

5

PRAY THE PSALM OF THE WEEK Psalm 31:2-3, 1, 5, 9, 16

Be my rock of refuge, a fortress of defense to | save me.*
 For You are my rock and my | fortress.
 Therefore, for Your | name's sake,*
 lead me and | guide me.
 In You, O Lord, I put my trust; let me never | be ashamed;*
 deliver me in Your | righteousness.
 Into Your hand I commit my | spirit;*
 You have redeemed me, O Lord | God of truth.
 Have mercy on me, O Lord, for I am in | trouble;*
 my eye wastes a- | way with grief.
 Make Your face shine upon Your | servant;*
 save me for Your | mercies' sake.



Around the Word Devotions + February 11-17, 2024

"The Lord's Call to Follow Him"

1

BLESS YOURSELF WITH THE HOLY CROSS AND SAY:

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

2

SAY THE APOSTLES' CREED

I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
 Maker of heaven and earth.

And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our
 Lord, who was conceived by the Holy
 Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered
 under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died
 and was buried. He descended into hell.
 The third day He rose again from the
 dead. He ascended into heaven and sits at
 the right hand of God, the Father
 Almighty. From thence He will come to
 judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy
 Christian church, the communion of
 saints, the forgiveness of sins, the
 resurrection of the body, and the life
 everlasting. Amen.

3

PRAY THE LORD'S PRAYER

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.

For Thine is the kingdom and
 the power and the glory
 forever and ever. Amen.

6

SAY TOGETHER THE VERSE OF THE WEEK Psalm 24:4-5

"Make me to know Your ways, O LORD; teach me Your paths. Lead me in
 Your truth and teach me, for You are the God of my salvation; for You I wait
 all the day long."

7

READ THE SCRIPTURE AND DEVOTION (OTHER SIDE OF THE PAGE)

8

PRAY THE PRAYER OF THE WEEK

O Lord, we implore You, mercifully hear our prayers, and, having set us free
 from the bonds of sin, defend us from all evil; for You live and reign with the
 Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

9

PRAYER FOR OURSELVES AND OTHERS

10

SING OR SAY THE HYMN OF THE WEEK

Let Us Ever Walk with Jesus

TLH 409, LSB 685

Aurelius C. Prudentius

1. Let us ever walk with Jesus
 Follow His example pure,
 Flee the world, which would deceive us
 And to sin our souls allure.
 Ever in His footsteps treading,
 Body here, yet soul above,
 Full of faith and hope and love,
 Let us do the Father's bidding.
 Faithful Lord, abide with me,
 Savior, lead, I follow Thee.
2. Let us suffer here with Jesus,
 To His image, e'er conform;
 Heaven's glory soon will please us,
 Sunshine follow on the storm.
 Though we sow in tears of sorrow,

3. We shall reap with heavenly joy;
 And the fears that now annoy
 Shall be laughter on the morrow.
 Christ, I suffer here with Thee;
 There, oh, share Thy joy with me!
4. Let us gladly live with Jesus;
 Since He's risen from the dead,
 Death and grave must soon release us.
 Jesus, Thou art now our Head,
 We are truly Thine own members;
 Where Thou livest, there live we.
 Take and own us constantly,
 Faithful Friend, as Thy dear brethren.
 Jesus, here I live to Thee,
 Also there eternally.

4

PRAY THE MORNING OR EVENING PRAYER

Morning. I thank You, my
 heavenly Father, through Jesus
 Christ, Your dear Son, that You
 have kept me this night from all
 harm and danger; and I pray that
 You would keep me this day also
 from sin and every evil, that all my
 doings and life may please You.
 For into Your hands I commend
 myself, my body and soul, and all
 things. Let Your holy angel be with
 me, that the evil foe may have no
 power over me. Amen.

Evening. I thank you, my
 heavenly Father, through Jesus
 Christ, Your dear Son, that You
 have graciously kept me this day;
 and I pray that You would forgive
 me all my sins where I have done
 wrong, and graciously keep me this
 night. For into Your hands, I
 commend myself, my body and
 soul, and all things. Let Your holy
 angel be with me, that the evil foe
 may have no power over me. Amen.

Around the Word Devotions + the week of February 11-17, 2024

THEME OF THE WEEK: The Lord's Call to Follow Him

As we approach Ash Wednesday and the sacred season of Lent, we hear again the call to "Return to the LORD, your God" (Joel 2:13b). And since the LORD "is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love," we can return to Him (Joel 2:13c). Like the blind man sitting by the roadside, we know that God's mercy is found in Jesus, "Son of Man" and "Son of David" Who was "delivered over to the Gentiles" to be mocked, flogged and killed for us and our salvation (Lk. 18:31-32). Baptized into Christ, we follow Him by dying daily to sin so that we might also arise with Him to live by His grace and in His mercy.

