

**Sixth Week of Easter – Rogate**  
**May 8 – 9, 2010**  
**John 16:23-33 - “Prayer”**

In the Name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Prayer in Jesus’ Name is prayer that mirrors Gethsemane. There in the garden of betrayal, the garden of the faithless kiss, Our Lord’s perfect prayer is so intense that He sweats blood. His Father hears His prayer and bends His Son’s will to His own. Set for the sacrifice, the angels come and minister to Him one last time until they roll away the stone three days later. Meanwhile, a stone’s throw away from that bloody prayer, the weak and sleepy disciples fail to pray. They succumb to temptation. But despite that, despite their sin, their failure, the Son’s prayer is answered. The Father’s will is done. They go free. He is arrested. They live. He dies. This is all our life, all our prayer, in Him. For He is our atoning sacrifice, the sweet aroma offered to God on our behalf, the Lamb consumed in the Father’s wrath, our holy Substitute and by Him we live and pray. *How then, having given us even this, His own Son, will He not give us all things?*

That is prayer in Jesus’ Name. It is prayer that finds its voice and substance in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Prayer in Jesus’ Name prays, “**Lord, have mercy**” and He does. It prays, “**Create in me a clean heart, O God,**” and He does. It prays, “**Our Father . . .**” and He is. We do not pray in order to obtain pleasures of the flesh, earthly lusts and desires. But we pray to the God who has saved us and called us out of the present darkness. We pray like Jesus in Gethsemane that God would bend our wills to His, that He would break us free from this house of doom and the trapping flesh that drags us down. For prayer in Jesus’ Name is prayer in accord with Jesus’ Word and will. And this prayer is always heard, always answered, for whatever you ask in Jesus’ Name the Father gives.

The president of the United States, or even the governor of this state, will not return your calls. You are not important to them. Despite all the propaganda about being the people’s servants, they do not behave as though they were. But even though they are not heads

of state, when their children call, they answer. And so it is that we pray to our Father in heaven as children. We pray with boldness and confidence bounding up onto our Father's lap, knowing He loves us. The Almighty, the Ruler and the Creator of all things, the One who is, the One who laid down His life as a ransom to serve the unfaithful and faithless rebels, the Living God, He eagerly awaits and rejoices in your prayers. He hears you. He loves to hear you, to bless you, to feed you and forgive you. He answers.

It is not only the Son, who came to serve, but also the Father who spoke from heaven in His own voice, and the Spirit who bears witness of the Son and speaks the Truth, who loves you. The inner council of the Holy Trinity is at work on your behalf. The Son is your Advocate. He rules on high at the right hand of His Father, judging all things. He has completed His mission, fulfilled His holy Office, and returned to the Father. There He advocates for you. He mediates. He points to His wounds and to your clean conscience in Him. He sends the Spirit. The Spirit also has sympathy for you in whom He makes His home. He knows you do not know what or how to pray. So He prays for you with perfect prayers, in perfect accordance with His Word and will, with unspeakable groans on your behalf. The Father hears the Spirit and the Son. He is convinced. And, yet still, there is more for He too loves you. Lowly you, whom kings and presidents dismiss, have authority given in Baptism to call Him "**Father**" and to pray. He hears and answers.

In Him who died and rose again we pray and have peace. He has overcome the world for us. Our prayers are answered. He delivers Himself to us in the Holy Eucharist. There in that sacred meal you know God as your Father. You are His, and what is His is yours. His Name is holy. His Name is your name. His good and gracious will is done to and for you in the eating and the drinking. His kingdom comes to you as you kneel before Him and is placed into your mouth. You have your daily bread, and you have eternal bread, the Bread of Life. Your sins are forgiven. He goes with you through the valley of the shadow of death leading you out of temptation. And at last, this deliverance will be complete. He will deliver you once and for all from the evil one who has been crushed by the Heel he bruised!

You are not alone. And soon we shall ask Him nothing. In ✠ Jesus' Name. Amen.

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