

Set/written prayers can be helpful in focusing us when our prayers become distracted or helping us find the words when we don't know what to pray. The Trisagion (literally, The Thrice Holy Hymn) is an ancient hymn/prayer that is still an integral part of worship in Orthodox churches today. As you, slowly, read the prayer, take time to pause at the end of each line (or comma/period) and think about what it means. Examples of the types of things to think about: Who is God? What do phrases like "heavenly King" "Holy" "Treasury of good things" "forgive us our trespasses" mean? How have you seen God be/do these things in your life? Who has hurt you? Who do you need to forgive?

## The Trisagion

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

Glory to thee, our God, glory to thee.

O heavenly King, O Comforter, the Spirit of truth, who art in all places and fillest all things; Treasury of good things and Giver of life: Come and dwell in us and cleanse us from every stain, and save our souls, O gracious Lord.

Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal: have mercy on us. (Thrice)

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

All-holy Trinity, have mercy on us. Lord, cleanse us from our sins. Master, pardon our iniquities. Holy God, visit and heal our infirmities for thy Name's sake.

Lord, have mercy. (Thrice)

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy Name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

Through the prayers of our holy Fathers, Lord Jesus Christ our God, have mercy on us and save us. Amen.

Praying the Creeds helps remind us of who God is. It also helps focus our prayer and helps us find words when we have none. Read slowly and take the time to pause at the end of each line (or comma/period) and contemplate what it means. Examples of the type of things to think about: What do I believe? What is the significance of terms like “Lord” “incarnate” “salvation” “baptism” “resurrection” in your life? What is the focus of your life/what are you “looking for”?

## The Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed

I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible;

And in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Only-begotten, Begotten of the Father before all ages, Light of Light, True God of True God, Begotten, not made, of one essence with the Father, by Whom all things were made:

Who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven, and was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary, and was made man;

And was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate, and suffered and was buried;

And the third day He rose again, according to the Scriptures;

And ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of the Father;

And He shall come again with glory to judge the living and the dead, Whose kingdom shall have no end.

And I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, and Giver of Life, Who proceedeth from the Father and the Son, Who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified, Who spoke by the Prophets;

And I believe in One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church.

I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins.

I look for the Resurrection of the dead,

And the Life of the age to come. Amen.

## THE PROCESS of *LECTIO DIVINA*

by Fr. Luke Dysinger, monk: *Order of St Benedict*

A VERY ANCIENT art, practiced at one time by all Christians, is the technique known as *lectio divina* - a slow, contemplative praying of the Scriptures which enables the Bible, the Word of God, to become a means of union with God. This ancient practice has been kept alive in the Christian monastic tradition, and is one of the precious treasures of Benedictine monastics and oblates. Together with the Liturgy and daily manual labor, time set aside in a special way for *lectio divina* enables us to discover in our daily life an underlying spiritual rhythm. Within this rhythm we discover an increasing ability to offer more of ourselves and our relationships to the Father, and to accept the embrace that God is continuously extending to us in the person of his Son Jesus Christ.

### *Lectio* - reading/listening

THE ART of *lectio divina* begins with cultivating the ability to listen deeply, to hear “with the ear of our hearts” as St. Benedict encourages us in the Prologue to the Rule. When we read the Scriptures we should try to imitate the prophet Elijah. We should allow ourselves to become women and men who are able to listen for the still, small voice of God (**I Kings 19:12**); the “faint murmuring sound” which is God's word for us, God's voice touching our hearts. This gentle listening is an “atunement” to the presence of God in that special part of God's creation which is the Scriptures.

THE CRY of the prophets to ancient Israel was the joy-filled command to “Listen!” “Sh'ma Israel: Hear, O Israel!” In *lectio divina* we, too, heed that command and turn to the Scriptures, knowing that we must “hear” - listen - to the voice of God, which often speaks very softly. In order to hear someone speaking softly we must learn to be silent. We must learn to love silence. If we are constantly speaking or if we are surrounded with noise, we cannot hear gentle sounds. The practice of *lectio divina*, therefore, requires that we first quiet down in order to hear God's word to us. This is the first step of *lectio divina*, appropriately called *lectio* - reading.

THE READING or listening which is the first step in *lectio divina* is very different from the speed reading which modern Christians apply to newspapers, books and even to the Bible. *Lectio* is reverential listening; listening both in a spirit of silence and of awe. We are listening for the still, small voice of God that will speak to us personally - not loudly, but intimately. In *lectio* we read slowly, attentively, gently listening to hear a word or phrase that is God's word for us this day.

