

LENT 2026

The
LORD'S
Prayer



Lutheran Church In Singapore



CONTENTS

- 3 FOREWORD
- 5 MESSAGE FROM ILSM
- 7 GUIDELINES ON FASTING
- 8 THE LUTHERAN VIEW ON FASTING
- 9 ASH WEDNESDAY AND CHINESE NEW YEAR
- 10 18 FEB: **Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name**
- 13 25 FEB: **Thy kingdom come**
- 15 4 MAR: **Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven**
- 17 11 MAR: **Give us this day our daily bread**
- 19 18 MAR: **And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us**
- 21 25 MAR: **And lead us not into temptation**
- 23 1 APRIL: **But deliver us from evil**
- 25 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



Foreword

One of the most important requests ever made by one of Jesus' disciples was this: "Lord, teach us to pray" (Luke 11: 1-4). It was a request through which our Lord Jesus blessed every generation of disciples with a life-changing gift – Jesus gave us HIS very own prayer, the one we call The Lord's Prayer. Every word of this prayer was thought out, prayed and taught by Jesus Himself. As we unwrap this precious gift, we will discover that it is indeed excellent for teaching His disciples, both then and now, how to pray.

This prayer is, first of all, a prayer. It is brief but complete. It is a prayer that is fit for imitating, for learning by heart and for praying together – not as mechanical recitation – but for uniting believing hearts in prayer. This prayer is, second, a model prayer. It comes from the mouth of Jesus Himself, and is fit for study and meditation. It models for us Jesus' way of praying, addressing God as "Our Father" in child-like faith and love, confident that God will hear and answer. It models for us prayer that seeks His glory and will before our own, and faith that is active in love for our neighbor, praying for "us" and not just for "me". And it models for us the content of prayer, that we may indeed seek Him for everything we need for life and salvation. The concluding doxology "For yours is the kingdom...forever" was likely to have been a fitting liturgical response of trust, submission and praise when the early churches used this prayer in worship (*The Lutheran Study Bible, notes for Matthew 6:13, © 2009, CPH, pg. 1590*).

In Matthew 6:1-18 Jesus speaks regarding good works, prayer and fasting. During the season of Lent the church has traditionally encouraged these three acts of faith, as she calls for all her members to contemplate the meaning of Jesus' suffering, death and resurrection for us. These three so-called "disciplines of Lent" are not mutually exclusive. Prayer is the most pervasive one, as much of Christian life and worship consists of prayer, and disciplines such as fasting and good works need to be undergirded with prayer. As the Holy Spirit works through the word of God to produce confession and repentance in us, our response is very much expressed through prayer.

Prayer is a fruit of faith, the faith given to us in Baptism, and the faith that is nourished in Holy Communion. Prayer is not self-centered or self-effacing elocution to God, nor about length, detail or language. Rather, it is entrusting ourselves and others to God in every circumstance, whether delightful or dire. We take to heart Luther's comments on Ps 118:5 – "Out of my distress I called on the Lord; the Lord answered me and set me free." Luther writes: "You must



learn to call on the Lord. ...Fall on your knees, and raise your hands and eyes toward heaven. Read a psalm. Say the Lord's Prayer, tearfully tell God what you need." "Before him I tell my trouble"(Ps 142:2). God wants you to tell him your troubles. He doesn't want you to keep them to yourself. He doesn't want you to struggle with them all alone and torture yourself. Doing this will only multiply your troubles... He wants you to grow strong in him." (LW 14: 60–61)

We draw our text for this year's devotional from Matthew's record of the prayer in Matthew 6:9-13. Luther, in his Small Catechism, makes the Lord's Prayer, and praying, an unmissable aspect of Christian life. He explains the Lord's Prayer as having an address, and 7 petitions. The conclusion did not appear in Luther's Small and Large Catechisms. The 7 petitions (requests) which are the subject of our devotional, pretty much cover everything we need, and everyone we can think of, in daily life. He then recommends that the Lord's Prayer be used in our daily morning, evening and family prayers. Finally, the last word in the Small Catechism's Table of Duties is a reminder of our Christian duty "To Everyone", namely, "I urge...that requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for everyone (1Timothy 2:1). Hence our theme – The 7 Petitions of the Lord's Prayer for daily life and intercession. Each of our 7 contributors will consider:

first, Luther's question and answer explanation for his or her assigned petition. Then,

second, how each petition prompts us towards intercession, praying for others and not only for ourselves. In other words, to give attention to how the Prayer encompasses heaven and earth, and repeatedly includes "us" and not only "me".

