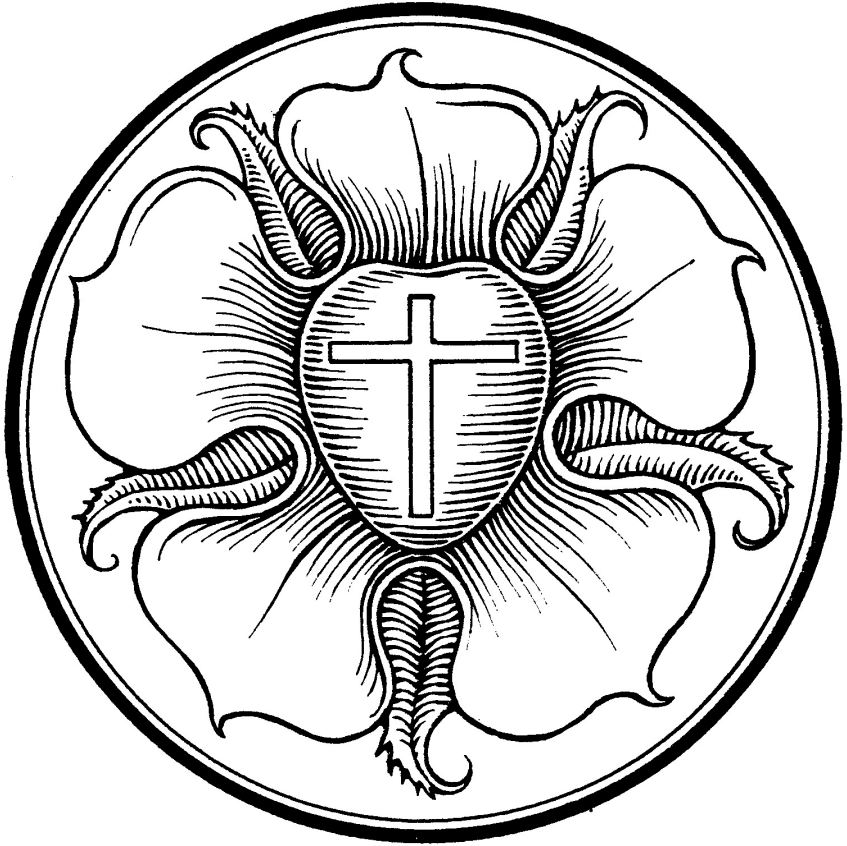


Holy Cross at Prayer



Pentecost Week 21 to the Last Sunday of the
Church Year, Series A

October 22 to December 2, 2023

SUNDAY (October 22, 2023)

Twenty-first Sunday after Pentecost

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

GOSPEL SENTENCE

"I am the LORD, and there is no other, besides me there is no God."
(Isaiah 45:5)

READING

"Thus says the LORD to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have grasped, to subdue nations before him and to loose the belts of kings, to open doors before him that gates may not be closed: "I will go before you and level the exalted places, I will break in pieces the doors of bronze and cut through the bars of iron, I will give you the treasures of darkness and the hoards in secret places, that you may know that it is I, the LORD, the God of Israel, who call you by your name." (Isaiah 45:1-3)

MEDITATION

God orders and works all things for the sake of His Bride, His Church. (See Rom 8:28) He will even use foreign kings, like Cyrus. Throughout history our Lord has directed people and events so that Christ could come and redeem us. Our Lord will finish what He has begun in you, and faith trusts in Him despite what we see around us.

SILENCE

PRAYER FOR HOLY CROSS MEMBER

Let your grace be upon Megan (Lange) O Lord, and teach her to hope in the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

PRAYER OF THE WEEK

O God, the protector of all who trust in You, have mercy on us that with You as our ruler and guide we may so pass through things temporal that we lose not the things eternal; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

MONDAY (October 23, 2023)

St. James of Jerusalem, Brother of Jesus and Martyr

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

GOSPEL SENTENCE

"I am the LORD, and there is no other, besides me there is no God."
(Isaiah 45:5)

READING

"For the sake of my servant Jacob, and Israel my chosen, I call you by your name, I name you, though you do not know me. I am the LORD, and there is no other, besides me there is no God; I equip you, though you do not know me, that people may know, from the rising of the sun and from the west, that there is none besides me; I am the LORD, and there is no other. I form light and create darkness, I make well-being and create calamity, I am the LORD, who does all these things." (Isaiah 45:4-7)

MEDITATION

Cyrus does not know the Lord. He is not a "Christian" ruler. Yet, he is God's instrument. God still uses him to show the world that He alone is the Lord and there is no other. That is how God works. He is the God who created light and darkness, bringing order with Creation. Receive comfort from the simple fact that God will use all things for the good of His people.

SILENCE**PRAYER FOR HOLY CROSS MEMBER**

Heavenly Father, bless Norma (Hashimoto) with faith in you and fervent love toward all those who cross her path this day. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

PRAYER FOR THE FEAST OF ST. JAMES OF JERUSALEM, BROTHER OF JESUS AND MARTYR

Heavenly Father, shepherd of Your people, You raised up James the Just, brother of our Lord, to lead and guide Your Church. Grant that we may follow his example of prayer and reconciliation and be strengthened by the witness of his death; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

LORD'S PRAYER

TUESDAY (October 24, 2023)

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

GOSPEL SENTENCE

"I am the LORD, and there is no other, besides me there is no God."
(Isaiah 45:5)

READING

"We give thanks to God always for all of you, constantly mentioning you in our prayers, remembering before our God and Father your work of faith and labor of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ. For we know, brothers loved by God, that he has chosen you, because our gospel came to you not only in word, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction." (1 Thessalonians 1:2-5)

MEDITATION

Faith, hope and love. From the gift of faith flow hope and love. Although we are saved through faith alone, faith is never alone. It works hope and love always. These are the gifts the Holy Spirit has given to each one of us as those belonging to Jesus. Fads and gimmicks come and go, but faith, hope and love are enduring and interwoven. One day, faith and hope will come to their completion, and love will remain as we stand face to face with Christ in heaven.

