

THE LITANY

The name “Litany” comes from a Greek word for prayer (λιτανεία—*litaneía*). In essence it is an expansion of the “Kyrie” (“Lord, have mercy”). Historically it arose from the ninefold Kyrie used before the Reformation (the Roman Latin Mass) and originally stood between the Sermon and the Service of the Sacrament. It was the source of our “Prayer of the Church” (*Lutheran Service Book*) or “General Prayer” (*The Lutheran Hymnal*). It was also used in processions outside of the church building. (Such as *Corpus Christi* day celebrations).

Source: Our Litany is based on Luther’s revision of the original “Great Litany” from the Latin Mass. He translated it into German and purged it of *invocations of saints* (calling upon saints to do something) and other errors. He also limited it to use inside the services of the Church (not in parades, etc.). The Litany stands as a great and comprehensive pattern of prayer for the Church, the world, and for all sorts and conditions of people.

It’s **structure** consists of:

- Deprecations**—cries for deliverance
(“From all sin... *deliver us*”)
- Obsecrations**—pleas for help based on Christ’s work
(“By the mystery of Your incarnation... *help us*”)
- Supplications**—pleas for our own needs
(“In all time of tribulation... *help us*”)
- Intercessions**—pleas on behalf of others
(“To rule and govern Your church... *we implore you to hear us*”)
- Kyrie(s)**—threefold cries to the Lord for mercy book end the whole Litany
(including the *Agnus Dei*)
- The Lord’s Prayer**, and final **collects**

History of Lutheran Use

Luther talked of using it in 1519, but it fell out of use again when Andreas Karlstadt took over in Wittenberg (1521) while Luther was in hiding because he had been declared an outlaw.

It only went into common use for Lutherans in 1529 when the Ottoman Empire—under Suleiman the Magnificent—almost succeeded in taking Vienna, gaining a foothold in western Europe. This could have ushered in Islamic rule over all Europe. The historic accounts of Suleiman’s unsuccessful attacks on Vienna are filled with “acts of God” which slowed and weakened this most powerful army, and shocking defeats of his overwhelming force at the hands of small bands of Christian knights. And so we earnestly pray at all times for our deliverance and every need of body and soul.

When Sulieman attempted to take Vienna again in 1541 Luther was requested to pray (as last time) and wrote the hymn “Lord, Keep Us Steadfast in Your Word” (*LSB* 655) for a prayer service in Wittenberg. The original first verse said this:

*Lord, keep us in thy Word and work,
Restrain the murderous Pope and Turk,
Who fain would tear from off thy throne
Christ Jesus, thy beloved Son.*

The Litany

Kneel/Stand

How many appeals for mercy?
Who is in the centre?

L O Lord,

C have mer - cy.

L O Christ,

C have mer - cy.

L O Lord,

C have mer - cy.

L O Christ,

C hear us.

Summary



Kyrie

Mark 10:47

L God the Fa - ther in heaven,

C have mer - cy.

L God the Son, Redeemer of the world,

C have mer - cy.

L God the Holy Spir - it,

C have mer - cy.

L Be gra - cious to us.

C Spare us, good Lord.

Why repeat the Kyrie, specifically naming the persons of God?



Trinitarian
Kyrie

We pray to the Father, through the Son, in the Spirit. Who is the "Lord"? (see Athanasian Creed)

L Be gra - cious to us.

C Help us, good Lord.

Deprecations -cries for deliverance

L From all sin, from all error, from all e - vil;
 From the crafts and assaults of the devil; from sudden and e - vil death; *
 From pestilence and famine;
 from war and bloodshed; from sedition and from re - bel - lion;
 From lightning and tempest;
 from all calamity by fire and water; and from ever - last - ing death:

} spiritual evils
 Psalm 116:15
 } natural evils

* -an evil death is to die apart from faith in Jesus the saviour

C Good Lord, de-liv-er us.

