to bend toward God, for “the kingdoms of this world to become the kingdoms of our Lord”

Now let us meditate on, Your kingdom come

**Lord Hear Our Prayer**

**Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven**

Like most of Jesus’ teachings, this one is, finally, infinitely personal. When we pray for God’s will to be “done on earth as it is in heaven”, we do well to remember that we are made of earth. When we ask for God’s will to be done “on earth” we invite God into the earth that is us, into the matter of our lives. This opens the door for God to change us at the deepest levels of our being so that we come to will what God wills.

Now let us meditate on Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

**Lord Hear Our Prayer**

**Give us this Day our daily bread**

The Lord’s Prayer shows that we are to ask God for the things we need to sustain physical life. Though Jesus said rightly that we do not live by bread alone, he also made it clear that we are to look to God for the literal bread we need. Jesus shows us that God is concerned with the details of our lives.

“Give us this day our daily bread” reminds us that like the Hebrews gathering manna each day in the wilderness, we cannot store up what we need from God. Yesterday’s experience with God was for yesterday; today we must come to God again for this day’s nourishment, reassurance, direction and challenge. God sustains us one day at a time.

Now let us meditate on Give us this day our daily bread

**Lord Hear Our Prayer**

**(New reflection)**

Let us continue to reflect on Give us this day our daily bread.

The prayer that Jesus gave us also does not say, “Give me today my daily bread” It says “Give us today our daily bread”. We are bound together with all God’s children, and God’s provision for us is to be shared. There is enough food on the planet to feed everyone; there is enough energy to keep all of us warm; there is enough wealth to supply everyone’s basic needs—If we share our abundance. In these words about daily needs we can hear Jesus again calling us to a new way of living. What comes to us can be the answer to other’s prayers, If we are willing to open our hearts, our wallets and our hands. As we allow God’s love to flow through us, the needs of God’s children can be met.

Now let us meditate on Give us this day our daily bread

**Lord Hear Our Prayer**

**Forgive us our Sins as we forgive those who sin against us**

This directs us to consider our own sins and to mend our relations with others, telling us to pray “Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us”

Forgiveness often does not come easily. We may berate ourselves endlessly for our failures, unable to forgive ourselves even after we have asked God to forgive us. And many of us find it difficult to forgive others. We so enjoy a good grudge! After all, if someone hurts us, we naturally want them to suffer for their actions. But Jesus said that if we do not forgive others, we can not experience God’s forgiveness ourselves.

Some are reluctant to forgive because doing so seems to discount the seriousness of the wrongs that others do. Actually, forgiving says the opposite. Forgiving requires first acknowledging that an act is wrong. If it were not, forgiveness would not be needed. When we forgive, we are saying, “what you did was wrong, but I release you from it’s penalty”. We also release ourselves when we forgive those who have harmed us. If we do not forgive, we remain bound to the one who has wronged us. Only by forgiving can we put the past behind us.

Forgiveness is the door to freedom and Jesus reminds us to make forgiving and being forgiven a matter of prayer.

Now let us meditate on, Forgive us our Sins as we forgive those who sin against us.

**Lord Hear Our Prayer**

(The part above is from Upper Room, the part below was written by Rose Emmons)

**Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from Evil**

The evil one is alive and active in our fallen world. Temptations surround us and speak lies to our weak souls. We need a savior, a protector, to guide us in our daily walk. Here we acknowledge our weakness, our desire to please ourselves over choosing what pleases God. We need to invite the Holy Spirit, our “helper” to save us from ourselves with humble hearts. We must learn to lean on and trust God to deliver us from evil!

Now let us meditate on, Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.

**Lord Hear Our Prayer**

**For Thine is the Kingdom, the power and the glory forever**

God’s love is timeless, endless and eternal. It never ends. He is the Alpha and the Omega. His power never fades… And yet He loves each of us in an intimate and personal way.

Now let us meditate on For Thine is the Kingdom, the Power and the Glory forever.

**Lord Hear Our Prayer**

In closing please join me in the Lord’s Prayer.

Our Father who art In heaven,

Hallowed be Your name.

Your kingdom come

Your 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 Yours is the kingdom, and the power

and the glory forever.

Amen.