### *Meditatio* - meditation

ONCE WE have found a word or a passage in the Scriptures that speaks to us in a personal way, we must take it in and “ruminate” on it. The image of the ruminant animal quietly chewing its cud was used in antiquity as a symbol of the Christian pondering the Word of God. Christians have always seen a scriptural invitation to *lectio divina* in the example of the Virgin Mary “pondering in her heart” what she saw and heard of Christ (**Luke 2:19**). For us today these images are a reminder that we must take in the word - that is, memorize it - and while gently

repeating it to ourselves, allow it to interact with our thoughts, our hopes, our memories, our desires. This is the second step or stage in *lectio divina* - *meditatio*. Through *meditatio* we allow God's word to become His word for us, a word that touches us and affects us at our deepest levels.

### ***Oratio* - prayer**

THE THIRD step in *lectio divina* is *oratio* - prayer: prayer understood both as dialogue with God, that is, as loving conversation with the One who has invited us into His embrace; and as consecration, prayer as the priestly offering to God of parts of ourselves that we have not previously believed God wants. In this consecration-prayer we allow the word that we have taken in and on which we are pondering to touch and change our deepest selves. Just as a priest consecrates the elements of bread and wine at the Eucharist, God invites us in *lectio divina* to hold up our most difficult and pain-filled experiences to Him, and to gently recite over them the healing word or phrase He has given us in our *lectio* and *meditatio*. In this *oratio*, this consecration-prayer, we allow our real selves to be touched and changed by the word of God.

### ***Contemplatio* - contemplation**

FINALLY, WE simply rest in the presence of the One who has used His word as a means of inviting us to accept His transforming embrace. No one who has ever been in love needs to be reminded that there are moments in loving relationships when words are unnecessary. It is the same in our relationship with God. Wordless, quiet rest in the presence of the One Who loves us has a name in the Christian tradition - *contemplatio*, contemplation. Once again we practice silence, letting go of our own words; this time simply enjoying the experience of being in the presence of God.

<http://www.valyermo.com/ld-art.html>

Read slowly. Pause at the end of each line and listen. What words or lines speak to you? Why does that particular thing speak to you?

**Psalms 51:1-13**

For the director of music. A psalm of David. When the prophet Nathan came to him after David had committed adultery with Bathsheba.

- 1** Have mercy on me, O God,  
according to your unfailing love;  
according to your great compassion  
blot out my transgressions.
- 2** Wash away all my iniquity  
and cleanse me from my sin.
- 3** For I know my transgressions,  
and my sin is always before me.
- 4** Against you, you only, have I sinned  
and done what is evil in your sight;  
so you are right in your verdict  
and justified when you judge.
- 5** Surely I was sinful at birth,  
sinful from the time my mother conceived me.
- 6** Yet you desired faithfulness even in the womb;  
you taught me wisdom in that secret place.
- 7** Cleanse me with hyssop, and I will be clean;  
wash me, and I will be whiter than snow.
- 8** Let me hear joy and gladness;  
let the bones you have crushed rejoice.
- 9** Hide your face from my sins  
and blot out all my iniquity.
- 10** Create in me a pure heart, O God,  
and renew a steadfast spirit within me.
- 11** Do not cast me from your presence  
or take your Holy Spirit from me.
- 12** Restore to me the joy of your salvation  
and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me.
- 13** Then I will teach transgressors your ways,  
so that sinners will turn back to you.

Read slowly. Pause at the end of each line and listen. What words or lines speak to you? Why does that particular thing speak to you?

### **John 10:1-18**

"Very truly I tell you Pharisees, anyone who does not enter the sheep pen by the gate, but climbs in by some other way, is a thief and a robber. **2** The one who enters by the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. **3** The gatekeeper opens the gate for him, and the sheep listen to his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. **4** When he has brought out all his own, he goes on ahead of them, and his sheep follow him because they know his voice. **5** But they will never follow a stranger; in fact, they will run away from him because they do not recognize a stranger's voice." **6** Jesus used this figure of speech, but the Pharisees did not understand what he was telling them.

**7** Therefore Jesus said again, "Very truly I tell you, I am the gate for the sheep. **8** All who have come before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep have not listened to them. **9** I am the gate; whoever enters through me will be saved. They will come in and go out, and find pasture. **10** The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.

**11** "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. **12** The hired hand is not the shepherd and does not own the sheep. So when he sees the wolf coming, he abandons the sheep and runs away. Then the wolf attacks the flock and scatters it. **13** The man runs away because he is a hired hand and cares nothing for the sheep.