SILENCE

PRAYER FOR HOLY CROSS MEMBER

Lord Jesus Christ, be with John (Lunsford) this week. Give him your grace and teach him to learn more of your mercy with each passing day. Amen.

PRAYER OF THE WEEK

O God, the protector of all who trust in You, have mercy on us that with You as our ruler and guide we may so pass through things temporal that we lose not the things eternal; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

WEDNESDAY (October 25, 2023)

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

GOSPEL SENTENCE

"I am the LORD, and there is no other, besides me there is no God."
(Isaiah 45:5)

READING

"You know what kind of men we proved to be among you for your sake. And you became imitators of us and of the Lord, for you received the word in much affliction, with the joy of the Holy Spirit, so that you became an example to all the believers in Macedonia and in Achaia." (1 Thessalonians 1:5-7)

MEDITATION

Paul and his traveling companions, Silvanus and Timothy, handed down the faith - the Gospel - as it had been handed down to them. The Gospel is the power of God to save and keep in the midst of everything that opposes it. So the Lord is with you, not far away in your suffering. Today, our pastors are given the gift of handing down the "tradition" – God's Word taught and preached in purity. The Word does not change, but it does exactly what God promises. It gives and delivers our Lord Himself who is joined with us, even in our suffering. For the Lord is always there, with His Word.

SILENCE**PRAYER FOR HOLY CROSS MEMBER**

Be with Pat (Short) this day, O Lord, and show her your great love throughout all the days of her life. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

PRAYER OF THE WEEK

O God, the protector of all who trust in You, have mercy on us that with You as our ruler and guide we may so pass through things temporal that we lose not the things eternal; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

THURSDAY (October 26, 2023)

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

GOSPEL SENTENCE

"I am the LORD, and there is no other, besides me there is no God."
(Isaiah 45:5)

READING

"For not only has the word of the Lord sounded forth from you in Macedonia and Achaia, but your faith in God has gone forth everywhere, so that we need not say anything. For they themselves report concerning us the kind of reception we had among you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come." (1 Thessalonians 1:8-10)

MEDITATION

The Word of Christ is a living, breathing Word that does what it says – it delivers Jesus' cleansing through forgiveness. Where there is forgiveness, there is also life and salvation. Those of us, like the Thessalonians, who belong to Christ, stand clean before the Father in His forgiveness and mercy. God brings forth this new life so that others may see and believe. God uses us, too, to speak and bring the good news of His cleansing to others. We are His witnesses, that the Truth that is in us, may be spoken to those God has placed in our lives.

SILENCE

PRAYER FOR HOLY CROSS MEMBER

Show your grace to Ben (Hull) this day, as he goes about the callings you have given to him. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

PRAYER OF THE WEEK

O God, the protector of all who trust in You, have mercy on us that with You as our ruler and guide we may so pass through things temporal that we lose not the things eternal; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

FRIDAY (October 27, 2023)

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

GOSPEL SENTENCE

"I am the LORD, and there is no other, besides me there is no God."
(Isaiah 45:5)

READING

"Then the Pharisees went and plotted how to entangle him in his words. And they sent their disciples to him, along with the Herodians, saying, "Teacher, we know that you are true and teach the way of God truthfully, and you do not care about anyone's opinion, for you are not swayed by appearances. Tell us, then, what you think. Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar, or not?" (Matthew 22:15-17)

MEDITATION

Jesus' enemies don't give up. They continually seek ways to trap Jesus and bring Him down. First they "flatter" Him, and slide in an innocent sounding question they think will make Jesus "choose which team he is on". And by choosing a team, His answer will display Jesus' disloyalty to the other side. However, Jesus knows this game well and chooses not to play. After all, he was tempted by the devil soon after His Baptism. Instead, Jesus remains faithful to His Father, fulfills all the Law, and dies in your place, for all your sins. Game over.

SILENCE**PRAYER FOR HOLY CROSS MEMBER**

Father, we lift up Kirtus (Creiglow) before you this day, asking that You would give him your mercy all the days of his life. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

PRAYER OF THE WEEK

O God, the protector of all who trust in You, have mercy on us that with You as our ruler and guide we may so pass through things temporal that we lose not the things eternal; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

SATURDAY (October 28, 2023)

St. Simon and St. Jude, Apostles

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

GOSPEL SENTENCE

"I am the LORD, and there is no other, besides me there is no God."
(Isaiah 45:5)

READING

"But Jesus, aware of their malice, said, "Why put me to the test, you hypocrites? Show me the coin for the tax." And they brought him a denarius. And Jesus said to them, "Whose likeness and inscription is this?" They said, "Caesar's." Then he said to them, "Therefore render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's." When they heard it, they marveled. And they left him and went away." (Matthew 22:18-22)

MEDITATION

Jesus calls these false teachers of the law, "hypocrites". They try to trap Him as either a revolutionary against Rome or one who supports Roman oppression. He beats them at their own game and exposes their evil motives, trying to control others, even Jesus. Jesus is teaching that all authority, whether the *government* or the *eternal*, is from God alone. Jesus submits to both authorities, even unto death under Pilate to save them all.

