The Lord's Prayer: a resource prepared by FamilyVoice Australia

- May 2021 -

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, and the power, and the glory, For ever and ever. Amen.

- According to the Anglican *Book of Common Prayer*, 1662

Purpose

To help children and families understand and memorise the words of the prayer Jesus taught his disciples, as we comprehend its meaning and role to shape our civic culture. The lesson also enables the construction of a poster of The Lord's Prayer, which may be displayed prominently to encourage memorisation and recitation. Students also appreciate the engraving skill of a soldier during the First World War who inscribed The Lord's Prayer on a silver threepenny piece.

Preparation

Print several copies of *The Lord's Prayer worksheet.pdf* and get ready to play the YouTube video of "The Millennium Prayer": https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mL9yDb134Rk .

Activity

Play "The Millennium Prayer" YouTube video.

Explain that the lyrics mainly come from versions of The Lord's Prayer, based on the words of Jesus.

Circulate copies of "The Lord's Prayer worksheet.pdf" that features the wording of The Lord's Prayer according to the 1662 Book of Common Prayer (the main traditional version of the prayer).

Have everyone colour the individual letters and border to make a poster of The Lord's Prayer, during which the YouTube audio can be played repeatedly. Older children and adults may start memorising!

The background to the lettering may also be coloured, perhaps guided by the artistry of the Latin manuscript with its beautiful decorations. Students can supply their own decorative elements.

Senior students may wish to compare four versions of the prayer:

- Matthew 6:9-13
- The Book of Common Prayer (1662)
- Luke 11:2-4
- The Millennium Prayer (1999)

The traditional wording includes additional words from a later manuscript of Matthew's Gospel:

Each person can take a turn reading aloud the text of Revelation 7:9-12 which is the basis of the additional words in *The Millennium Prayer*.

The Latin text of The Lord's Prayer is shown in the vellum manuscript image. The initial letter "P" in "Pater" (Father) is especially decorated. (The page also provides the alphabet in Gothic calligraphy).

> *Pater noster, qui es in caelis, sanctificetur nomen tuum. Adveniat regnum tuum. Fiat voluntas tua, sicut in caelo et in terra. Panem nostrum quotidianum da nobis hodie, et dimitte nobis debita nostra sicut et nos dimittimus debitoribus nostris. Et ne nos inducas in tentationem, sed libera nos a malo. Amen*.

The Lord's Prayer inscribed on a threepenny piece

The letter "O" in the poster contains the exact size image of a silver threepenny coin, with the reverse ground down to a blank surface on which is inscribed the wording of The Lord's Prayer. That coin was carried by Australian soldier Albert Nickel (a Warrant Officer Class II) who served at the Western Front during World War One. The words were inscribed between 1914 and 1919. It is enlarged for careful study in the worksheet materials. It contains the incorrect word "trespassers" instead of "trespasses".

The Millennium Prayer

In 1999 the pop singer and keen Christian Cliff Richard recorded *The Millennium Prayer*, enabling the contemporary world to connect across the 2,000 years, using the tune of the song "Auld Lang Syne".

Cliff Richard asked his recording company, EMI (Electric and Musical Industries), to release the song, but it declined, as the composition was not expected to be very popular. Cliff Richard approached the independent recording company Papillon Records which agreed to release the song, with proceeds going to a children's charity. Upon its release, many mainstream radio stations refused to play the song. Nevertheless, it became the biggest selling song in the UK for three weeks in a row!

The Millennium Prayer ends with the words: *Let all the people say 'Amen', "in every tribe and tongue"* (Revelation 7:9). Interestingly, the word 'Amen' is among the most universal of all words.

The Sator Square

Early Christians enjoyed writing the 'Sator Square', using Latin words, readable from right, or left, or up, or down. While the meaning is unclear, in alternating directions as SATOR OPERA TENET - TENET OPERA SATOR it may mean *As ye sow, so shall ye reap.* However, the TENET forms a cross that might be a clue: The letters can form the first two words of the Lord's Prayer, as a cross, with two sets of A and O [denoting *Alpha* and *Omega*] in reference to the statements: *I am the Alpha and Omega* recorded in Revelation 1:8, 21:6 and 22:13 (see also Isaiah 44:6).





Images from Wikipedia

The Lord's Prayer in personal devotion and in shaping the civic culture

Many Christians are pleased to pray The Lord's Prayer every day. However, the prayer should not be prayed *passively* - as if we are happy for his kingdom to come, but don't wish to be involved in taking action towards that achievement! It should be prayed *actively* - as we commit ourselves sincerely in God's service as his ambassadors who will be used by him to promote and bring about his kingdom.

When praying The Lord's Prayer, we are not asking God to do things differently, but we are dedicating ourselves in his service: "Thy will be **done**" - by us, who are to be instrumental in seeing his kingdom come, with his purposes achieved on earth as in heaven, not by imposition but by loving persuasion.

In Australia, The Lord's Prayer according to the 1662 *Book of Common Prayer* is recited daily to open each State (and Federal) Parliament. Without prayer, we plunge into the agenda. But the custom of commencing civic proceedings with Christian prayer acknowledges the nation's frailty, dependency and its accountability to Almighty God, in accordance with Australia's Christian civic foundations.