Obsecrations -pleas for help based on Christ's work

L By the mystery of Your holy incarnation; by Your holy na - tiv - i - ty; Incarnation
 By Your baptism, fasting, and temptation;
 by Your agony and bloody sweat; by Your His work of redemption
 cross and passion; by Your precious death and bur - i - al;
 By Your glorious resurrection and ascension;
 and by the coming of the Holy Spirit, the Com - fort - er: His bringing life & immortality to light

C Help us, good Lord.

Supplications -for us



L { In all time of our tribulation; in all time
in life { of our prosperity; in the hour of death; and in the day of judgment: } in death

Proverbs 30:8b-9



C Help us, good Lord.

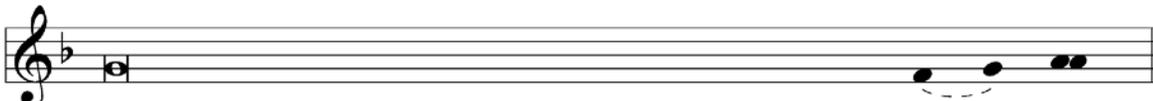


L We poor sinners im - plore You



C to hear us, O Lord.

**Supplications/
Intercessions** -for us & others



L To rule and govern Your holy Christian Church;
to preserve all pastors and ministers of Your Church in the true knowledge and understanding
of Your wholesome Word and to sustain them in holy liv - ing;

Eph. 1:16-17;
Col. 1:9

To put an end to all schisms and causes of offense;
to bring into the way of truth all who have erred and are de - ceived; John 17:17; 14:23

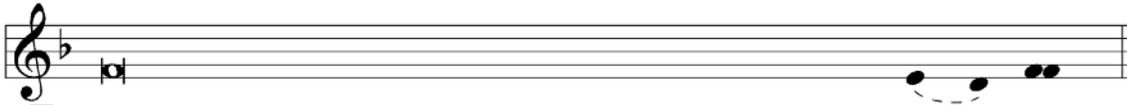
To beat down Satan under our feet;
to send faithful laborers into Your harvest; ✚ *Genesis 3:15;
Romans 16:20

and to accompany Your Word with Your grace and Spir - it: ✚ Luke 10:2



C We implore You to hear us, good Lord.

Intercessions -for others

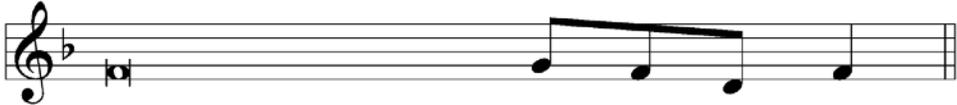


L To give to all peoples concord and peace;
 to preserve our land from discord and strife;
 to give our country Your protection in every time of need;
 To direct and defend our president/queen/king and all in
 authority; to bless and protect our magistrates and all our peo - ple; 1 Timothy 2:1-2

To watch over and help all who are in danger,
 necessity, and tribulation; to protect and guide all who trav - el;

To grant all women with child, and all mothers
 with infant children, increasing happiness in
 their blessings; to defend all orphans and widows and pro-vide for them; Deut. 10:18;
 Psalm 68:5

To strengthen and keep all sick persons and
 young children; to free those in bondage; and to have mercy on us all:



C We implore You to hear us, good Lord.



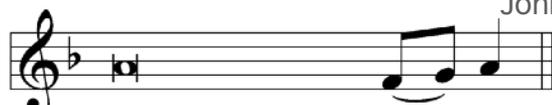
L To forgive our enemies, persecutors, and slanderers
 and to turn their hearts; to give and preserve for our
 use the kindly fruits of the earth; and graciously to hear our prayers; Matthew 5:44



C We implore You to hear us, good Lord.



L Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God,



C we implore You to hear us.

John 14:13-14; 16:23



L Christ, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world,



C have mer - cy.