May this devotional encourage all of us to faithful and fervent prayer, not only during Lent, but every day, as part and parcel of God's call to love Him and to love our neighbors. And when we come together for the Divine Service, let this prayer unite us all in submission, trust and adoration of Christ Jesus who gave us His prayer. For indeed, His is the kingdom, the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.

*Reverend Soh Guan Kheng
Lutheran Church in Singapore*



Message from ILSM

Grace and peace to you.

Lent is a sacred season in the life of the Church, a time of repentance and realignment with God's purposes. Through fasting, prayer, and giving, the Church is formed into a people who learn to notice the unseen and respond with sacrificial love. These practices lie at the heart of ministry to seafarers, where faithful presence and Gospel witness are essential.

Every day, seafarers from across the world berth at Singapore's shores, carrying the goods that sustain nations and communities. In their brief time on land, the Church is presented with a rare and strategic mission field, one that comes to us. This is not incidental, but providential. The presence of seafarers at our ports is a clear invitation for the Church to bear witness to Christ among those who often pass through unnoticed.

The **International Lutheran Seafarers' Mission (ILSM)** exists to ensure that the Gospel reaches this vital yet frequently overlooked community. Serving at Singapore's Container Terminals and Jurong Fishery Port, ILSM offers free Coastal Welcome Services, ship visits, welfare assistance, befriending, and the faithful proclamation of the Gospel. Through prayerful presence and practical care, ILSM brings the Church to the seafarers, extending hospitality, and the hope of Christ to those who may otherwise encounter no Christian witness during their time in port.

This ministry is not peripheral to the Church's calling. It is a direct expression of the Great Commission, where Jesus commands His followers to proclaim the Gospel to all creation: *"Go into all the world and proclaim the gospel to the whole creation"* (Mark 16:15). In maritime ministry, this call is lived out by welcoming the nations as they arrive at our doorstep. To reach seafarers is to participate faithfully in God's global mission.

Seafarer ministry requires the active partnership of the Church. To render care and faithfully share the Gospel among seafarers demands trained volunteers, sustained pastoral presence, logistical coordination, and financial provision. This work must be upheld by congregations who recognise seafarer ministry as part of the Church's shared witness and responsibility.



We therefore invite everyone to support ILSM during this Lenten season:

In Prayer

- Commit to regular intercession for seafarers and their families
- Uphold ILSM's staff and volunteers in their ministry

In Giving

- Support through regular or one-time financial contributions
- Designate mission offerings towards seafarer ministry
- Encourage giving as an act of Lenten obedience

A **QR code** is included with this devotional to enable direct giving to ILSM. For many seafarers, the care they receive in Singapore may be the only encounter with the Church they experience for months. Let us not miss this moment. May this Lenten season move us beyond reflection into faithful action, as we proclaim the Gospel, welcome the stranger, and stand together in God's mission.

Thank you for standing intentionally with ILSM.



QR Code to International Lutheran Seafarers' Mission (ILSM)

Please Indicate "Lent 2026" when giving through PayNow.

For enquiries: ilsm@lutheran.org.sg



Guidelines on Fasting

For readers interested in going beyond our recommended **one-day-per-week fasting every Wednesday** during the Lent season, here are some important information for your consideration:

Traditionally, fasting, or the practice of abstaining from food, is observed daily throughout the Lenten season, with exceptions made for Sundays and significant church feast days, such as The Annunciation on 25 March, unless it coincides with Holy Week. A customary fasting day entails partaking in one complete meal and two smaller $\frac{1}{4}$ meals. These guidelines however serve as recommendations rather than strict mandates, allowing individuals the flexibility to tailor their fast according to their own preferences and needs. For instance, one may opt for two full meals while omitting a meal of their choice, or they may choose to have one full meal, one $\frac{1}{2}$ meal, and forgo one additional meal. Regardless of the specific approach, these are all considered valid forms of fasting, as long as the decision to fast is made prayerfully and is observed throughout the entire 40-day Lenten period.

