

Lenten Reflection

St. Michael Parish

On Earth as it is in Heaven; is a practical and inviting book that shows us how the Lord's Prayer can be a powerful spiritual guide for daily living.

Although the author's main objective is to provide evidence of God's will to save all people, she makes available amazing insights and truths (both biblical and scientific facts) about God's desire and plan for us.

By reflecting on each line of the Lord's prayer and bearing in mind the information the author provides, the reader is drawn to mull over how The Lord's Prayer connects earth to heaven and how to recognize this truth, through our personal life experience.

God has and does invite each one of us to accept his gift of salvation through our active participation; our yes response to God. Jesus promised that "we would have life and have it to the full". This promise was not a later reward for good behaviour but is meant for us to experience each day of our life here on earth.

At the end of each section in the book, the author offer questions for reflection as well as a prayer. This supplemental booklet offers additional questions for reflection with a hope that all who participate in this Lenten Reflection, will be drawn closer to our God.

About the Author:

"As a married mother of four, Dr. Josephine Lombardi has served as a parish minister, campus minister, high school chaplaincy leader, and theologian. She uses her rich experience to encourage us to reconsider the everyday implications of the Lord's Prayer in our present needs and challenges."

Most Rev. Gerard Bergie
Auxiliary Bishop of Hamilton

Beginning my reading:

As I enter into this time of reading and reflection, I begin with deep faith, that God wants to communicate very personally with me. God can do so, only if I am as open as possible. No matter where I have been in life, no matter how closed I have been in the past, I am present here, at this moment.

I ask for the grace of openness.

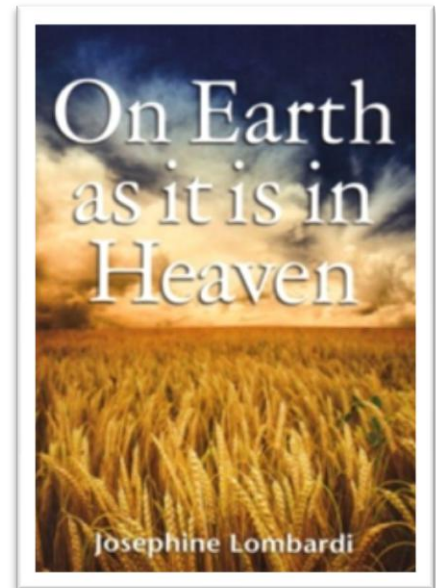
Open Me Lord!

Open Lord, one by one, those places in my life
where I refuse to be overcome by surprise.

Open, one by one, those parts of my heart
where I fight the entrance of real growth.

Open, one by one, those aspects of my spirit where my security struggles with the truth.

Keep me open to the different and the strange;



Help me to accept the unusual and also the ordinary;
Take me to people, events, and situations
And stretch me into much greater openness.

Open me. Open me. Open me.
For it is only then that I will grow and change.
For it is only then that I will be transformed.
For it is only then that I will know how it is
To be in the moment of rising from the dead.
Amen.

Understanding the Gift of Salvation

“For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.” John 3:16

- How do I understand “The Gift of Salvation”? What does the phrase “to be saved” mean to me?
- Do I believe the Lord desires my salvation? Why or why not?
- How does the gift of salvation help me to grow in holiness?
- What choices do I make that:
 - help me to grow in holiness;
 - hinder my growth in holiness?

Introduction to the Lord’s Prayer

“Lord, teach us to pray,...” Luke 11:1

- What are my thoughts about the Lord’s Prayer? How do I interpret this prayer and is it significant to me?
- How often do I pray this prayer?
- Do I reflect upon the meaning of the words and what the Lord is offering; asking of me?
- How will I respond?

Our Father in Heaven

“And God said, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness...” Gen 1:26

- What is/are my image(s) of God?
- How would I describe my relationship with God?
- Does my relationship with God offer me hope and restoration?
- In what ways have I already experienced “Heaven on Earth”?

Hallowed be your name

“You therefore, must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.” Mat 5:48

- How do I acknowledge the holiness of God’s name?
- In what ways or situations is God inviting me to be holy?
- How will I respond?

Your Kingdom come

“So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation...” 2Cor 5:17

- How do I understand “the coming of God’s Kingdom”?
- How do I allow the coming of God’s kingdom to transform me into “a new creation”?
- In what ways can I experience the Kingdom of God in my life today?

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

“This is good and it pleases God our Saviour who wants everyone to be saved and to come to know the truth.” 1Tim 2:3

- What do I believe is God’s will for my life?
- In what ways do I show trust in God’s will and plan for my life?
- What prevents me from doing God’s will?

Give us this day our daily bread

“I am the Bread of Life.” John 6:48

- How do I demonstrate my belief that God is concerned about my daily human needs, both physical and spiritual?
- In what ways do I cooperate with God to provide for the physical and spiritual needs of my neighbour?

And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors

“If you forgive others the wrongs they have done to you your Father in heaven will also forgive you.” Matt 6:14

- In what areas of my life do I need to receive healing and forgiveness for the times others have hurt me?
- In what areas of my life do I need to offer or ask for forgiveness for the times that I have hurt others?

And do not bring us to the time of trial

“I do the things I do not want to do and I don’t do the things I want to “ Romans 7:15

- What do I love more than God; what are my addictions?
- What are the patterns or choices I make that lead me away from the love of God and into the times of trial?
- What choices have others made that create a time of trial for me? How do or have I responded to the situation; the person?

Rescue us from the evil one

“Christ has set us free! Stand, then, as free people, and do not allow yourselves to become slaves again.” Gal 5:1

- Do I “do the right thing” out of duty or love; and am I aware of my thoughts or feelings in each situation?
- What choices do I make that show I am an advocate in the building of God’s kingdom on earth?
- What choices do I make that show I am an adversary to the building of the kingdom of God?
- In what ways am I held prisoner of the evil one?

Amen (So be it!)

Christ is the way of Salvation – the Lord’s prayer provides the instruction.

In conclusion I take some time to prayerfully consider the information the author has provided and my own faith and lived experience, I ask myself:

- What was most significant for me?
- Why was it significant?
- What is my next step?

I take time to talk to God about my ponderings and I take the time to listen to what God has to say to me.

I conclude my time of prayer with an Our Father; praying it slowly while reflecting upon each life and what it now means to me.

I take a few minutes to review my experience of prayer and to write down any thoughts, feelings or insights that may have come to my awareness.

“I alone know the plans I have for you, plans to bring you prosperity and not disaster, plans to bring about the future you hope for.”

Jer 29:11