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 away with grief.
Make Your face shine upon Your servant;*
save me for Your mercies’ sake.

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 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 Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.
**THEME OF THE WEEK: The Lord’s Call to Follow Him**

Pre-Lent is drawing quickly to an end. Lent and Holy Week are coming down the tracks where we rejoice in Jesus, Who is lifted up drawing all men to Himself upon the cross where the righteous dies for the unrighteous. We follow Him during Lent, we take a few moments of quiet contemplation and introspection. Our introspection reflects our sinful blind eyes, which we pray will be opened. We begin our fast from physical food to feast upon the food of God’s Word which satisfies eternally. We gather in more worship in the Lord’s house where we rejoice to be. There, His presence and glory are present for us in the Love of God, made flesh in Jesus and washed upon us in Baptism.

**SCRIPTURE:** Luke 18:31-43 Lord, Open our Eyes

Jesus predicts His death for the third time, then behold, there is a man who is physically blind. He prayed for mercy from Jesus. “Lord, have mercy!” The disciples, on the other hand, were spiritually blind. They needed to see this exchange take place. One day their eyes will also be opened to see why Jesus must go to Jerusalem. The Holy Spirit will bring to their remembrance everything Jesus told them. Our eyes have been opened and we rejoice in our salvation of Jesus, Who dies on the cross as taught by those disciples. Lord, we pray You to keep our eyes open to see why Jesus went to Jerusalem for us. Amen.

**SCRIPTURE:** Psalm 26 We Confess our Sins

Like us, the psalmist is a sinner. Praying his words, we learn to confess that we need mercy. We need saving from the enemies that pursue us. We cannot save ourselves. We need to keep God’s love ever before our faces. We confess that we love where God dwells and plead for God’s mercy when dealing with Him. Every Divine Service we begin with confessing our sins and plead for redemption. And that is why Jesus came. To be our redemption and salvation and the receivers of His wondrous deeds. Lord, have mercy on us who love Your house where Your glory dwells. Amen.

**SCRIPTURE:** 1 Corinthians 13:1-13 True Love

Paul shows us that love, true love, is active. It is more than just emotional reactions in our heart or chemical reactions in our brains. Love is the greatest gift that we have from God Who is Love. Love fulfills the Law. Love is why Jesus was born, died, and rose again. Without love, nothing has value or meaning, even those gifts listed by Paul. Without love, we gain nothing in our faithful enduring. One day, on account of God’s love for us in Christ Jesus, we will fully see God face to face and know Him as He knows us. Lord, help us to love one another as You love us. Amen.

**SCRIPTURE:** Matthew 6:16-21 Fasting

Fasting during Lent is a bodily prayer offered to the Holy Trinity, God alone truly fulfills our hunger pangs. Unlike bread that satisfies for a time, God’s Word satisfies forever. In freedom, one who fasts does so to spend more time in the study of Scripture. When fasting is done, it’s not to impress God or to win His favor. Instead, it’s to be drawn closer to Him, Who went the way of Calvary in a Good Friday Death and Easter Resurrection for us. Lord, help us to fast so that we may remember that You provide us with everything for our bodies and souls. Amen.

**SCRIPTURE:** John 12:23-36 Good Friday Death

“And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself.” John tells us that was to show us by what type of death Jesus was going to die. His Good Friday Cross Death is a divine necessity for our salvation. Without the shedding of blood, there is no forgiveness of sins. The animal sacrifices of the Old Testament were all a foreshadowing of this. Jesus’ death forgives all sins so that we may be raised in bodies that are as imperishable and undefiled as His body is. Lord, draw us and keep us close to Your Son, our salvation. Amen.

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

Jesus is given to us in Baptism. In Him, the sins of the world were paid for in bitter sufferings and death on His Good Friday cross. And, to top it off, Jesus rose from the dead. Doing so, Jesus won forgiveness for us. That forgiveness from Jesus is given to us in the waters and Word of Baptism. And just as Noah and His family were saved by God from the sinful world, we are saved from the devil, world, and our sinful flesh in Baptism. Baptism is all about Jesus for us. Lord, help us to daily repent and receive the forgiveness of sins washed upon us in Baptism. Amen.

**SCRIPTURE:** Psalm 27 Dwell in the House of the Lord

Enemies are encamped around the Psalmist. What is the Psalmist’s response? He just wants to dwell in the House of the Lord all the days of his life. Why is that so important? It’s because Jesus has promised to be in the House of the Lord for us Christians. He is present in His gifts of forgiveness, life, and salvation. He is present in His gifts of joyfully hearing the Word of God proclaimed and received in the Sacraments. Nothing is more precious for us than to be in the House of the Lord, which is a foreshadowing of our resurrected worship and life. Lord, help us honor Your house and rejoice in it. Amen.