Before embarking on a full fast, consider the following:

- 1) Fasting is not suitable for
 - a. children below 10,
 - b. pregnant or nursing mothers,
 - c. persons under restricted dietary requirements,
 - d. persons with existing health conditions,
 - e. and the elderly.
- 2) Begin slowly. Do not try full fast immediately. Prepare yourself by slowly limiting your food intake as you approach the Lent season.
- 3) Fast together with others! Christian faith is not individual-based. We draw strength from and encourage one another within the God-given church community.
- 4) If your fasting is disrupted, do not feel guilty nor troubled. Rather, give thanks to God for the food he has given you and then resume your fast the next day!
- 5) For further queries on fasting, seek guidance from your pastors for their insights and recommendations.



The Lutheran View on Fasting

Martin Luther has this to say on fasting, “It is right to fast frequently in order to subdue and control the body. For when the stomach is full, the body does not serve for preaching, for praying, for studying, or for doing anything else that is good. Under such circumstances, God’s Word cannot remain. But one should not fast with a view to meriting something by it as by a good work” (*What Luther Says*, 506).

The Church does not prescribe fasting as a means to accumulate merits or earn favour with God. This stance aligns with the teaching that salvation cannot be achieved through our works, but rather it is obtained solely by grace through faith in Jesus Christ. Fasting should instead be regarded as a beneficial exercise to discipline our mind and body spiritually. It is also an act that pleases God, as articulated in the Lutheran Confessions, which state, “... repentance ought to bring forth good fruits for the sake of God’s glory and command, and good fruits, true fasting, true prayers, true alms, etc., have the commands of God...” (*Apology of the Augsburg Confession XII.139*)

Indeed, Martin Luther wrote in his Small Catechism that while “fasting and other outward preparations may serve a good purpose” as preparatory practices prior to receiving the Lord’s Supper, faith, or belief in Jesus’ words, remained the key prerequisite for partaking in the Holy Communion. Fasting before the Holy Communion, during Lent or at any other times, though a good practice, is never a substitute for faith.

Suggested Fasting and Giving Activity

- 1) Every Wednesday (18 February to 1 April), 12 noon. Lunchtime fast.
- 2) Read the assigned Lenten reflection for that day.
- 3) Utilise the prayer prompts at the end of each reflection to deepen your prayer experience.
- 4) Scan the QR code to give to ILSM (e.g. the money saved from not having lunch, or any other amount as the Lord would have you give cheerfully).

Reverend Ray Soh
Lutheran Church of Our Redeemer – Chinese



Ash Wednesday and Chinese New Year

This year, Ash Wednesday, which signals the start of the 40-day Lent season, falls on 18 February. This most solemn day of the church calendar happens to fall on the second day of the Lunar New Year, a festival of 15 days celebrated by Chinese. How then should Chinese Christians still participate in the festivity of the New Year while still observing the three key practices of Lent – fasting, praying and giving? While there are no clear answers to this question, we can take the cue from our Lord Jesus who tells us that we “in the world and not of the world” (John 17:16). As baptised children of God, we belong to the eternal Kingdom of God while at the same time are still physically members of the temporal society that we live in. Make no mistake for both realms still belong to God who continues to give good gifts to sustain his beloved children and all creation. Therefore, as citizens holding such “dual citizenship” – heavenly and earthly – we are to live as people fully aware of our redemption in Christ, and fully aware of our calling to serve in this world. Thus we are privileged to revel in the Chinese New Year festivity albeit in moderation. We too can participate in Lent practices which can help us walk closer with our Lord as he journeys to Calvary. Here are some suggestions on how you can celebrate and observe both Chinese New Year and Lent season this year with some modifications.