SILENCE

PRAYER FOR HOLY CROSS MEMBER

O Lord, in Holy Baptism you put your Name upon Rick (Fielitz). Bless him now with the forgiveness of sins and a firm trust in you. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

PRAYER FOR THE FEAST OF ST. SIMON AND ST. JUDE, APOSTLES

Almighty God, You chose Your servants Simon and Jude to be numbered among the glorious company of the apostles. As they were faithful and zealous in their mission, so may we with ardent devotion make known the love and mercy of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

LORD'S PRAYER

SUNDAY (October 29, 2023)

Reformation Day (Observed)

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

GOSPEL SENTENCE

"...if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed." (John 8:36)

READING

"Then I saw another angel flying directly overhead, with an eternal gospel to proclaim to those who dwell on earth, to every nation and tribe and language and people. And he said with a loud voice, "Fear God and give him glory, because the hour of his judgment has come, and worship him who made heaven and earth, the sea and the springs of water."" (Revelation 14:6-7)

MEDITATION

Judgment is a word that we feel is pretty negative most of the time. "Don't judge me", we might say. But here the angel flies overhead "with an eternal gospel to proclaim" - good news. And what is this "good news"? The "judgment" of the cross. Jesus took your judgment upon Himself. He died the death you deserve as a sinner and instead pronounces you absolved, innocent, free. Thanks be to God that He judged our sins on that cross. This innocence is now yours in Baptism and in hearing; this is a great Gospel.

SILENCE**PRAYER FOR HOLY CROSS MEMBER**

Let your grace be upon Al (Arrington) O Lord, and teach him to hope in the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come.

Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

PRAYER OF THE WEEK

Almighty and gracious Lord, pour out Your Holy Spirit on Your faithful people. Keep us steadfast in Your grace and truth, protect and deliver us in times of temptation, defend us against all enemies, and grant to Your Church Your saving peace; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

LORD'S PRAYER

MONDAY (October 30, 2023)

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

GOSPEL SENTENCE

"...if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed." (John 8:36)

READING

"Now we know that whatever the law says it speaks to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be stopped, and the whole world may be held accountable to God. For by works of the law no human being will be justified in his sight, since through the law comes knowledge of sin." (Romans 3:19-20)

MEDITATION

Every mouth may be stopped, or in other words, "shut up". God uses His Law, not to clean us up, but shut us up, and show us that we're sinners. Our works cannot make us right with God. The Law shows us our sin, and so at some point, there is nothing left for us to say before God about our own goodness. In our salvation, we have nothing to add, no excuses to make, nothing to give. But once we are shut up, God speaks His Word of forgiveness. From the cross to you, Jesus says, 'Father, forgive them.' And this is His Word of Gospel for you.

SILENCE

PRAYER FOR HOLY CROSS MEMBER

Heavenly Father, bless Jordan (Yates) with faith in you and fervent love toward all those who cross her path this day. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

PRAYER OF THE WEEK

Almighty and gracious Lord, pour out Your Holy Spirit on Your faithful people. Keep us steadfast in Your grace and truth, protect and deliver us in times of temptation, defend us against all enemies, and grant to Your Church Your saving peace; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

LORD'S PRAYER

TUESDAY (October 31, 2023)

Reformation Day

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

GOSPEL SENTENCE

"...if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed." (John 8:36)

READING

"But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it– the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction: for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith." (Romans 3:20-25)

MEDITATION

The righteousness of God. While it sounds stern, it is actually the sweetest of words. Why? Because God's righteousness is what you receive through faith in Jesus Christ, given to you in your baptism. That's what He delivers to you through His Word and His Body and Blood. We call it justification, that God declares you innocent and holy and righteous for the sake of His Son, Jesus Christ.

SILENCE**PRAYER FOR HOLY CROSS MEMBER**

Lord Jesus Christ, be with Del (Cirelli) this week. Give her your grace and teach her to learn more of your mercy with each passing day. Amen.

PRAYER OF THE WEEK

Almighty and gracious Lord, pour out Your Holy Spirit on Your faithful people. Keep us steadfast in Your grace and truth, protect and deliver us in times of temptation, defend us against all enemies, and grant to Your Church Your saving peace; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

LORD'S PRAYER

WEDNESDAY (November 1, 2023)

All Saints' Day

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

GOSPEL SENTENCE

"...if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed." (John 8:36)

READING

"This was to show God's righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins. It was to show his righteousness at the present time, so that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus. Then what becomes of our boasting? It is excluded. By what kind of law? By a law of works? No, but by the law of faith. For we hold that one is justified by faith apart from works of the law." (Romans 3:25-28)

MEDITATION

God shows His righteousness in Jesus Christ. Although we are unrighteous, Jesus makes us righteous through the forgiveness of sins. Your righteousness as a Christian is from faith alone, not something you do. To be justified is to be forgiven of all sins. Faith clings to Jesus alone and His blessed Promise to forgive you, giving His righteousness to you.

SILENCE**PRAYER FOR HOLY CROSS MEMBER**

Be with Samantha (Creiglow) this day, O Lord, and show her your great love throughout all the days of her life. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

PRAYER FOR ALL SAINTS' DAY

Almighty and everlasting God, You knit together Your faithful people of all times and places into one holy communion, the mystical body of Your Son, Jesus Christ. Grant us so to follow Your blessed saints in all virtuous and godly living that, together with them, we may come to the unspeakable joys You have prepared for those who love You; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

LORD'S PRAYER

THURSDAY (November 2, 2023)

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

GOSPEL SENTENCE

"...if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed." (John 8:36)

READING

"So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed him, "If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." They answered him, "We are offspring of Abraham and have never been enslaved to anyone. How is it that you say, 'You will become free'?" (John 8:31-33)

