



# The Beacon Online

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## **The Beacon Online is the communication source for the SELC District.**

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## **Confirmation Day at St. John's in Massillon, Ohio**

On Sunday, May 16, 2021, Lillian Margaret Stacy; Victoria Rose Sturm & Myla Joanne Williams were confirmed during the Divine Service. The young students completed two years of catechetical instruction with Pastor John Telloni (Year One) and Pastor Jon Carpenter (Year Two), and so they publicly confessed their faith in Jesus Christ and reaffirmed their Baptism, pledging continued faithfulness to Him as His disciples. They also received the blessed Sacrament for the first time with their families and the congregation.

We offer our congratulations to Lily, Victoria, and Myla and pray God's richest blessings upon them as they continue to grow in their faith and life in Christ in His holy Church!



From left to right:  
First Row: Lily, Myla, and Victoria.  
Second Row: Pastor John Telloni and Pastor Jon Carpenter.



## Faith and Writing Workshop set for July 20-22 Registration now open

Writers of all abilities can explore the art of creative writing in its various forms – starting a blog, creating a sermon or devotion, story, nonfiction, drama, poetry and everything in between – at the Faith and Writing Workshop set for July 20-22 at **Concordia Seminary, St. Louis**.

This year's workshop will include an emphasis on social media and new forms of expression. There will be ample time for creative exercises. Participants are encouraged (but not required) to share their own work, as well as favorite works by others.

The workshop will be led by Dr. Travis Scholl, managing editor of the **Concordia Journal**, and Peter Mead, a Christian editor, publisher and writer.

"When our workshop went online last year due to the pandemic, Peter and I were prompted to re-envision this creative writing workshop. We're excited to bring all those new insights into this year's in-person workshop."

The cost of the workshop is \$175 per person (\$75 for Seminary students) with a maximum of 15 participants. Meals are not included. The registration deadline is July 6, 2021.

For more information and to register, click **here**.

For more information about the Faith and Writing Workshop, contact Continuing Education at 314-505-7286 or **ce@csli.edu**.



## How Well Do You Pray Our Lord's Prayer? For and With Others? For Yourself?

by Pastor K. M. Ballas, EM

A story is told about a rather brief conversation between two novitiates at a medieval monastery (taking a mandatory "vow of silence" apart from observing daily canonical hours is a common misconception). The topic of said conversation? Local lore stipulated that any member of the order who could honestly recite the **Our Father** once through without allowing his mind to wander would have privileged use of the finest horse in the community stable. Naively believing that to be a simple enough challenge, the younger man asked his friend to put him to the test. And so it was that the young man began praying, "**Pater Noster, qui es in caelis**" only to pause and ask, "What *color* is the horse?" A brief conversation indeed!

There are, of course, far better reasons for praying this most well-known of all prayers. Historically, believers as well as many non-Christians, have used these familiar words of Jesus for a variety of reasons. For example well-intended "12-step recovery programs" like AA (which also have many Christian members and who deservedly achieve remarkably positive results have happily found cherished meeting space in countless synodical parish facilities) rightly or wrongly use the Lord's Prayer at most, if not all, weekly meetings.

Those who at times seemingly delight in judging the devotional motives of fellow-believers may on occasion be **missing out on the intended benefits of taking literally** Jesus' brief instructions to His inquiring student-disciples prior to giving to His Church on earth what is likely not only the most abused but, paradoxically, also the most **under-utilized** of all prayers. In addition to being the grandest of all intercessory prayers also, the "**Our Father**" serves (especially when memorized at an early age) as a marvelous all-encompassing, "God- given self-help" of sorts designed to address a host of spiritual or other daily life issues.

At the risk of being unduly literalistic, we may do well to revisit how Jesus answered one of His unnamed disciples who asked, "Lord, teach us to pray as John the baptizer taught his student-disciples." Jesus' answer: "OK, boys, **whenever you pray, continue to say: "Father, Your Name be holy** etc. (Luke 11:2). This being the case, **we also do well to think of our Lord's Prayer as a loving reminder of the idealized picture of His blood-bought Church for those of us still living in a fallen world He obviously came to redeem from sin, eternal death and power of the devil.**

Even in heaven there will (or should) remain for each of us an element of mystery regarding our sovereign and merciful Triune God. Only there will be willingly content in allowing things to be and remain exactly as Jesus said they would be, namely, "On that Day you will ask Me no more questions" (John 16:23a). In the meantime, God can be trusted to continue to offer His unequivocal YES to every one of His Gospel promises for our every earthly need! (2Cor.1:20; cf. also John 1:18).

The point of this article, then, is simply to suggest that the very things that may lead our anxious minds to question (or even perhaps find us unable to fall sleep at night) may also be used by the indwelling Spirit of Christ to prompt us as His baptized believers to recall for help-ful and immediate use the Savior's comforting invitation, "When you pray, **say, "Our Father!"** **doing so out loud** (in whatever language of choice) **slowly but uninterruptedly without stopping** in keeping with Luther's Small Catechism divisions of introduction, seven petitions and conclusion or meaning of the universal word **AMEN**.

Because of Jesus, such obedient action on our part becomes anything but some pagan ritualistic mantra or magical incantation. Focusing solely on **Christ's own words in our Lord's Prayer** also liberates normally caring Christians from any compulsive "felt need" to look for "ever newer ways" to help others understand the depth of meaning behind these precious liturgical and catechetical scriptural petitions of our blessed Redeemer as we are in reality **already and immediately** interceding for others in the best way possible by using **His very words** which (lest it be forgotten) are also happily intentionally **plural in number!** Lest anyone think you are left totally alone to pray for yourself (never a bad idea), please know that **millions of fellow-believers are also praying for you** as you also intercede for them!

Truly, then, what makes **this** prayer of our Lord **to** the Church especially **for** the Church so extraordinarily special is its **unique Author**, our loving sinless sacrificial crucified and risen Brother-Savior and ascended living **LORD** Jesus Christ! **To Him belongs the glory with the Father and the Holy Spirit! AMEN!**

(See Matthew 6:5-15; 18:21-35; Mark 11:25-26; Luke 11:1-4; Philemon; 1 Peter 4:8. While Lutheran Christians assiduously avoid praying to the saints including the chosen Virgin Mother of God's incarnate Son, we seemingly come "close" to doing so, not by making use of Rosary beads, but perhaps by singing one of our beloved hymns however properly understood, LSB, #670, stanza 2).



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### CCM Attorney Vacancy Nomination

There is a vacancy in an **attorney position** on the Commission on Constitutional Matters Committee for the Council of Presidents. The position is to fill a term from 2016 - 2023. Since this term is less than half of a full term, the appointee would be able to serve two subsequent, full six-year terms if successively reappointed.

The Commission on Constitutional Matters exists to interpret the Constitution, Bylaws, and resolutions of the Synod and ensure that the governing instruments of the Synod and its agencies are in accord with the Constitution and Bylaws of the Synod. The responsibilities of the Commission need to have an attorney who has

knowledge of church governance, logic, and language, as well as familiarity with the policy and structure of the synod, as well as the personal qualities necessary to contribute in a deliberative body. There is a significant time commitment that needs to be available. The Commission meets on a quarterly basis that requires intense preparation.

Nominations are by **District President only**. If you have a suggestion for District President Vinovskis, please notify the SELC District Office by July 1, 2021 so that the submission deadline can be met. The email address and the mailing address are available at the end of this issue.



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