1. Set another day to observe a full-meal fast if you are unable to do so on a Wednesday as recommended.
2. Limit the amount of food whenever complete fasting is not possible. Suggestion: Halve the amount of New Year goodies (a can of soft drinks instead of two; two pineapple tarts instead of four; one slice of *bak kwa* instead of two etc).
3. Cook or buy simpler and modest dishes for the family.
4. Donate the money saved on food to our dedicated beneficiary ILSM.
5. Pray for non-Christian family and friends whose homes you will visit. Share with them why you are practicing Lent even in such festivity, should they be curious about it.

Reverend Ray Soh
Lutheran Church of Our Redeemer – Chinese



18 February: “Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name” (Matthew 6:9)

Whose Father is He? Does It matter?

Do you believe in God or gods? Many people do. In Asia, with our many cultures and religions, the idea of “god” is familiar. It shapes our traditions and is part of our identity.

In Singapore, the second-largest group in our religious statistics is “No Religion.” These are not necessarily atheists. Many of them believe there may be a god, but they choose not to follow or commit to any. In other words, god becomes distant and irrelevant to daily life. The question for us to reflect on is this: could we also fall into this pattern without realizing it, simply by the way we live?

As we begin our Lenten journey, let us turn our attention to Him. Lent is not just about believing that God exists, but about the two essentials we embrace today in the first petition of the Lord’s Prayer. Luther unpacks this petition for us in the Large Catechism:

1. **“Our Father, who art in heaven”**: Acknowledges God's fatherly, caring nature and His supreme power.
2. **“Hallowed be thy name”**: We pray that God's name be honoured through holy living and teaching His Word, not profaned by our unholy actions or words.

The first words of the Lord’s Prayer — “Our Father” — give us the foundation of our spiritual life. If we doubt this truth, our confidence weakens, and our ability to rest in Him is disturbed.

Jesus called God “Abba Father,” showing the deepest intimate relationship within the Godhead. He prays, “Abba, Father, all things are possible for You...(Mark 14:36a). Now, such privilege of calling God “Daddy God” was given to us because of Christ and the work of the Holy Spirit in us. Because you are His sons, God sent the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, “Abba, Father.” (Galatians 4:6)

The 1st verse in this Jesus’ prayer to the Father gives us a spiritual foundation of:

- a) A new key identity as a child of God (You are not an orphan).
- b) We are saved by HIM and integrated into the family of God (You are not alone).



c) It gives us the liberty to address Him as our Father (You belong to Him).

With this intimate relationship given to us, we are to call upon His holy name in our prayers: “Hallowed be Thy name.” We do not make His name holy through our prayers; rather, we pray that God’s name be honoured through holy living and the teaching of His Word, and not profaned by our unholy actions or words, as Luther describes.

How do all these impact us today?

a) Take time to meditate and gaze on this special relationship.
You can begin by calling God, “Abba Father, I am here today.”

Take time to sit in His Presence. You may repeat this a few times until your spirit unites with His Spirit. The Father’s love will envelop your heart.

b) Return back to our Father:

You may use the song: Abba Father, Let Me Be. (Sing or read a few times till you mean it in your spirit)

*Abba Father, let me be,
Yours and Yours alone.*

*May my will forever be,
Evermore Your own.*

*Never let my heart grow cold,
Never let me go.*

*Abba Father, let me be,
Yours and Yours alone.*

c) Living a holy life in accordance with His holy name.
His name is holy! Are there any areas in our lives that we need to bring before the cross today?

Summary:

Fellow believers, Our Father’s eyes are on you and on us.



Two weeks ago, my daughter went on a school trip to South Asia. Many photos were sent home — airport, mountains, schools, rivers, school children laughing... etc. All were good photos, but nothing touched the father's heart more than the photos where the father could see his daughter in them. That is what brought joy to the father.

Likewise, our Heavenly Father delights in you!

Psalm 149:4: "For the Lord delights in his people; he crowns the humble with victory."

Psalm 147:11: "The LORD takes pleasure in those who fear Him, those who hope in His unfailing love."

Don't miss that!

Let this be the first step in our Lenten journey, as we pray, "Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name."