MEDITATION

The Jews couldn't believe it. We have never been in slavery to anyone! Forget the Egyptians, the Babylonians, the Assyrians, and a host of other nations who walked all over Israel at different times. All sinners are blind to the slavery Jesus speaks of, the worst kind, our slavery to sin. We are literally born into it. But Jesus came for exactly this reason, to save us from our slavery to sin. Through His Word of forgiveness, the Gospel, you are set free! Thanks be to God for Jesus' victory over our sin by the cross. "So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed." (John 8:36)

SILENCE**PRAYER FOR HOLY CROSS MEMBER**

Show your grace to Kristina (Lunsford) this day, as she goes about the callings you have given to her. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

PRAYER OF THE WEEK

Almighty and gracious Lord, pour out Your Holy Spirit on Your faithful people. Keep us steadfast in Your grace and truth, protect and deliver us in times of temptation, defend us against all enemies, and grant to Your Church Your saving peace; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

LORD'S PRAYER

FRIDAY (November 3, 2023)

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

GOSPEL SENTENCE

"...if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed." (John 8:36)

READING

"Jesus answered them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who practices sin is a slave to sin. The slave does not remain in the house forever; the son remains forever. So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed." (John 8:34-36)

MEDITATION

Jesus giving freedom is not just a set of nice words. When Jesus, the Word of God in human flesh, set you free, that is what happened. God creates everything through His Word. He holds together everything by His Word. And He forgives all sin (sets free) by His Word. That forgiveness of sins is as sure and certain as God saying, "Let there be light." (And there was light.) So, our Lord's word of forgiveness is no mere wishful thinking. His Word gives what it says. You are truly free, indeed.

SILENCE

PRAYER FOR HOLY CROSS MEMBER

Father, we lift up Jack (Poshepny) before you this day, asking that You would give him your mercy all the days of his life. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

PRAYER OF THE WEEK

Almighty and gracious Lord, pour out Your Holy Spirit on Your faithful people. Keep us steadfast in Your grace and truth, protect and deliver us in times of temptation, defend us against all enemies, and grant to Your Church Your saving peace; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

LORD'S PRAYER

SATURDAY (November 4, 2023)

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

GOSPEL SENTENCE

"...if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed." (John 8:36)

READING

God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear though the earth gives way, though the mountains be moved into the heart of the sea, though its waters roar and foam, though the mountains tremble at its swelling. (Psalm 46:1-3)

MEDITATION

Our Lord is with us. He has given us His own Name in Holy Baptism. He joins Himself to us in times of trouble and in times of joy. In this world, we suffer trials and temptations, but God promises to be with us always. That is sure and certain through faith alone, not through the things we see or feel in the moment. We need not fear, for God's promises are certain and steady, like an anchor for us in the middle of crashing waters, roaring and foaming. His mercy and compassion are steadfast. In Him, we rest secure and can call on His name in any trouble or need.

SILENCE**PRAYER FOR HOLY CROSS MEMBER**

O Lord, in Holy Baptism you put your Name upon Tom (Dennis). Bless him now with the forgiveness of sins and a firm trust in you. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

PRAYER OF THE WEEK

Almighty and gracious Lord, pour out Your Holy Spirit on Your faithful people. Keep us steadfast in Your grace and truth, protect and deliver us in times of temptation, defend us against all enemies, and grant to Your Church Your saving peace; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

LORD'S PRAYER

SUNDAY (November 5, 2023)

All Saints' Day (Observed)

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

GOSPEL SENTENCE

"See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are." (1 John 3:1)

READING

"After this I looked, and behold, a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands, and crying out with a loud voice, "Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!" And all the angels were standing around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures, and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, saying, "Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might be to our God forever and ever! Amen."" (Revelation 7:9-12)

MEDITATION

St. John sees a certain and true heavenly vision. There are throngs streaming to the throne of Christ. He sees countless people, not segregated by human tribe, social status or income. A multitude with one thing in common – they are cleansed by the blood of the Lamb. Although we all were born into death and slavery to sin, all these are washed by the blood of the Lamb who takes away our sin. He does it for you and for all people everywhere. You are washed clean, even today!

SILENCE

PRAYER FOR HOLY CROSS MEMBER

Let your grace be upon Carol (Kell), O Lord, and teach her to hope in the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

PRAYER FOR ALL SAINTS' DAY

Almighty and everlasting God, You knit together Your faithful people of all times and places into one holy communion, the mystical body of Your Son, Jesus Christ. Grant us so to follow Your blessed saints in all virtuous and godly living that, together with them, we may come to the unspeakable joys You have prepared for those who love You; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

LORD'S PRAYER

MONDAY (November 6, 2023)

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

GOSPEL SENTENCE

“See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are.” (1 John 3:1)

READING

“Then one of the elders addressed me, saying, “Who are these, clothed in white robes, and from where have they come?” I said to him, “Sir, you know.” And he said to me, “These are the ones coming out of the great tribulation. They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.” (Revelation 7:12-14)

MEDITATION

This throng, these multitudes with their varying pedigrees and backgrounds, have the one thing necessary. Jesus has clothed them with the garments of His righteousness—His holiness. They are washed clean by Jesus’ blood on the cross. We, too, are washed clean, forgiven through the waters and promise of Baptism, where we too are clothed in Christ’s righteousness. He has made you His own—gathered into His one holy, christian and apostolic church.