SUN

SCRIPTURE: Luke 18:31-43 Word of Jesus, Eyes of Faith

The blind beggar knows who Jesus is and cries out to Him in faith. He cries out to Jesus for mercy even when told to be silent! Ironically, he asks Jesus for his sight, but like the thief on the cross he already sees with the eyes of faith (Lk. 23:42). Receiving physical sight and divine mercy from Jesus, the man once blind is, unlike the rich man who turned away sad (Lk. 18:18-30), ready to follow Jesus. Saint Paul teaches us that faith comes by hearing "the word of Christ" and not by seeing with our eyes (Rom. 10:17). Called by His Word through the waters of Holy Baptism, we believe that Jesus is "the Son of David" and are ready to follow Him wherever He leads. *Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me and lead me in the way of everlasting life. Amen.*

MON

SCRIPTURE: Psalm 26 Walking in the Ways of the LORD

David is not righteous before God in and of himself. We know full well, as does he, that his life was not without sin and failure. David knows that the LORD must redeem his life according to His grace (v.11). And yet, David's desire is to walk in the ways of the LORD and not in the ways of the wicked. As one who has been gathered into the assembly of the righteous, he knows that his life is set apart for service to the LORD. So it is with those who have been baptized into Christ Jesus. Buried with Christ into His death and raised with Him by the glory of the Father, we too walk in the ways of the LORD and the new life given to us in Christ Jesus (Rom. 6:4). *O Lord Jesus, be gracious to me and guide me to walk in Your ways always. Amen.*

TUE

SCRIPTURE: 1 Corinthians 13:1-13 Love is a Verb

Our culture reduces love down to emotions, feelings, and favorite interests. But love as demonstrated by our God and shown to us in the person of Christ Jesus is far more and greater than these things! He who loved us "while we were still sinners" and "enemies" of God by laying down His life for us (Rom. 5:8-10), calls us to love one another as He has loved us (Jn. 13:34). Saint Paul gives us concrete examples of how we are to love our brothers and sisters in Christ. Love acts and serves. Love is selfless, not self-seeking. Love takes no joy in evil, but rejoices in the truth. Love flows out of faith because Christ first loved us (1 Jn. 4:10). His love abides and never ends, even when our love fails. *O Lord, help me to love others as You have loved me. Amen.*

WED

SCRIPTURE: Matthew 6:16-21 Hearts Fixed on Jesus - Ash Wednesday

Today the Lord calls us again to return to Him in repentance and faith as we begin the holy season of Lent. What do we need to confess before Him this day? What do we need to repent of and turn from today? Plenty to be sure! After teaching His disciples about Godly piety that should be practiced (almsgiving, prayer, and fasting), Jesus warns them and us of the universal temptation to fix our hearts and tighten our grip on earthly things that rust and decay. Jesus invites all to repent of their idolatrous grip on earthly treasures and to place their faith and trust in Him alone; the life that He gives and the identity He bestows upon us. *O Lord, incline my heart to trust in You and You alone for all things needful in this life and the next. Amen.*

THU

SCRIPTURE: John 12:23-36 Wheat and Men Must Die to Bear Fruit

Jesus says throughout His ministry, "My hour has not yet come" (Jn. 2:4). But now, Jesus' "hour" has in fact come! What is this "hour"? It is the hour of His passion, His being "lifted up from the earth" on a cross and crucified for your sins and the sins of the whole world (v. 32). In this hour Jesus is glorified not *in spite* of the cross, but *through* the cross. This is what He has come to do for you. This is both His active and passive obedience before the Father for you. Jesus' death and resurrection bears the fruit of forgiveness, life and salvation for you. The only way to live in Jesus and follow Him is to die daily with Him, that

raised with Him we might bear the fruits of faith. *Lord Jesus, help me to die with You that I might also live with You. Amen.*

FRI

SCRIPTURE: 1 Peter 3:18-22 Baptism Now Saves You!

Peter could not be any clearer here: "Baptism... now saves you" (v.21)! Baptism is not a symbolic act preformed by man, not a bath that removes dirt from the body. Baptism is God's way of making you a new creation in Christ Jesus. Just as Noah and his family were brought safely through the flood waters that cleansed the earth of evil, so those who are baptized into Christ are drown in His death and are raised with Him to new life now and forever. Cleansed of our unrighteousness and clothed with Christ's righteousness, we have a clean and good conscience before God today, tomorrow, and on the Last Day. *O Lord, should a guilty conscience seize me, remind me that I am baptized into Christ and cleansed by His blood. Amen.*

SAT

SCRIPTURE: Psalm 27 Confidence in the LORD

Psalm 27 is a beautiful prayer of confident trust in the LORD's providential care. Since the LORD is our light and salvation, our strong fortress of refuge and shelter in the day of trouble, there is nothing in this life to truly fear. And yet, David still calls upon the LORD for instruction, guidance and protection from his enemies; the devil, the world and the sinful nature. Because the LORD is faithful and trustworthy, David bids God's people to wait for the LORD, to trust in Him at all times and for all good things. Those who do so are strong and can take courage to face anything in this life. *O LORD, grant me faith to wait for and to trust in You for all things needful, through Jesus Christ. Amen.*

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