PRAY THE PSALM OF THE WEEK Isaiah 66:10-11; Psalm 122:1-2, 6, 8

Rejoice with Jerusalem, and be glad with her,*
all you who | love her;
that you may feed and be satisfied* with the consolation of her | bosom.
I was glad when they | said to me,*
“Let us go into the house | of the Lord.”
Our feet have been | standing* within your gates, O Je- | rusalem!
Pray for the peace of Je- | rusalem:*
“May they prosper who | love you.”
For the sake of my brethren and companions, I will | now say,* “Peace be with | in 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.

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.
THEME OF THE WEEK:  He Suffered the Worldliness of Sinners

Our God is a God of love and compassion. Though we were hopelessly enslaved and afflicted, addicted to the desires and passions of the world and our flesh, the Lord sought us out and delivered us. “This is love: not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins” (1 John 4:10). Jesus Christ, born of the Virgin Mary, took upon Himself our flesh and blood, yet without sin. He suffered the sin of the world, our worldliness, unto death on the cross that we might be released from our bondage and set free. “Exult, O earth: the Lord has comforted His people and will have compassion on His afflicted.”

SCRIPTURE:  John 6:1-15 They Saw the Signs

Born of Mary, Jesus entered into the world, yet Jesus is not of the world (John 17:14). Likewise, followers of Jesus live in the world, but are not to be of the world. Yet, our sinful inclination is to be worldly. A large crowd followed Jesus because He could cure whatever ailed them. When Jesus tested His disciples at dinner time, the worldly answer came forth—“we don’t have enough money to provide for this crowd.” The Bread of Life delivered in abundance and the crowd responded by trying to make Him their worldly king. Jesus came not to set up an earthly kingdom, but to deliver His own to The Kingdom without end. O Christ, You gave Your life that I may be Yours forevermore, increase in me the desire for Your kingdom and deliver me. Amen.

SCRIPTURE:  Psalm 46 God is Our Refuge and Strength

“The nations rage, the kingdoms totter.” A quick glance at the news headlines confirms this truth. We live in uncertain times. Our country is divided and we anxiously wonder what the future holds. Before we throw our hands up in despair or consume our days with worry, we must read on. “He utters His voice, the earth melts. The Lord of Hosts is with us: the God of Jacob is our fortress.” In the midst of uncertainty, our Lord reminds us that He is in control and encourages us to find our refuge in Him. Luther concludes his hymn based on this psalm, “A Mighty Fortress,” with these words, [In Christ] “our victory has been won: the Kingdom ours remaineth.” Lord, in the midst of uncertainty, grant me the faith to be still and know that You are God. Amen.

SCRIPTURE:  Galatians 4:21-31 Children of the Promise

When God’s ways appear unreasonable to us, we tend to trust in our own. Abraham, after hearing he would be a father of many nations when he was 100 years old (and his wife 90), sought a more reasonable way through his wife’s younger servant, Hagar. In so doing, Abraham was taught that the schemes of our flesh cannot attain salvation. Our salvation is a gift. It is an inheritance given to the children of the promise. Abraham’s blessing came through God’s promise. Heavenly Father, through the death of Your Son, Jesus Christ, You promise an eternal inheritance to all who believe. Help me to trust in Your promise, given in Baptism, that I may be eternally free. Amen.

SCRIPTURE:  2 Peter 1:2-11 All Things that Pertain to Life

All things that pertain to life and godliness are granted to us through the knowledge of Jesus Christ. Jesus suffered the corruption of the world that we might be set free from it. “Surely, He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows . . . He was wounded for our transgressions . . . and with His stripes we are healed” (Isaiah 53:4–5). In baptism, we received the fruit of our Lord’s suffering. We were healed and set free. Christ has called us to His own glory and excellence and granted to us very great promises. And so, through His calling, we are enabled to supplement our faith with virtue, which leads to acts of love toward one another. Lord, empower me to live out my calling in love that I may receive entrance to the kingdom of Your Son. Amen.

SCRIPTURE:  Psalm 139 Wonderful are Your Works

You are no accident. God had you in mind before you came into existence. He knows your thoughts. He is always with you. He is personally involved with His Son and believes in Him should have eternal life.”

WEDNESDAY

SCRIPTURE:  Isaiah 49:8-13 Compassion on His Afflicted

The world did not look kindly upon Christ and, likewise, does not look kindly upon the people of God. In this world we experience darkness, affliction, and deadly struggle. The Lord answers. He saves and sustains His people. Christ, the Lamb of God has conquered. Though we may not see it, His deliverance is real. Quoting Isaiah, John depicts this reality in Revelation 7: [The ones coming out of the great tribulation] “shall hunger no more, neither thirst anymore; for the Lamb in the midst of the throne will be their Shepherd, and He will guide them to springs of living water, and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.” Heavenly Father, open my eyes to see the reality of salvation, through Your Son, Jesus Christ, that I may sing for joy. Amen.

THURSDAY

SCRIPTURE:  John 6:36-51 The Bread that Jesus Gives

Our Lord gives and we grumble. Adam and Eve could eat of any tree of the garden, save one. But, this was not enough. They had life and they chose death. The deadly sin of discontent and insatiable desire has coursed through the veins of humanity ever since. The Israelites grumbled of manna in the desert. The Jews grumbled at Jesus, the Bread of Life. We grumble too. Our desires lead to death, yet our Heavenly Father continues to draw us through the One who can give us life. “For this is the will of My Father, that everyone who looks on the Son and believes in Him should have eternal life.” Father, crucify my sinful appetite and increase my desire for the food that leads unto life everlasting, the Bread of Life, Your Son, Jesus Christ. Amen.

FRIDAY

SCRIPTURE:  2 Peter 1:2-11 All Things that Pertain to Life

All things that pertain to life and godliness are granted to us through the knowledge of Jesus Christ. Jesus suffered the corruption of the world that we might be set free from it. “Surely, He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows . . . He was wounded for our transgressions . . . and with His stripes we are healed” (Isaiah 53:4–5). In baptism, we received the fruit of our Lord’s suffering. We were healed and set free. Christ has called us to His own glory and excellence and granted to us very great promises. And so, through His calling, we are enabled to supplement our faith with virtue, which leads to acts of love toward one another. Lord, empower me to live out my calling in love that I may receive entrance to the kingdom of Your Son. Amen.

SATURDAY

SCRIPTURE:  Psalm 139 Wonderful are Your Works

You are no accident. God had you in mind before you came into existence. He knows your thoughts. He is always with you. He is personally involved with His Son and believes in Him should have eternal life.”

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