Bishop Anthony Loh
Lutheran Church in Singapore



25 February: “Thy kingdom come” (Matthew 6:10)

The Lord’s Prayer was given by our Lord Jesus Christ as a result of the disciple’s request. The key to understand the role of the Lord’s Prayer is in the reason for the request.

The gospels record the struggles of the disciples to follow Jesus, to carry the cross of Christ. We read of their lack of faith in their following, doubts on the Lord’s messianic identity, willful disobedience and yielding to temptations.

When they asked the Lord Jesus to teach them to pray, they were asking Him to empower them to be faithful disciples. From this point of view, the Lord’s prayer should rightly be known as the disciple’s prayer rather than the Lord’s prayer. This is how we are approaching the prayer. It provides the framework for living out the disciple’s life.

The prayer begins with “Our Father who art in Heaven” which reminds the disciples of their identity as a child of God. And God is their Father, one who truly cares and loves them and He is in heaven, a higher and spiritual realm to which they are to trustingly submit to.

The first petition sets the goal of living out the disciple’s life is that disciples would hallow God’s name – set Him aside from all other gods and honour Him as their Lord and God. This is the focus as they carry their cross.

This is nothing new! It’s the living out the first commandment of the OT and the subsequent greatest commandment of the NT which the Lord would issue.

The second petition, “Thy kingdom come” Let’s begin with Luther’s explanation in his Catechism. There are two parts to it and I have enumerated them for easy reference.

1. *The kingdom of God comes indeed of itself, without our prayer, but we pray in this petition that it may come also to us (note how Luther personalises it).*
2. *This is done when our heavenly Father gives us His Holy Spirit, so that by His grace we believe the Word of God, and live holy (set apart) and Christ-like lives here in time, and in heaven forever.*

The first part is indeed what our Lord has warned the early believers that it is



not about speculation as much as it is about readiness. No one knows the coming except the Father (Matthew 24:36,40-41).

The second part is crucial and is the heart of the petition. It reminds believers to live life in the light of the coming of the kingdom. It provides the framework for a believer's daily living or daily spirituality.

To live in the light of the kingdom for Lutherans:

- a. *Rest in Grace*: Starting your day knowing you are already loved and forgiven. This is to avoid the pitfall of living under “the anxiety of performance.” Let’s begin the day right and bright.
- b. *Returning to Baptism*: It means every morning “drowning” the old, selfish self through repentance and rising as a new person, confident in God’s promise which helps “*live holy (set apart) and Christ-like lives here in time.*”
- c. *Embrace your Vocation*: Bringing God’s love and touching others on behalf of Christ in everything we do for our neighbours, including the small little things, at the different stations (roles) in our lives.

Reverend Dr William Chang
Yishun Christian Church (Lutheran) – English



4 March: “Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven” (Matthew 6:10)

Lent is a season where many Christians turn their attention to prayer, fasting and almsgiving. These Lenten disciplines are meant to draw us closer to God.

This Lenten devotion is focussed on the Lord’s prayer. The Lord’s prayer is the best prayer given to us by our Lord. God certainly answers this prayer because it is given by His Son. Today we are looking at the third petition, “Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.”

What is God’s will for us? God’s will for us is that we should believe in Him and the Gospel and be saved according to 1 Timothy 2:4. It is also God’s will that we should be holy as Paul tells us in 1 Thessalonians 4:7. Furthermore, God’s will is that we submit to all His dealings with us which may involve us to suffer and carry our cross as in Romans 8:17. So these are the three aspects of God’s will for us.

There are oppositions to God’s will too. The Devil opposes God’s will. His aim is to eradicate the Gospel and that none believe in God and follow Him. Then there is the will of the world. These are people who do not walk in God’s ways and do things that are against God’s will.

Finally, there is our own sinful will led by our sinful nature. It does things that are contrary to God’s will and God’s commands. This unholy trinity of the Devil, world and sinful nature or flesh resists God’s will.

Therefore, Luther says that we need to pray without ceasing. “Dear Father, your will alone be done, not the will of the Devil, nor the will of those who wish to stifle Your Word or prevent the coming and the progress of Your kingdom, lest our poor selves retreat or surrender out of weakness or apathy.”