L Christ, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world,



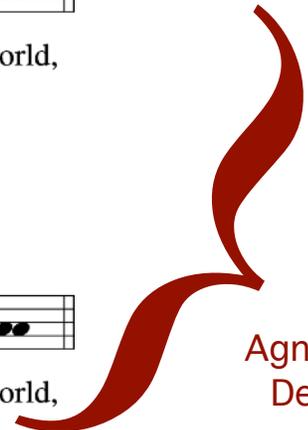
C have mer - cy.



L Christ, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world,



C grant us Your peace.



Agnus Dei

John 1:29

How many times do we repeat John the Baptist's statement?

Summary



L O Christ,



C hear us.

Knowing that the Father will be gracious to us on account of His Son, we ask Christ to hear us.



L O Lord,



C have mer - cy.

Kyrie

Mark 10:47



L O Christ,



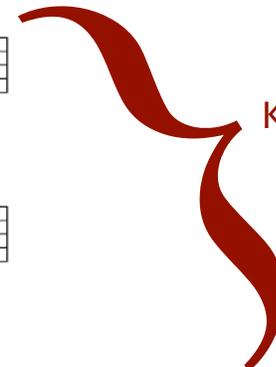
C have mer - cy.



L O Lord,



C have mer - cy. A - men.



The Litany may conclude with the Lord's Prayer and a collect.

Lutheran Service Book 655 “Lord, Keep Us Steadfast in Your Word”

Lord, Keep Us Steadfast In Your Word	Original first verse
1. Lord, keep us steadfast in Your Word; Curb those who by deceit of sword Would rest the kingdom from Your Son And bring to naught all He has done.	1. Lord, keep us in Thy word and work, Restrain the murd'rous pope and Turk, Who fain would tear from off Thy throne Christ Jesus, Thy beloved Son.
2. Lord, Jesus Christ, Your pow'r make known, For Thou are Lord of Lord's alone; Defend Thy Christendom that we May sing Your praise eternally.	
3. O Comforter of priceless worth, Send peace and unity on earth. Support us in our final strife And lead us out of death to life.	

O Lord, Look Down From Heaven, Behold	Psalm 12
<p>1 O Lord, Look down from heaven, behold And let Thy pity waken; How few are we within Thy fold, Thy saints by men forsaken! True faith seems quenched on ever hand, Men suffer not Thy Word to stand; Dark times have us o'er-taken.</p>	<p>1 Help, Lord, for the godly man ceases! For the faithful disappear from among the sons of men.</p>
<p>2 With fraud which they themselves invent Thy truth they have confounded; Their hearts are not with one consent On Thy pure doctrine grounded. While they parade with outward show, They lead the people to and fro, In error's maze astounded</p>	<p>2 They speak idly everyone with his neighbor; With flattering lips and a double heart they speak.</p>
<p>3 May God root out all heresy And of false teachers rid us Who proudly say: "Now, where is he That shall our speech forbid us?" By right or might we shall prevail; What we determine cannot fail; We own no lord and master."</p>	<p>3 May the Lord cut off all flattering lips, And the tongue that speaks proud things, 4 Who have said, "With our tongue we will prevail; Our lips are our own; Who is lord over us?"</p>
<p>4 Therefore saith God, "I must arise, The poor My help are needing; To Me ascend My people's cries, And I have heard their pleading. For them My saving Word shall fight And fearlessly and sharply smite, The poor with might defending."</p>	<p>5 "For the oppression of the poor, for the sighing of the needy, Now I will arise," says the Lord; "I will set him in the safety for which he yearns."</p>
<p>5 As silver tried by fire is pure From all adulteration, So thro' God's Word shall men endure Each trial and temptations. Its light beams brighter thro' the cross, And, purified from human dross, It shines through every nation.</p>	<p>6 The words of the Lord are pure words, Like silver tried in a furnace of earth, Purified seven times. 7 You shall keep them, O Lord, You shall preserve them from this generation forever.</p>
<p>6 Defend Thy truth, O God, and stay This evil generation; And from the error of its way Keep Thine own congregation. The wicked everywhere abound And would Thy little flock confound; But Thou art our Salvation.</p>	<p>8 The wicked prowl on every side, When vileness is exalted among the sons of men.</p>