SILENCE**PRAYER FOR HOLY CROSS MEMBER**

Heavenly Father, bless Jack (Cross) with faith in you and fervent love toward all those who cross his path this day. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

PRAYER OF THE WEEK

Almighty and everlasting God, You knit together Your faithful people of all times and places into one holy communion, the mystical body of Your Son, Jesus Christ. Grant us so to follow Your blessed saints in all virtuous and godly living that, together with them, we may come to the unspeakable joys You have prepared for those who love You; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

LORD’S PRAYER

TUESDAY (November 7, 2023)

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

GOSPEL SENTENCE

"See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are." (1 John 3:1)

READING

""Therefore they are before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple; and he who sits on the throne will shelter them with his presence. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst anymore; the sun shall not strike them, nor any scorching heat. 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."" (Revelation 7:15-17)

MEDITATION

Heaven is revealed as an unimaginable place where there is no more hunger, thirst, sickness and sorrow. It is a Christian's sure and certain eternal home. No more suffering, no more tears. Here service is no burden at all, since there's no more sinful flesh and effects of sin in heaven. It's sinless, perfect and holy, because God is there with us. We will have new resurrected bodies that serve God day and night. This is all because Jesus came to serve us and give His life for us.

SILENCE

PRAYER FOR HOLY CROSS MEMBER

Lord Jesus Christ, be with Matteo (Barone) this week. Give him your grace and teach him to learn more of your mercy with each passing day. Amen.

PRAYER OF THE WEEK

Almighty and everlasting God, You knit together Your faithful people of all times and places into one holy communion, the mystical body of Your Son, Jesus Christ. Grant us so to follow Your blessed saints in all virtuous and godly living that, together with them, we may come to the unspeakable joys You have prepared for those who love You; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

LORD'S PRAYER

WEDNESDAY (November 8, 2023)

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

GOSPEL SENTENCE

“See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are.” (1 John 3:1)

READING

“See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are. The reason why the world does not know us is that it did not know him. Beloved, we are God’s children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is. And everyone who thus hopes in him purifies himself as he is pure.” (1 John 3:1-3)

MEDITATION

Through the waters of Baptism, we are made children of God. We are given faith and a new life, because God loves us. It’s that simple. God’s love goes beyond the foundations of the earth, farther than the East is from the West. He calls us by name, redeems us and continues to shower His love upon us, so that we have this life forever.

SILENCE**PRAYER FOR HOLY CROSS MEMBER**

Be with Marianna (North) this day, O Lord, and show her your great love throughout all the days of her life. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

PRAYER OF THE WEEK

Almighty and everlasting God, You knit together Your faithful people of all times and places into one holy communion, the mystical body of Your Son, Jesus Christ. Grant us so to follow Your blessed saints in all virtuous and godly living that, together with them, we may come to the unspeakable joys You have prepared for those who love You; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

LORD’S PRAYER

THURSDAY (November 9, 2023)

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

GOSPEL SENTENCE

"See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are." (1 John 3:1)

READING

"Seeing the crowds, he went up on the mountain, and when he sat down, his disciples came to him. And he opened his mouth and taught them, saying: "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. "Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted." (Matthew 5:1-4)

MEDITATION

Blessed are the poor in spirit, those who stand before God with nothing to claim, but only to be given to. These find the God before whom they stand is He who is the One on his way to the cross. There He will stand before men to be judged by them. He stands before them, the one who claims nothing on his own, and they give him the one thing they have to give - their sin, their deaths, and their judgements. He takes that judgment upon Himself, in order to say to us, 'By the blood of my cross, you are blessed, you are of the Kingdom of Heaven.'

SILENCE

PRAYER FOR HOLY CROSS MEMBER

Show your grace to George (Cirelli) this day, as he goes about the callings you have given to him. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

PRAYER OF THE WEEK

Almighty and everlasting God, You knit together Your faithful people of all times and places into one holy communion, the mystical body of Your Son, Jesus Christ. Grant us so to follow Your blessed saints in all virtuous and godly living that, together with them, we may come to the unspeakable joys You have prepared for those who love You; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

LORD'S PRAYER

FRIDAY (November 10, 2023)

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

GOSPEL SENTENCE

"See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are." (1 John 3:1)

READING

"Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied. "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy. "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God." (Matthew 5:4-9)

MEDITATION

Righteousness is to be judged innocent by the Father. Righteousness is to be found in fulfilling the full Law, so that no part of the Law is left unsatisfied. Fulfilling the full Law is 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and all your soul and all your mind, and you shall love your neighbor as yourself'. Jesus hungered for righteousness, even to the point of death on the cross, so that in that death, every sinner is justified before the face of God the Father.

SILENCE**PRAYER FOR HOLY CROSS MEMBER**

Father, we lift up Lee (Weise) before you this day, asking that You would give him your mercy all the days of his life. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

PRAYER OF THE WEEK

Almighty and everlasting God, You knit together Your faithful people of all times and places into one holy communion, the mystical body of Your Son, Jesus Christ. Grant us so to follow Your blessed saints in all virtuous and godly living that, together with them, we may come to the unspeakable joys You have prepared for those who love You; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

LORD'S PRAYER

SATURDAY (November 11, 2023)

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

GOSPEL SENTENCE

“See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are.” (1 John 3:1)

READING

“Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. “Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.” (Matthew 5:10-12)

MEDITATION

Jesus’ word is the blessing of those who are poor in spirit, who faithfully receive every good gift from the Father. Jesus’ word blesses those who mourn in this world of sin, but who are comforted by the Word of promise and life. Jesus’ word blesses those who are meek and afflicted, but who inherit the Earth. This word of blessing will be rejected by the world. In his Word of blessing, however, Jesus creates us anew, as the people not under the Law, but under His promise - the Gospel of all sins forgiven.