**14** "I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me—**15** just as the Father knows me and I know the Father—and I lay down my life for the sheep. **16** I have other sheep that are not of this sheep pen. I must bring them also. They too will listen to my voice, and there shall be one flock and one shepherd. **17** The reason my Father loves me is that I lay down my life—only to take it up again. **18** No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down and authority to take it up again. This command I received from my Father."

Read slowly. Pause at the end of each line and listen. What words or lines speak to you? Why does that particular thing speak to you?

### **Psalms 34:1-19**

Of David. When he pretended to be insane before Abimelek, who drove him away, and he left.

- 1** I will extol the Lord at all times;  
his praise will always be on my lips.
- 2** I will glory in the Lord;  
let the afflicted hear and rejoice.
- 3** Glorify the Lord with me;  
let us exalt his name together.
- 4** I sought the Lord, and he answered me;  
he delivered me from all my fears.
- 5** Those who look to him are radiant;  
their faces are never covered with shame.
- 6** This poor man called, and the Lord heard him;  
he saved him out of all his troubles.
- 7** The angel of the Lord encamps around those who fear him,  
and he delivers them.
- 8** Taste and see that the Lord is good;  
blessed is the one who takes refuge in him.
- 9** Fear the Lord, you his holy people,  
for those who fear him lack nothing.
- 10** The lions may grow weak and hungry,  
but those who seek the Lord lack no good thing.
- 11** Come, my children, listen to me;  
I will teach you the fear of the Lord.
- 12** Whoever of you loves life  
and desires to see many good days,
- 13** keep your tongue from evil  
and your lips from telling lies.
- 14** Turn from evil and do good;  
seek peace and pursue it.
- 15** The eyes of the Lord are on the righteous,  
and his ears are attentive to their cry;
- 16** but the face of the Lord is against those who do evil,  
to blot out their name from the earth.
- 17** The righteous cry out, and the Lord hears them;  
he delivers them from all their troubles.
- 18** The Lord is close to the brokenhearted  
and saves those who are crushed in spirit.
- 19** The righteous person may have many troubles,  
but the Lord delivers him from them all;

## **Praying for labmates/classmates/roommates/MIT**

Suggestions of what to pray for:

Who annoys you/persecutes you/dislikes you?

Who do you dislike?

- Why do they annoy/persecute/dislike you/you dislike them? Pray for God to open your heart to see them the way He does, to help you to understand and love them.

Labmates/classmates/roommates facing health problems

Labmates/classmates/roommates facing financial problems

Labmates/classmates/roommates facing family problems

Labmates/classmates/roommates facing research problems

Advisor

Department

That all may feel and come to know God's love and presence



Slowly read (or sing in your head) the hymn. Pause at the end of each line. Let the words sink in. How does it connect to your life? When do you feel tempted? How do you react to your temptations? How do you identify with those who suffer/with Christ? Do you shun suffering? How do you die daily? Do you really believe in the resurrection? How does it change your daily life?

## Go to Dark Gethsemane

1. Go to dark Gethsemane,  
ye that feel the tempter's power;  
your Redeemer's conflict see,  
watch with him one bitter hour.  
Turn not from his griefs away;  
learn of Jesus Christ to pray.
2. See him at the judgment hall,  
beaten, bound, reviled, arraigned;  
O the wormwood and the gall!  
O the pangs his soul sustained!  
Shun not suffering, shame, or loss;  
learn of Christ to bear the cross.
3. Calvary's mournful mountain climb;  
there, adoring at his feet,  
mark that miracle of time,  
God's own sacrifice complete.  
"It is finished!" hear him cry;  
learn of Jesus Christ to die.
4. Early hasten to the tomb  
where they laid his breathless clay;  
all is solitude and gloom.  
Who has taken him away?  
Christ is risen! He meets our eyes;  
Savior, teach us so to rise.

Slowly read (or sing in your head) the worship song. Pause at the end of each line. Let the words sink in. How do you see the majesty of God in your life, in creation, in your research? What does it mean to be 'Holy'? What does it mean "such a marvelous mystery"?

