**Praying three ways: Adoration, Contemplation, Intercession**

**Worksheet 5**

**May 7, 2020**

1. **Adoration**

Almighty, immaculate God, Father without origin; invisible, infinite, indescribable, uncircumscribable, immutable, unknowable, unreachable; you, who alone have immortality, abiding in unapproachable light;

Through your Word, you created the heavens and the earth, the sea and the dry land, and all creatures that are in them; and through your Spirit, all creatures came into existence.

And for the sake of your infinite love for the human race [Eph 2:4-5], you sent your only-begotten Son to save us from the curse of Adam.

He descended from heaven, took body from the holy and immaculate Virgin Mary by means of the Holy Spirit. He bore all human passions except for sin, and he liberated us from the passions of sin.

And having endured the cross and death for us, he liberated us from servitude to Satan and from the adoration of idols.

And he taught [us] to bend our knees and necks to the all-Holy Trinity, to offer prayers, and to ask for the forgiveness of our sins.

And after his resurrection, he appeared to his disciples with various signs [Acts 1:3-4], sharing the bread with them for forty days, for the establishment of the faith of his life-giving economy.

And when he ascended into heaven on the fortieth day of his resurrection, he placed his hand upon, and blessed his disciples [Lk 24:50], bestowing upon them the perfect gifts of apostleship.

And he opened their minds to comprehend the Scriptures [Lk 24:32]. He commanded them to remain in Jerusalem and to await the divine promise [Acts 1:4], the good news of the heavenly Father who loves mankind.

You, Lord, gave the human race the infinite grace of your mercy.

You sent the Holy Spirit, consubstantial with you, on this great Sunday, at the completion of the fiftieth day of the resurrection of the Savior, at the third hour, when the first father was created by the life-giving divine breath of the Holy Spirit [Gen 2:7], lost to him because he tasted the fruit and died.

Again at the same hour, he was brought back to life by the descent of the Holy Spirit on the ranks of the apostles.

Appearing in tongues of fire, [the Holy Spirit] rested upon them [Acts 2:4] and filled them with all abundant grace to speak in every tongue and ear, ministering with one voice to the Holy Spirit.

He gave birth, as a first birth, to the three thousand [Acts 2:41], in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit [Mt 28:19], and they first worshipped the Holy Trinity. With them, today we too bend our knee and our neck and beseech with your apostles. Receive our adoration with theirs, and [with those] who, with the same worthiness, have mystically adored you until now.

-- St. John Chrysostom (349-407), *Prayer on the Feast of Pentecost*

1. **Contemplation – Centering Prayer**

**A brief guide to Centering Prayer:**

*• Find a quiet space where you are unlikely to be disturbed.*

*• Sit in a way that allows you to be relaxed in body and alert in mind. Use a chair, meditation cushion or prayer rug, according to your own physical needs and preferences.*

*• Gently close your eyes.*

*• Allow your heart to open toward that invisible but always present God of all that exists.*

*• Whenever you become aware of a thought, no matter what its nature, let it go.*

*• Use a “sacred word”\**

**Additional Directions:**

Continue this practice for 20 minutes. At the end of the time get up and go about your business, leaving the practice behind, in the same way you let go of your thoughts.

People who are just beginning, and are particularly restless in mind and body, may find it easier to start off with shorter prayer periods, perhaps only 5 minutes per sit to start. Then after a few days extend the time to 10 minutes and so on until you are able to sit for 20 minutes. Give the practice at least 2 weeks before you decide if it is right for you.

*\* This is a word or short phrase that helps you to let go of thoughts. It is a reminder of your intention to remain open to the silence. Generally sacred words fall into one of 2 categories: “God” words/phrases such as “Abba”, “Jesu, “Mary”, “Reality”, “Come Lord” or “state” words/phrases such as “love”, “peace”, “be still”. Sacred words are not used as mantras, as in constantly repeating them, but as a reminder of your intention to remain open.*

1. **Intercessions**

Since, then, prayer is petition for the blessings given by the incarnate Logos, let us make Him our teacher in prayer. And when we have contemplated the sense of each phrase as carefully as possible, let us confidently set it forth; for the Logos Himself gives us, in the manner that is best for us, the capacity to understand what He says. ‘

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name; Thy kingdom come’ (Matt. 6:9-10) It is appropriate that at the outset the Lord should teach those who pray to start with theology, and should initiate them into the mode of existence of Him who is by essence the created Cause of all things. For these opening words of the prayer contain a revelation of the Father, of the name of the Father, and of the kingdom of the Father, so that from this beginning we may be taught to revere, invoke and worship the Trinity in unity. . .

At the outset of this prayer, then, we honor the coessential and supraessential Trinity as the creative cause of our coming into existence. Secondly, we are taught to proclaim the grace of our adoption, since we have been found worthy of addressing our Creator by nature as our Father by grace. Thus, venerating this title of our begetter by grace, we strive to stamp our Creator’s qualities on our lives, sanctifying His name on earth, taking after Him as our Father, showing ourselves to be His children through our actions, and through all that we think or do glorifying the author of this adoption, who is by nature Son of the Father.

-- Maximus the Confessor (d.662) *On the Lord’s Prayer*

***Concluding prayer:***

Our Father, which art in heaven,

Hallowed be thy Name;

Thy kingdom come;

Thy will be done

in earth, as it is in heaven:

Give us this day our daily bread;

And forgive us our trespasses,

as we forgive them that trespass against us;

And lead us not into temptation,

But deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom,

the power, and the glory,

For ever and ever.

**Amen.**

1. **Closing Prayer**

Christ yesterday and today,

the beginning and the end,

Alpha and Omega,

all time belongs to you,

and all ages;

to you be glory and power

through every age and forever.

**Amen**