So let us this Lenten Season join in with others and form a strong wall against God’s enemies and our enemies with our prayer that God’s will be done. God’s will is done perfectly in heaven by the angels and our prayer is that God’s will be also done by all people on earth, especially by His beloved Children. Our Lord Jesus also submitted to God’s will in Gethsemane by going to the cross for our salvation.

When God's will is done, God's name is hallowed and His kingdom comes. Let us pray that many in Singapore will turn to the Lord and be saved for this is God's will. May the Lord bring some of them into our congregations for His glory and praise.

Reverend Nick Singh
Lutheran Church of Our Redeemer - English





11 March: “Give us this day our daily bread” (Matthew 6:11)

When the Lord Jesus taught His disciples to pray, He gave us the prayer we know so well—the *Lord’s Prayer*. Every line of this prayer is rich in meaning, guiding us to learn how to pray according to God’s will. In the middle of this prayer is a sentence that is extremely brief yet very important: “Give us this day our daily bread.” At first glance, it seems to be a prayer simply for food, but in fact it contains much deeper spiritual meaning. It teaches us how to trust God daily, depend on Him, and remain in a close relationship with Him.

I. A Prayer of Trust in God’s Daily Provision

In a world that emphasises long-term planning, Jesus teaches us instead to ask God for our needs “today.” The word “*today*” reminds us that faith is a daily relationship lived in the presence of God. In the Old Testament, when God provided manna for the Israelites in the wilderness (Exodus 16), they were allowed to gather only enough for the day. If they tried to keep it until the next day, it would rot. Through this, God taught His people to trust His provision day by day. Likewise, when we pray, “Give us this day our daily bread,” we acknowledge that God supplies our daily needs, and that our satisfaction does not come from relying on our own abilities.

II. A Prayer That Acknowledges God as the Provider

“Bread” does not refer only to food, but symbolizes everything necessary to sustain life—clothing, food, shelter, transportation, health, work, and relationships. When we pray this petition, we are acknowledging before God that all good things come from Him. James 1:17 says, “Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights.” The most ordinary things of daily life—the food on our table, the ability to work, peaceful sleep—are in fact all God’s grace.

When we understand this, humility and gratitude arise in our hearts. We no longer assume that everything is achieved by our own effort, but instead give thanks to God for His generous provision.

III. A Prayer for Spiritual Nourishment

Jesus said, “I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst” (John 6:35). Our bodies need daily food, but our souls also need spiritual nourishment: the Lord’s presence, the truth of His Word, and the comfort of the Holy Spirit. At times, we may be materially well provided for, yet spiritually hungry. When we pray for “daily



bread,” we are also saying, “Lord, feed my soul today. Grant me strength from Your Word, that my faith may be strengthened and my heart satisfied.” Just as the body cannot live without food, our life of faith cannot survive without daily fellowship with the Lord.

IV. A Prayer of Care for Others and Mutual Love

Notice that Jesus teaches us to pray, “our daily bread,” not “my” daily bread. This “our” reminds us that God’s grace is not meant to be enjoyed by ourselves alone, but to be shared with others. When we sincerely pray this petition, we pray not only for ourselves, but also for those who are hungry, poor, and suffering. The book of Acts records that the believers in the early church shared everything they had, and “there was not a needy person among them” (Acts 4:34). When God’s people truly live out the spirit of this prayer, they become channels of blessing to others.

Reverend David Ng

Yishun Christian Church (Lutheran) - Dialect



18 March: “And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us” (Matthew 6:12)

What does it mean? Is this a conditional prayer: If we forgive then we get forgiven?

I met my semi-retired neighbour at the wet market. After the pleasantries, he said he had been struggling to forgive his dead mother. His conscience bothers him no end. He simply cannot forgive. He said, “Even though she is now dead!” Then, I told him the story of the “Unforgiving Servant” (Matt 18:23-35).

In praying the Lord’s Prayer, we must understand that Jesus knew of our frailty, as we are prone to sin every single day: our thoughts, desires, words and deeds. Even, when we are just being ourselves. We are not even aware of how we have sinned against God and neighbour. Like the unforgiving servant, we need someone to report us and call out our sin! (Matt 18:31).

