

St. Peter Lutheran Church  
May 10, 2026  
Sixth Sunday of Easter  
John 16:23b-30

**Ask, and you will receive that your joy may be full.** Jesus has told the disciples that after a very sorrowful time, their sorrow would be turned to joy. After Christ's betrayal, trial, crucifixion, death, and burial, they would see Him again, risen from the dead, living, breathing, eating, and speaking peace to them. And the joy they would find in His resurrection from the dead, no one could take from them.

Now our Lord goes on to invite and urge his disciples to prayer. What does His death and resurrection accomplish for them and for us? It accomplishes reconciliation between God who is angry with sins and sinners by the blood of the Lamb. He is the propitiation for sins, and not for ours only, but for the sins of the entire world. He had a cup to drink, and He drank it, which was God's wrath and just punishment for every sin of every person of every time. This is why the resurrected Christ speaks peace to His disciples, because by His death and resurrection, their sins have been forgiven, and they are reconciled to God.

Therefore, they should have all boldness and confidence to pray to Him. For if He did not spare even His own Son but delivered Him up for us all, how will He not together with Him give us all good things? So just ask, Jesus says. You who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Jesus. No longer God's enemy, but through baptism, His child. Baptized into Christ, He sees you righteous and clean, every stain, spot, and blemish removed by Christ's blood. We are baptized into Christ, the beloved Son of the Father, with whom the Father is well pleased—baptized into Christ, we have the same loving Father in heaven, and He loves us even as He loves His only begotten Son. So ask Him for what you need as dear children ask their dear father. **Ask, and you will receive that your joy may be full.**

And how does our Lord tell us this will be? He says, **whatever you ask the Father in My name He will give you.** This is our confidence in prayer. We don't pray based on our holiness or our merits or our worthiness—we pray in Christ's name. We draw near to God based on Christ's holiness, Christ's merits, Christ's worthiness. Therefore, we ought to pray whenever we are in any need, no matter how prepared we feel to approach God, no matter how stained we feel because of our sins. For we approach God through Jesus Christ, who offered Himself for our sins in order to present us spotless and without blemish. The devil would have us believe that we are not ready to pray, that we are not holy enough to pray. But this is exactly why we should pray, trusting in Christ, and knowing that in Him, we have the Father's eternal love. When you are tempted, pray for steadfastness. When you have sinned, pray quickly for forgiveness and help. When you are downtrodden under the burdens and cares of this life and the weight of your sins, pray for the restoration of the joy of your salvation. **Ask, and you will receive that your joy may be full.**

Jesus says, **“Until now, you have asked nothing in My name.”** The disciples had Jesus with them—He prayed to His Father, often, and on this pivotal evening, when He says He will be going away, He prays at length for them. But He is going to His Father, and now the disciples will learn to pray themselves. **“These things I have spoken to you in figurative language,”** says Jesus. He had described these things in dark, hidden sayings, like, **“A little while, and you will not see Me; And again a little while and you will see Me,”** and **“I go to the Father,”** and He likened the upcoming time of suffering leading to the joy of the resurrection to a woman in childbirth whose pain and sorrow turns to relief and joy when a child is born.

All these things will become plain after the time of sorrow is past and Christ is risen and ascended. When Christ is seated at the right hand of God and all things that are the Father’s are given to Him, and He reigns over all things, then this will plainly be preached. And so it is for us, as post-Pentecost disciples. We understand plainly what Christ going to the Father means, for since He has gone away, He has sent the Helper to bring us into all truth. We know what the little while of His suffering accomplished—the defeat of the devil and atonement for our sins. We know what the disciples seeing Him again means—they were witnesses of Christ in His resurrected glory. And we know what His going to the Father means. The One whom God sent forth, His only Son into our flesh, has suffered and died for sins, and risen for our justification, and has returned to God, assumed His throne as the rightful heir of all things, and as the One who died for sins, will come again as Judge on the Last Day. He ever intercedes for us as our great High Priest. We know these things plainly.

This is why we now go directly to our Father in heaven through Christ, for these facts we believe. This is why Jesus says, **“I do not say that I shall pray the Father for you; for the Father Himself loves you, because you have loved Me, and have believed that I came forth from God. I came from the Father and have come into the world. Again, I leave the world and go to the Father.”** We pray in this faith—that Christ has died, risen, and ascended—and our prayers in His name are heard by God and answered. We boldly draw near and ask for ourselves. For since we love Jesus and believe in Him, He is in us and we in Him, and the Father loves us.

Our needs we bring to God continually, knowing He hears and answers. Whether with our words, or silently with our hearts, we make our requests known to God. Even our sighs are heard. And when we know not what to pray, the Spirit intercedes for us. And when we need words to pray, we have the prayer our Lord taught us, seven petitions which we know are pleasing to God and which he loves to answer. Seven petitions that are exactly God’s will for us, exactly what we ought to pray, and exactly what God promises to give when we ask. The Lord’s prayer covers every one of our needs, leaving out nothing. Not only do we have God’s promise that if we ask we will receive, but we even have words given by our Lord to use. Nothing ought hinder us from prayer.

The Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday leading up to the Ascension are traditionally rogation days for the church, or special days of prayer. The Latin *rogare* means “to ask.” These

penitential days were devoted to prayer and fasting, the practice reaching back as far as the fifth century. It was a time to pray not only for eternal things, but for temporal things, asking God's blessing on the fields and asking for fruitfulness of the land. A long standing tradition was the use of the Litany, and on this Rogate Sunday, we will use this ancient Prayer of the Church. The Church has long recognized that she is sustained both by the Word of God and by prayer, asking for and receiving from God what is needed, not only for our eternal salvation, but also for our daily bread. All things, every request, brought to God our Father in Jesus' name—these prayers God hears and answers. **Ask, and you will receive that your joy may be full.** Amen.