### **"Revelation Song"**

Worthy is the Lamb who was slain  
Holy, holy is He  
Sing a new song to Him who sits on  
Heaven's mercy seat

Worthy is the Lamb who was slain  
Holy, holy is He  
Sing a new song to Him who sits on  
Heaven's mercy seat

Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty  
Who was and is and is to come  
With all creation I sing praise to the King of kings  
You are my everything and I will adore You

Clothed in rainbows of living color  
Flashes of lighting rolls of thunder  
Blessing and honor strength and glory and power be  
To You the only wise King

Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty  
Who was and is and is to come  
With all creation I sing praise to the King of kings  
You are my everything and I will adore You

Filled with wonder awestruck wonder  
At the mention of Your name  
Jesus Your name is power, breath and living water  
Such a marvelous mystery

Oh, You're worthy, mystery  
You are worthy

Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty  
Who was and is and is to come  
With all creation I sing praise to the King of kings  
You are my everything and I will adore You, I will adore You

Slowly read (or sing in your head) the hymn. Pause at the end of each line. Let the words sink in. Do you give every part of your life to God? What would that look like? How can your life be filled more with the love of God? How do you use your words? Your finances? Your intellect? Is your heart a royal throne for God or is something else the center of your life?

## **Take My Life and Let It Be**

**Take my life, and let it be consecrated, Lord, to Thee,  
Take my moments and my days; let them flow in ceaseless praise,  
Take my hands, and let them move at the impulse of Thy love.  
Take my feet, and let them be swift and beautiful for Thee.**

**Take my voice, and let me sing always, only, for my King.  
Take my lips, and let them be filled with messages from Thee.  
Take my silver and my gold; not a mite would I withhold.  
Take my intellect, and use every power as Thou shalt choose.**

**Take my will, and make it Thine; it shall be no longer mine.  
Take my heart, it is Thine own; it shall be Thy royal throne.  
Take my love, my Lord, I pour at Thy feet its treasure store.  
Take myself, and I will be ever, only, all for Thee.**

Slowly read (or sing in your head) the hymn (as well as the story behind it). Pause at the end of each line. Let the words sink in. What is your response to suffering in your life? What are the most difficult things you've gone through in your life? How is Christ redeeming those times? What are you most afraid of? What do you put your hope in?

### **It Is Well With My Soul**

This hymn was written after two major traumas in Spafford's life. The first was the great Chicago Fire of October 1871, which ruined him financially (he had been a wealthy businessman). Shortly after, while crossing the Atlantic, all four of Spafford's daughters died in a collision with another ship. Spafford's wife Anna survived and sent him the now famous telegram, "Saved alone." Several weeks later, as Spafford's own ship passed near the spot where his daughters died, the Holy Spirit inspired these words.

1. When peace, like a river, attendeth my way, When sorrows like sea billows roll;  
Whatever my lot, Thou has taught me to say, It is well, it is well, with my soul.

◦       *Refrain:* It is well, with my soul, It is well, it is well, with my soul.

2. Though Satan should buffet, though trials should come, Let this blest assurance control,  
That Christ has regarded my helpless estate, And hath shed His own blood for my soul.

3. My sin, oh, the bliss of this glorious thought! My sin, not in part but the whole, Is  
nailed to the cross, and I bear it no more, Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, O my soul!

4. For me, be it Christ, be it Christ hence to live: If Jordan above me shall roll, No  
pang shall be mine, for in death as in life Thou wilt whisper Thy peace to my soul.

5. But, Lord, 'tis for Thee, for Thy coming we wait, The sky, not the grave, is our  
goal; Oh, trump of the angel! Oh, voice of the Lord! Blessed hope, blessed rest of my soul!

6. And Lord, haste the day when my faith shall be sight, The clouds be rolled back  
as a scroll; The trump shall resound, and the Lord shall descend, Even so, it is well with my soul.

Slowly read (or sing in your head) the worship song. Pause at the end of each line. Let the words sink in. What are you afraid of? What storms are you currently going through? Ask God to show you where He is in them. Ask God for hope in your situation. Who do you know that is going through a difficult time now or who feels like they are too far from God to ever come back/meet Him? Take a moment to pray for them and their situation.

### **"You Never Let Go"**

Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death  
Your perfect love is casting out fear  
And even when I'm caught in the middle of the storms of this life  
I won't turn back  
I know You are near

And I will fear no evil  
For my God is with me  
And if my God is with me  
Whom then shall I fear?  
Whom then shall I fear?