We have such a blind spot when it comes to our own sin! If God is to take us to task, we will have no standing before him. This is why we owe him so much, and we cannot ever hope to repay him (Matt 18:25: “and since he could not pay...”). Not because God will not forgive us if we did not pray, for he had already decided from the beginning to forgive when we are sorrowful and repentant over our inability to forgive others. But because our conscience struggles within us, accusing us day and night, for we cannot imagine how God can want to forgive a people who are so unforgiving, like us. So, to help us, God decides to give us a sign that he will forgive us.

Just as Baptism and the Lord’s Supper are given to us as signs of God’s promise to forgive us, so, it is with this prayer. Martin Luther (in the Large Catechism) taught that this prayer is God’s absolution. It is his sign of the forgiveness of our sins. Here is God promising to forgive. You can hang your faith on this.

Hence, when we are thinking unforgiving thoughts, even against someone who is dead. When our conscience troubles us that we are such wicked and unforgiving people. When we think to ourselves that God won’t want to forgive us. Then we should pray this prayer by faith:

“And forgive me my sins as I forgive (name) for his / her sins against me”.

In this way, you have God's forgiveness, and you can be so sure of that, just as you are so sure that you had forgiven others!

*Reverend Dr Samuel Wang
Lutheran Church in Singapore*





25 March: “And lead us not into temptation” (Matthew 6:13)

“Let us not meet with temptation” is the wording used in the Chinese Union Version and is commonly used in many churches. However, the Chinese New Version translates this petition as “let us not fall into temptation,” which is closer to the English rendering, “*And lead us not into temptation.*” This helps us understand that temptation itself is unavoidable for human beings, but what we pray for is that we may not fall into temptation.

Let us look at Jesus’ own experience of temptation. From His experience, we learn the ways and promises He has given us, so that we may not fall into unbelief, despair, shame, or evil. And even when we are tempted, we trust that we can rely on the Lord to enable us to persevere and overcome to the end.

Jesus was tempted in the wilderness in order to reveal to us the inner struggle of His heart, His understanding of His identity as the Son of Man, and His way of dealing with temptation. The initiator and sovereign Lord behind “the Jesus who was being tempted” was God the Father Himself, in connection with Jesus’ newly assumed Messianic mission and His identity as the Son of God. Jesus faced three temptations:

1. The First Temptation: Physical Need (*Matthew 4:3–4*)

The devil based his temptation on human need. He knew that Jesus was the Son of God, with the power to perform miracles and to provide for Himself. He tempted Jesus to turn stones into bread to satisfy His physical hunger, and in doing so, to prove His identity as the Son of God.

Jesus responded to Satan with the words, “It is written.” He declared that human beings cannot seek satisfaction apart from God’s Word; complete reliance on God is the only true path to fulfilment.

2. The Second Temptation: Mission and Purpose (*Matthew 4:5–7*)

Satan directly challenged Jesus’ sense of mission: “Aren’t you here to be the Messiah, the King of kings? Just bow down to me, and I will give you all the kingdoms of the world.” No suffering, no waiting—instant success!

Satan offered the highest price to buy Jesus’ authority. Jesus decisively rejected him, saying, “It is written: ‘Worship the Lord your God, and serve Him only.’”



3. The Third Temptation: Emotional Need (*Matthew 4:9–12*)

Satan said to Jesus, “Jump down and prove who You are.” This temptation targeted human emotions—the need for security and affirmation: *Will God really protect me?* Satan wanted Jesus to force God the Father to perform a miracle to rescue Him.

Jesus knew Scripture thoroughly and would not fall for Satan’s schemes. Once again He replied, “It is also written.” God’s Word never contradicts itself. Jesus did not need to test His relationship with God by demanding miraculous protection. He quoted Deuteronomy 6:16: “Do not put the Lord your God to the test.”

Luke 4:13 concludes the account of Jesus’ temptation in this way: “When the devil had finished all this tempting, he left Him until an opportune time.” The phrase “until an opportune time” is very telling—it reminds us that Satan did not give up on Jesus, but waited for another chance to attack.