SILENCE

PRAYER FOR HOLY CROSS MEMBER

O Lord, in Holy Baptism you put your Name upon Olivia (Erickson). Bless her now with the forgiveness of sins and a firm trust in you. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

PRAYER OF THE WEEK

Almighty and everlasting God, You knit together Your faithful people of all times and places into one holy communion, the mystical body of Your Son, Jesus Christ. Grant us so to follow Your blessed saints in all virtuous and godly living that, together with them, we may come to the unspeakable joys You have prepared for those who love You; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

LORD’S PRAYER

SUNDAY (November 12, 2023)

Twenty-fourth Sunday after Pentecost

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

GOSPEL SENTENCE

"But at midnight there was a cry, 'Here is the bridegroom! Come out to meet him.'" (Matthew 25:6)

READING

"Woe to you who desire the day of the LORD! Why would you have the day of the LORD? It is darkness, and not light, as if a man fled from a lion, and a bear met him, or went into the house and leaned his hand against the wall, and a serpent bit him. Is not the day of the LORD darkness, and not light, and gloom with no brightness in it?" (Amos 5:18-20)

MEDITATION

The prophets of old spoke of the "day of the LORD" as a time when God dramatically reveals Himself and executes judgement by condemning the wicked, and delivering the righteous. In this text, there seems to be no way out, and certainly no one *is* righteous. It is an ominous text, full of woe and judgment. Yet, for the judgement of *our* sin, we look to the cross, where One has already been judged and condemned for us. Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. Through your baptism, the fruits of the cross are yours, received through faith.

SILENCE**PRAYER FOR HOLY CROSS MEMBER**

Let your grace be upon Rick (Merkh), O Lord, and teach him to hope in the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

PRAYER OF THE WEEK

Lord God, heavenly Father, send forth Your Son to lead home His bride, the Church, that with all the company of the redeemed we may finally enter into His eternal wedding feast; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

LORD'S PRAYER

MONDAY (November 13, 2023)

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

GOSPEL SENTENCE

"But at midnight there was a cry, 'Here is the bridegroom! Come out to meet him.'" (Matthew 25:6)

READING

"I hate, I despise your feasts, and I take no delight in your solemn assemblies. Even though you offer me your burnt offerings and grain offerings, I will not accept them; and the peace offerings of your fattened animals, I will not look upon them. Take away from me the noise of your songs; to the melody of your harps I will not listen. But let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream." (Amos 5:21-24)

MEDITATION

Though Israel may continue to offer the worship described in these verses, it will do no good. Where simple justice and humility are lacking, even the most orthodox ritual and the finest of music is nothing more than a hypocritical sham. Luther puts it this way: "The wicked do not please the Lord, regardless of how great and splendid their works may be." Our worship begins with God serving us and not the other way around. Thanks be to God for His service to us through His Gospel and Sacraments.

SILENCE**PRAYER FOR HOLY CROSS MEMBER**

Heavenly Father, bless John (Martin) with faith in you and fervent love toward all those who cross his path this day. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

PRAYER OF THE WEEK (FROM SUNDAY)

Lord God, heavenly Father, send forth Your Son to lead home His bride, the Church, that with all the company of the redeemed we may finally enter into His eternal wedding feast; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

LORD'S PRAYER

TUESDAY (November 14, 2023)

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

GOSPEL SENTENCE

"But at midnight there was a cry, 'Here is the bridegroom! Come out to meet him.'" (Matthew 25:6)

READING

"But we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, about those who are asleep, that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope. For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have fallen asleep. For this we declare to you by a word from the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep." (1 Thessalonians 4:13-15)

MEDITATION

When someone we love dies, we rightly grieve. Death is not natural, but a result of sin. It causes chaos and pain, and we are often left in deep sorrow. We grieve, yes, but do not grieve as those who have no hope. Our hope is in the resurrected Christ. Our hope is that His death and resurrection is for us. That through Baptism, the certainty of His death and resurrection is our certainty. To die with Christ is to live. 'For to me, to live *is* Christ, and to die *is* gain.' (Phil 1:21)

SILENCE**PRAYER FOR HOLY CROSS MEMBER**

Lord Jesus Christ, be with Dianne (Herfindahl) this week. Give her your grace and teach her to learn more of your mercy with each passing day. Amen.

PRAYER OF THE WEEK (FROM SUNDAY)

Lord God, heavenly Father, send forth Your Son to lead home His bride, the Church, that with all the company of the redeemed we may finally enter into His eternal wedding feast; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

LORD'S PRAYER

WEDNESDAY (November 15, 2023)

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

GOSPEL SENTENCE

"But at midnight there was a cry, 'Here is the bridegroom! Come out to meet him.'" (Matthew 25:6)

READING

"For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord. Therefore encourage one another with these words." (1 Thessalonians 4:16-18)

MEDITATION

These are very descriptive words of the last day – the day of judgement and joy. Judgement is for those who do not believe; joy for all believers who rise with Christ – those whose sins are already judged at the cross. First to rise are those who died in Christ (believers), and then all believers will be caught up. A joyous day indeed. St. Paul writes these words to comfort and strengthen us as we await that great day in hope.

SILENCE

PRAYER FOR HOLY CROSS MEMBER

Be with Michael (Prowatzke) this day, O Lord, and show him your great love throughout all the days of his life. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

PRAYER OF THE WEEK (FROM SUNDAY)

Lord God, heavenly Father, send forth Your Son to lead home His bride, the Church, that with all the company of the redeemed we may finally enter into His eternal wedding feast; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

LORD'S PRAYER

THURSDAY (November 16, 2023)

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

GOSPEL SENTENCE

"But at midnight there was a cry, 'Here is the bridegroom! Come out to meet him.'" (Matthew 25:6)

READING

""Then the kingdom of heaven will be like ten virgins who took their lamps and went to meet the bridegroom. Five of them were foolish, and five were wise. For when the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with them, but the wise took flasks of oil with their lamps." (Matthew 25:1-4)

MEDITATION

Jesus is revealing Himself as the groom who came to take as his bride the Church. As Paul says in Ephesians 5, Christ loves his Church. He gave his life for her. He makes her holy by the washing of water with the word. He presents his bride in all her splendor, forgiven, cleansed, and sanctified. The point of the parable is to reveal Jesus and His kingdom. He is the Groom. We are his bride, the Church. In hearing this parable, look to what Jesus is telling us about Himself.

