**Dial-A-Prayer**

**One man says to another while driving: “What I especially like about my car phone, in traffic or bad weather I can dial-a-prayer." *(The Clergy Journal cartoon)***

 **Car phones are great. When you’re going downhill on I-64 with a huge tractor-trailer on your bumper, you can dial a prayer. *(Terry Marchal, in Charleston, WVa., Gazette)***

**In 1955, many churches began broadcasting recorded prayers continuously over the telephone. Within a year, churches all over the nation were offering dial-a-prayer services. New York’s Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church today averages almost 500 calls per day. *(William Ecenbarger, in Reader’s Digest)***

**Frank says to Ernest: “Now I am worried -- I just called Dial-A-Prayer, and got a disconnected number!" *(Bob Thaves, in Frank & Ernest comic strip)***

**The final exam in electrical engineering worried my son, Don. On the last day of class, the professor wished the students luck as he wrote a phone number on the blackboard. “If any of you have difficulty understanding the review material, call this number,” he said as he dismissed the class. On Saturday afternoon, stumped by one of the review problems, Don reached for the phone and heard a recorded message from Dial-A-Prayer. *(D. Moore, in Reader’s Digest)***

**Each Sunday the minister called the children to the front of the church while he told them a story. Once he brought a telephone to better illustrate the idea of prayer. “You talk to people on the telephone and don’t see them on the other end of the line, right?” he began. The children nodded yes. “Well, talking to God is like talking on the telephone. He’s on the other end, but you can’t see him. He’s listening, though.” Just then a little boy piped up and asked, “What’s his number?” *(Barbara Frahm, in Reader’s Digest)***

**A Sunday School teacher asked a young miss in her class to define prayer. “Prayer,” said the child, “is messages sent up at night and on Sundays when the rates are lower.” *(Baptist New Mexican)***

**The telephone service is now bringing us all different kinds of things like dial-a-prayer. You pick up the phone when you’re feeling despondent and want someone to talk to, and it makes you feel better. But I think, to be fair, they should also have a phone number for the atheists. When they are feeling bad they should be able to dial a number and hear the phone ring--ring--ring--ring. *(Irwin C. Wilson, in Parade)***

**By entering “Papa On” on their cellular phones, 24 million customers of Italy’s biggest mobile phone company can receive daily text messages from Pope John Paul II that include excerpts from his prayers and speeches. Papa is Italian for pope. The service costs 15 euro cents (16 U.S. cents) a message. *(Rocky Mountain News, January 15, 2003)***

**After Mass one Sunday I was searching through my pockets for a coin to make a phone call. Among the keys, gum, and other miscellany that I put on the table was my rosary. A keepsake of more than 30 years, it is missing several beads. One of my companions noticed it, and pointing it out to another friend, he nodded toward me, and said, “I always suspected he wasn’t praying with a full rosary.” *(Michael L. Hanlon)***

**In Bil Keane’s cartoon “Family Circus,” one of the pre-school girls is explaining to her even younger brother, “We can talk to God anytime we want,” she says pointing her finger up above her head, “cause he has a toll-free number.’” *(The Joyful Newsletter)***

**It is my heart-warming and world embracing Christmas hope and aspiration that all of us--the high, the low, the rich, the poor, the admired, the despised, the loved, the hated, the civilized, the savage -- may eventually be gathered in heaven of everlasting rest and peace and bliss -- except the inventor of the telephone.  *(Mark Twain, 1890 Christmas prayer)***

**As the parents enter the room while their son is kneeling and praying, they say to him: “No, you don’t have to wait for the beep. Just start praying.” *(The Saturday Evening Post cartoon)***

**\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\***