Throughout our lives, we cannot escape the devil, the world, and our own sinful nature. As 1 Peter 5:8–9 says: “Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, looking for someone to devour. Resist him, standing firm in the faith...” Therefore, we earnestly pray to the Lord Jesus Christ, who has overcome temptation, holding fast to His promises recorded in Scripture:

Hebrews 2:18: “Because He Himself suffered when He was tempted, He is able to help those who are being tempted.” 1 Corinthians 10:13: “No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to mankind. And God is faithful; He will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, He will also provide a way out so that you can endure it.”

Let us pray to the Lord Jesus Christ to guard us, strengthen our faith, and lead us to victory over temptation.

Lord, lead us not into temptation. Amen.

Reverend Low Kim Cheng
Bedok Lutheran Church – Chinese



1 April: “But deliver us from evil” (Matthew 6:13)

Understanding Evil and Our Need for Deliverance

In the seventh petition of the Lord’s Prayer, “Deliver us from evil,” Luther teaches us to face the full reality of life in a fallen world. Evil is not limited to immoral actions alone; it includes sin, suffering, injustice, loss, tragedy and even death—everything that opposes God’s good will and harms His creatures. Scripture also reminds us that behind these realities of life stand an enemy, the evil one, Satan, who actively seeks to oppose God and to harm His people.

Sin begins in the human heart. When trust in God and reverence for Him are lost, the self takes centre stage. From this inward turning flows sinful attitudes in our hearts—selfishness, indifference toward others and a distorted sense of what is good and right. Not all suffering is the direct result of personal sin, yet all suffering reminds us that we live in a fallen world under the weight of sin and evil, a world that desperately needs God’s deliverance.

Is There Hope?

Evil is not merely a problem of behaviour that education, laws or self-discipline can fully resolve. Its roots run deep in human nature through original sin. Left to ourselves, we remain trapped in cycles of sin, suffering and death. We cannot overcome evil on our own.

Yet the Gospel proclaims hope. On the cross, Jesus bore the full weight of sin and evil. In His resurrection, He conquered sin, death and the devil. Through baptism, our old self is put to death and a new life is raised. Through the Word and the Sacraments, the Holy Spirit continually renews and preserves us.

Therefore, “Deliver us from evil” is a prayer grounded in Christ’s victory. We look forward even to the final deliverance when God brings us safely out of this valley of sorrow into His eternal kingdom.

A Prayer of Awakening, Perseverance and Hope

When we pray, “Deliver us from evil,” we are not surrendering to fear. Instead, this prayer awakens us to the reality of life in a fallen world and to our constant need for God’s grace. Evil is real and powerful, yet it does not have the final word. In such a world, we learn to live by returning daily to our baptism—through repentance, putting off the old self and putting on the new. This new self is not given to escape the world, but to live faithfully within it. God renews us so that we may face this fallen world with Christ’s truth, respond with His grace and walk with His wisdom.



This prayer also teaches us perseverance. Because the evil one is relentless and our flesh is weak, constant prayer is not optional. It is necessary. Prayer keeps us anchored in God's promises when we feel weary, confused or tempted to despair. Above all, "Deliver us from evil" is a prayer of hope. It does not deny darkness, but trusts God's light. It does not focus on fear, but on God's faithfulness. We pray it daily because Christ delivers us daily through his forgiveness, renewal and strength. And one day He will deliver us finally and completely.

Prayer:

Lord, deliver us from evil—not only from what harms us outwardly, but from all that draws our hearts away from You. Keep us in Your grace, until that day when You bring us safely home. Amen.

Reverend Caleb Oh
Jurong Christian Church – English



Acknowledgements

Contributors:

Bishop Anthony Loh

Rev Dr Samuel Wang

Rev Dr William Chang

Rev Caleb Oh

Rev David Ng

Rev Low Kim Cheng

Rev Nick Singh

Rev Ray Soh

Rev Soh Guan Kheng

Ms A'Fowsh Flora, International Lutheran Seafarers' Mission (ILSM)

LCS Prayer and Worship Committee (Design, Editorial and Translation)

Rev Ray Soh

Ms Sophia Lu

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