SILENCE**PRAYER FOR HOLY CROSS MEMBER**

Show your grace to Denise (Ussery) this day, as she goes about the callings you have given to her. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

PRAYER OF THE WEEK (FROM SUNDAY)

Lord God, heavenly Father, send forth Your Son to lead home His bride, the Church, that with all the company of the redeemed we may finally enter into His eternal wedding feast; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

LORD'S PRAYER

FRIDAY (November 17, 2023)

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

GOSPEL SENTENCE

"But at midnight there was a cry, 'Here is the bridegroom! Come out to meet him.'" (Matthew 25:6)

READING

"As the bridegroom was delayed, they all became drowsy and slept. But at midnight there was a cry, 'Here is the bridegroom! Come out to meet him.' Then all those virgins rose and trimmed their lamps. And the foolish said to the wise, 'Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.' But the wise answered, saying, 'Since there will not be enough for us and for you, go rather to the dealers and buy for yourselves.'" (Matthew 25:5-9)

MEDITATION

We are his bride, the Church – that designation was given us in our Baptism. And yet, this Groom tarries. We cannot get control of his schedule. We don't always know His plans for our lives. Sometimes the way He gives his gifts just doesn't seem right as we wait here under the Law. This Groom, however, is the Groom of the Gospel, the Groom who cleanses and sanctifies his bride, the Church. He does this with all generosity, abundantly, beyond making sense. He will certainly keep His Promise to come for you, His bride.

SILENCE

PRAYER FOR HOLY CROSS MEMBER

Father, we lift up Gary (Yee) before you this day, asking that You would give him your mercy all the days of his life. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

PRAYER OF THE WEEK (FROM SUNDAY)

Lord God, heavenly Father, send forth Your Son to lead home His bride, the Church, that with all the company of the redeemed we may finally enter into His eternal wedding feast; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

LORD'S PRAYER

SATURDAY (November 18, 2023)

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

GOSPEL SENTENCE

"But at midnight there was a cry, 'Here is the bridegroom! Come out to meet him.'" (Matthew 25:6)

READING

"And while they were going to buy, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the marriage feast, and the door was shut. Afterward the other virgins came also, saying, 'Lord, lord, open to us.' But he answered, 'Truly, I say to you, I do not know you.' Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour." (Matthew 25:10-13)

MEDITATION

When is the Last Day, when He comes to judge the living and dead? No one is given that knowledge. But, He will show up. Jesus is the Groom. As we suffer in life, as we undergo temptation, we ask, "Where is our salvation? When are we delivered?" This parable has us looking at the Groom and knowing, he will show up, though he seems delayed. But as we wait, we wait knowing that we belong to Him, and his blood cleanses us from all sin. He is with us in his Word, giving gifts to us in abundance, beyond anything we could've expected.

SILENCE**PRAYER FOR HOLY CROSS MEMBER**

O Lord, in Holy Baptism you put your Name upon Bonnie (Lahde). Bless her now with the forgiveness of sins and a firm trust in you. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

PRAYER OF THE WEEK (FROM SUNDAY)

Lord God, heavenly Father, send forth Your Son to lead home His bride, the Church, that with all the company of the redeemed we may finally enter into His eternal wedding feast; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

LORD'S PRAYER

SUNDAY (November 19, 2023)

Twenty-fifth Sunday after Pentecost

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

GOSPEL SENTENCE

"For you are all children of light, children of the day. We are not of the night or of the darkness." (1 Thessalonians 5:5)

READING

"Be silent before the Lord GOD! For the day of the LORD is near; the LORD has prepared a sacrifice and consecrated his guests. And on the day of the LORD's sacrifice—"I will punish the officials and the king's sons and all who array themselves in foreign attire. On that day I will punish everyone who leaps over the threshold, and those who fill their master's house with violence and fraud." (Zephaniah 1:7-9)

MEDITATION

Words of judgement make us squirm a bit. They sound so raw and unyielding. However, Christ has given us the appropriate attire to come before the Master. He has clothed us in the Baptismal garments of His righteousness. He has marked us as His own. We are redeemed, forgiven and loved.

SILENCE**PRAYER FOR HOLY CROSS MEMBER**

Let your grace be upon Kelsey (Lunsford), O Lord, and teach her to hope in the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

PRAYER OF THE WEEK

Almighty and ever-living God, You have given exceedingly great and precious promises to those who trust in You. Dispel from us the works of darkness and grant us to live in the light of Your Son, Jesus Christ, that our faith may never be found wanting; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

LORD'S PRAYER

MONDAY (November 20, 2023)

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

GOSPEL SENTENCE

"For you are all children of light, children of the day. We are not of the night or of the darkness." (1 Thessalonians 5:5)

READING

"The great day of the LORD is near, near and hastening fast; the sound of the day of the LORD is bitter; the mighty man cries aloud there. A day of wrath is that day, a day of distress and anguish, a day of ruin and devastation, a day of darkness and gloom, a day of clouds and thick darkness, a day of trumpet blast and battle cry against the fortified cities and against the lofty battlements." (Zephaniah 1:14-16)

MEDITATION

The great day of the LORD is near. There is an urgency to the prophet Zephaniah's words here. He paints a picture of reversal—creation is turned upside down. Instead of light, there is darkness, gloom and death. Destruction looms. Good Friday is Jesus taking all sin upon Himself and being judged horribly in our place. All that we deserve, Jesus took upon Himself, so that on the Last Day we stand before Him in the righteousness and holiness that He gives us. Faith looks to Jesus who has judged His church as forgiven on account of His blood. He is the Lamb who has taken away your sin.

