PRAY THE PSALM OF THE WEEK 1 Peter 2:2, Psalm 81:1, 7, 10, 16

As newborn babes, Alleluia.*
desire the pure milk of the Word. Alleluia. Alleluia.*
Sing aloud to | God our strength:* make a joyful shout to the God of | Jacob.
You called in trouble, and I delivered you:* I answered you in the secret place of | thunder.
I am the | Lord your God,*
who brought you out of the land of | Egypt:
open your mouth wide, and I will | fill it.* With honey from the rock I would have satisfied you.

BLESS YOURSELF WITH THE HOLY CROSS AND SAY:
In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

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.

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.

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 MORNING OR EVENING PRAYER

4. PRAY THE MORNING OR EVENING PRAYER

5. SAY THE VERSE OF THE WEEK John 20:22-23
And when He had said this, He breathed on them and said to them, “Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you withhold forgiveness from any, it is withheld.”

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

PRAY THE PRAYER OF THE WEEK
Almighty and merciful God, as You have brought us to celebrate the festival of the Lord’s resurrection, cause us by Your grace to bring forth the fruits thereof in our life and conduct: through the same Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

PRAY THE MORNING OR EVENING PRAYER

PRAY THE MORNING OR EVENING PRAYER

PRAY THE MORNING OR EVENING PRAYER

I AM CONTENT! MY JESUS LIVETH STILL

1. I am content! My Jesus liveth still,
   In whom my heart is pleased.
   He hath fulfilled the Law of God for me,
   God’s wrath He hath appeased.
   Since He in death could perish never,
   I also shall not die forever.
   I am content! I am content!

2. I am content! My Jesus is my Head:
   His member I will be.
   He bowed His head when on the cross
   He died

3. With cries of agony,
   Now death is brought into subjection
   For me, too, by His resurrection.
   I am content! I am content!

4. 5. I am content! Lord, draw me unto Thee
   And wake me from the dead
   That I may rise forevermore to be
   With Thee, my living Head.
   The fetters of my body sever,
   Then shall my soul rejoice forever.
   I am content! I am content!

5. I am content! Lord, draw me unto Thee
   And wake me from the dead
   That I may rise evermore to be
   With Thee, my living Head.
   The fetters of my body sever,
   Then shall my soul rejoice forever.
   I am content! I am content!

6. I am content! My Jesus is my Head:
   His member I will be.
   He bowed His head when on the cross
   He died

7. With cries of agony,
   Now death is brought into subjection
   For me, too, by His resurrection.
   I am content! I am content!

8. 5. I am content! Lord, draw me unto Thee
   And wake me from the dead
   That I may rise evermore to be
   With Thee, my living Head.
   The fetters of my body sever,
   Then shall my soul rejoice forever.
   I am content! I am content!

9. I am content! My Jesus is my Head:
   His member I will be.
   He bowed His head when on the cross
   He died

10. With cries of agony,
   Now death is brought into subjection
   For me, too, by His resurrection.
   I am content! I am content!
Around the Word Devotions + the week of April 23-29, 2017

THEME OF THE WEEK: He is Risen to Bring Us Forgiveness and Faith

Last week, the Church marked the bodily resurrection of Jesus from the grave. This week, the Church turns her attention to the proclamation of Christ’s victory over death, which brings the forgiveness of sins (John 20), brings the message of redemption to the ends of the earth (Psalm 111), gives comfort in the Resurrection of the body (Job 19), gives spiritual food to God’s people (John 21 and I Peter), and gives joy in the midst of suffering (Psalm 4). Additionally, this week, the Church remembers St. Mark, whose Gospel is a full-throated proclamation of Christ’s death and resurrection (Mark 16).

