PRAY THE PSALM OF THE WEEK  Psalm 97:6,9, 1, 10-12

The heavens declare His righteousness,*
and all the peoples see His glory.
For You, Lord, are most high above all the earth:* You are exalted far above all gods
The Lord reigns: let the earth rejoice;* let the multitude of isles be glad!
He preserves the souls of His saints:* He delivers them out of the hand of the wicked.
Light is sown for the righteous,* and gladness for the upright in heart.
Rejoice in the Lord, you righteous.* And give thanks at the remembrance of His holy name.

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.

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.

PRAY THE MORNING OR EVENING PRAYER
Morning. 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 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.
The Lord promises to bring health and healing. We hear this and we get both excited and confused. Excited because, who doesn’t want health and healing? Confused because, who of us knows a world devoid of those things. But what we fail to recognize are two things. First, that the healing promised is what is spoken of in verse 8, to be cleansed from our guilt. To be forgiven of our sins. Second, that the final removal of our ailments, the final fulfillmet of health and healing, is when our Lord raises our bodies on the Last Day. Then we will have no more sickness, as well as no more sin, and that will last for eternity. Lord Jesus, thank You for Your forgiveness and promise to raise me healed on the Last Day. Amen.

The apostles pray for increased faith. What Jesus says in response is striking. He says at the end that increased faith results in faithful living. And that we in the end get no credit for that faithfulness. We must confess at the last that we’re only doing what we’re supposed to be doing. But that is the response of faith. It doesn’t ask what I get out of my good works, but asks, “how may I serve my neighbor?” Faith doesn’t demand to get credit for our works, but instead confesses, “to God alone be glory.” And the reason for this is because faith also believes and trusts God’s promises, especially the forgiveness of sins. Heavenly Father, help me to always, by faith, serve my neighbors in my vocations. Amen.

When we begin construction on a building, we are disappointed if we don’t see its completion. When we teach our children, we fear that we will not live long enough to see the results. For the saints from Adam to the offspring of Abraham, they were given the promise of a new home. None of them saw it, but they trusted the promise. They lived by faith. So too, do we. We’re given the great promise of the resurrection. A home in the new heavens and new earth. A glorified body. But most will not see it in their life, but will have to wait for the life of the world to come. We live by faith, not by sight. Lord, bless us with unwavering faith in Your promise of the blessed resurrection from the dead. Amen.

Mary came to the temple to be purified. It was required by the Law. But also required by the Law was the presentation of the first born. And so Jesus was presented to the Lord. Right after His birth, Jesus begins His lifelong fulfillment of the Law. Mary had to, for herself. Jesus also had to, but not for His own holiness, but for the holiness of us, His dear children. And having fulfilled the Law in all its parts, having kept every aspect of it from His birth, Jesus goes to the cross, the one of whom Simeon speaks: salvation, light, and glory. And having shed His blood, we, like Mary, are purified from our sins. Blessed Lord, thank You for purifying me by Your blood, grant me a steadfast faith and trust in all You have done for my salvation. Amen.