*[Chorus:]*

Oh no, You never let go  
Through the calm and through the storm  
Oh no, You never let go  
In every high and every low  
Oh no, You never let go  
Lord, You never let go of me

And I can see a light that is coming for the heart that holds on  
A glorious light beyond all compare  
And there will be an end to these troubles  
But until that day comes  
We'll live to know You here on the earth

*[Chorus:]*

Yes, I can see a light that is coming for the heart that holds on  
And there will be an end to these troubles  
But until that day comes  
Still I will praise You, still I will praise You

*[Chorus: 2x]*

Slowly read (or sing in your head) the hymn. Pause at the end of each line. Let the words sink in. What was your life like before you became a Christian? How has God grown you over time? How have you grown in the past year? How have you seen God's grace in your life when you have failed? When has God seen you through "dangers, toils and snares"? What promises has God given you?

## Amazing Grace

1. Amazing grace! How sweet the sound  
that saved a wretch like me!  
I once was lost, but now am found;  
was blind, but now I see.
2. 'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear,  
and grace my fears relieved;  
how precious did that grace appear  
the hour I first believed.
3. Through many dangers, toils, and snares,  
I have already come;  
'tis grace hath brought me safe thus far,  
and grace will lead me home.
4. The Lord has promised good to me,  
his word my hope secures;  
he will my shield and portion be,  
as long as life endures.
5. Yea, when this flesh and heart shall fail,  
and mortal life shall cease,  
I shall possess, within the veil,  
a life of joy and peace.
6. When we've been there ten thousand years,  
bright shining as the sun,  
we've no less days to sing God's praise  
than when we first begun.

## **Ebenezers: journaling**

### **I Samuel 7:7-12**

**7** When the Philistines heard that Israel had assembled at Mizpah, the rulers of the Philistines came up to attack them. When the Israelites heard of it, they were afraid because of the Philistines. **8** They said to Samuel, "Do not stop crying out to the Lord our God for us, that he may rescue us from the hand of the Philistines." **9** Then Samuel took a suckling lamb and sacrificed it as a whole burnt offering to the Lord. He cried out to the Lord on Israel's behalf, and the Lord answered him. **10** While Samuel was sacrificing the burnt offering, the Philistines drew near to engage Israel in battle. But that day the Lord thundered with loud thunder against the Philistines and threw them into such a panic that they were routed before the Israelites. **11** The men of Israel rushed out of Mizpah and pursued the Philistines, slaughtering them along the way to a point below Beth Kar. **12** Then Samuel took a stone and set it up between Mizpah and Shen. He named it Ebenezer, saying, "Thus far the Lord has helped us."

We are forgetful creatures and we need Ebenezer's to help us remember how God has acted and is acting in our lives. Journaling can be a powerful way to remember God's faithfulness in your life and to work through current struggles in a focused way.

Some points to begin with:

- When have you felt God's presence?
- When has God come through for you in different situations?
- When has God answered your prayers?
- What are you currently struggling with?
- Cry out to God with your struggle.

## **Praying the headlines**

An easy way to integrate prayer into your daily life is to pray the headlines. When you read or watch the news pray. Remember the persecuted church. Pray for countries in turmoil. Pray for people suffering violence. Pray for those who have been hurt/abused by the church. Pray for those suffering from crimes. Pray for troubled celebrities. Pray for local problems in Boston/Cambridge. Pray for MIT.

Here are some recent headlines:

***Ukraine Crisis Deepens as Death Toll Climbs***

***California: Church to Pay \$13 Million in Abuse Cases***

**Rio's police-occupied slums see an increase in drug-related violence**

**300,000 Records Compromised in UMD Data Breach**

**Survey: Reported Christian "martyr" deaths doubled in 2013**

**'Cocky' Justin Bieber tested positive for pot, Xanax, police docs say**

**MIT president makes confronting campus sexual assault a 'central priority'**

**Miley Cyrus concert antics prompt parent complaints, calls for cancellations**

Ciudad Juárez, a Border City Known for Killing, Gets Back to Living

***2 Bishops, Priest, 12 Nuns Still Missing After Being Kidnapped by Syrian Rebels***

***North Korea Arrests Christian Missionary From Australia***

***Hard Times Leave Some Greek Car Owners With Nothing but Rust***

***Worst Spill In 6 Months Is Reported At Fukushima (radioactive water)***

***Under Gang's Rule, a Mexican City Loses Hope in the State***

***Amid Toxic Waste, a Navajo Village Could Lose Its Land***



“Be still, and know that I am God;  
I will be exalted among the nations,  
I will be exalted in the earth.”

**11** The Lord Almighty is with us;  
the God of Jacob is our fortress.

Psalm 46:10-11

Get comfortable.

Be still and listen to God.

What comes to mind as you are quiet?

Ask God why that comes to mind.