SCRIPTYURE: John 20:19-31: Jesus Sends Pastors to Preach

This week, we see that special authority Christ has given the Church on earth to forgive the sins of repentant sinners, but to withhold forgiveness from the unrepentant. Because Christ has commanded His Church on earth to act on His behalf, we can be certain that, when the called ministers of Christ deal with us by excluding the openly unrepentant from the Christian congregation and absolving those who repent and want to live a God-pleasing life, this is just as valid and certain, even in heaven, as if Christ our dear Lord dealt with us Himself. O Lord, teach me to mourn my sins and desire to live according to Your will. Absolve my guilt and shame that I may receive eternal life through the peace made by Your Son’s wounded hands. Amen.

SCRIPTYURE: Psalm 111: He causes His works to be remembered

The Psalmist declares that it is God who causes His wondrous works to be remembered (v. 4). This happens to us through the preaching of the Prophets in the Old Testament and the Apostles in the New. By the power of the Holy Spirit, God’s mighty deeds are passed down from generation to generation. In order for us to receive this testimony rightly, Jesus established the pastoral office (see John 20:19-31) to send that message of salvation from Jerusalem to His people throughout the world (v. 9). O Lord, Your mighty works of salvation are made known through the preaching of Your Word. Grant faith to those who hear Your Word, that they may receive the benefits of Your salvation. In Jesus’ name we pray. Amen.

SCRIPTYURE: Mark 16:14-20: St. Mark, Evangelist

St. Mark’s day teaches about the mission of the Church. After the resurrection and before His ascension into heaven on the 40th day, Jesus commanded His disciples to carry the message of His resurrection to the ends of the earth. This is to be done in a very specific way: through baptism and the preaching of the Gospel (see also Mt. 28:19-20). Here we see how God delivers salvation to His people through the office He Himself gives, because it is Christ Himself who is working through these means (v. 20). Almighty God, You have enriched Your Church with the proclamation of the Gospel through the evangelist Mark. Grant that we may firmly believe these glad tidings and daily walk according to Your Word: through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

SCRIPTYURE: John 21:15-19: Feed My Sheep

Jesus restored Peter to his office in accordance with the promise He made before His suffering and death. In this text, we also see Christ giving Peter a Divine directive to feed His flock. This reminds us of the primary reason for which God sends pastors into His Church. They are to feed and tend God’s flock as under shepherds of the Good Shepherd—Jesus Christ. This feeding is found in the Word and Sacraments that Jesus gives as the instruments to care for His flock. Even as the Christian walks through the valley of the shadow of death, the pastor is there as Christ’s man to help him follow Christ through death into life. O Lord, keep my pastor faithful to Your Holy Word, that I made be brought to good pasture. Amen.

SCRIPTYURE: 1 Peter 1:17-2:3: Like Newborn Infants

This Sunday’s Latin name, Quasimodogeniti, comes from the antiphon for the introit, found in this epistle reading. Here, we see the pastoral heart of St. Peter, who is feeding His flock and the Church of all time, through the preaching recorded in this Epistle. Part of true Apostolic preaching is exhortation to holy living. This kind of preaching certainly accuses us in our sin, but it is also preaching that we, who have been born anew through the water and the Word in Baptism, can delight in. God’s instruction is food to the Christian, and we live by every word that comes from the mouth of God. O Lord, teach me to delight in your statutes and not to forget Your Word. Amen. (Ps. 119:16)

SCRIPTYURE: Psalm 4: In Peace I Will Both Lie Down and Sleep

God’s Word brings us such comfort that even as we face death, we may lie down and sleep in peace. This means that going to the Divine Service to hear from the pastor God sent us that our sins are forgiven and receive from His hand the body and blood of Christ that have reconciled us to God is great practice for the day when we shall depart this life. Hearing these promises and receiving these gifts week in and week out instills in us a confident faith that cannot be shaken in times of turmoil or distress. Tomorrow, go to Christ, our true Sabbath rest, and hear His Word of peace from your pastor’s mouth! O Lord, through the power of Your Word, grant us such faith to trust in Your salvation, even in the midst of death. Amen.

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