SILENCE**PRAYER FOR HOLY CROSS MEMBER**

Heavenly Father, bless Kristen (Barone) with faith in you and fervent love toward all those who cross her path this day. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

PRAYER OF THE WEEK

Almighty and ever-living God, You have given exceedingly great and precious promises to those who trust in You. Dispel from us the works of darkness and grant us to live in the light of Your Son, Jesus Christ, that our faith may never be found wanting; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

LORD'S PRAYER

TUESDAY (November 21, 2023)

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

GOSPEL SENTENCE

“For you are all children of light, children of the day. We are not of the night or of the darkness.” (1 Thessalonians 5:5)

READING

“Now concerning the times and the seasons, brothers, you have no need to have anything written to you. For you yourselves are fully aware that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. While people are saying, “There is peace and security,” then sudden destruction will come upon them as labor pains come upon a pregnant woman, and they will not escape. But you are not in darkness, brothers, for that day to surprise you like a thief. For you are all children of light, children of the day. We are not of the night or of the darkness.” (1 Thessalonians 5:1-5)

MEDITATION

Christ is our only peace and security. He is our light, and He lights the path before us so we need not live in darkness and fear. The last days are here. But those living on *the* Last Day, those living in the darkness of their sin, will be taken by surprise—they won’t be ready to stand before the throne of Christ. But we, dear brothers and sisters in Christ, will stand before the throne in awe, face to face with the One who gave His life to give us life eternal.

SILENCE

PRAYER FOR HOLY CROSS MEMBER

Lord Jesus Christ, be with Donna (Menche) this week. Give her your grace and teach her to learn more of your mercy with each passing day. Amen.

PRAYER OF THE WEEK

Almighty and ever-living God, You have given exceedingly great and precious promises to those who trust in You. Dispel from us the works of darkness and grant us to live in the light of Your Son, Jesus Christ, that our faith may never be found wanting; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

LORD’S PRAYER

WEDNESDAY (November 22, 2023)

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

GOSPEL SENTENCE

"For you are all children of light, children of the day. We are not of the night or of the darkness." (1 Thessalonians 5:5)

READING

"So then let us not sleep, as others do, but let us keep awake and be sober. For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk, are drunk at night. But since we belong to the day, let us be sober, having put on the breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet the hope of salvation. For God has not destined us for wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us so that whether we are awake or asleep we might live with him. Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing." (1 Thessalonians 5:6-11)

MEDITATION

Christ makes us children of the light and gives us gifts of faith, love, hope and salvation. These gifts are not to be stored on a shelf, or hoarded for ourselves. No, these are lavish gifts, born out of generosity and mercy, given to us freely, so that we might be generous with these gifts to others. So, let us encourage one another. We are given to see one another as those for whom Jesus died and rose. Build up one another with this comfort of the Gospel.

SILENCE**PRAYER FOR HOLY CROSS MEMBER**

Be with Helen (Ohman) this day, O Lord, and show her your great love throughout all the days of her life. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

PRAYER OF THE WEEK (FROM SUNDAY)

Almighty and ever-living God, You have given exceedingly great and precious promises to those who trust in You. Dispel from us the works of darkness and grant us to live in the light of Your Son, Jesus Christ, that our faith may never be found wanting; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

LORD'S PRAYER

THURSDAY (November 23, 2023)

Day of Thanksgiving

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

GOSPEL SENTENCE

"For you are all children of light, children of the day. We are not of the night or of the darkness." (1 Thessalonians 5:5)

READING

""For it will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted to them his property. To one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. He who had received the five talents went at once and traded with them, and he made five talents more. So also he who had the two talents made two talents more. But he who had received the one talent went and dug in the ground and hid his master's money." (Matthew 25:14-19)

MEDITATION

God entrusts His servants with the abundance of His grace that we might be a gift to others. As God in Christ is merciful to us, He gives us the abundance of His mercy that we might be merciful to those in need. He gives us abundant love and truth that we might love and serve those around us, those whom God places before us everyday.

SILENCE**PRAYER FOR HOLY CROSS MEMBER**

Show your grace to Jacob (Wallace) this day, as he goes about the callings you have given to him. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

PRAYER FOR THE DAY OF THANKSGIVING

Almighty God, Your mercies are new every morning and You graciously provide for all our needs of body and soul. Grant us Your Holy Spirit that we may acknowledge Your goodness, give thanks for Your benefits, and serve You in willing obedience all our days; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

LORD'S PRAYER

FRIDAY (November 24, 2023)

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

GOSPEL SENTENCE

"For you are all children of light, children of the day. We are not of the night or of the darkness." (1 Thessalonians 5:5)

READING

"Now after a long time the master of those servants came and settled accounts with them. And he who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five talents more, saying, 'Master, you delivered to me five talents; here I have made five talents more.' His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.' And he also who had the two talents came forward, saying, 'Master, you delivered to me two talents; here I have made two talents more.' His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.'" (Matthew 25:19-23)

MEDITATION

God is the generous Master who gives freely. He delights in giving us His gifts. He is faithful to us, His children. He asks in turn, that we be faithful to Him, receiving His blessings with thanksgiving, and caring for all whom He has entrusted to us. God encourages us to give away the free gifts we've been given.

SILENCE**PRAYER FOR HOLY CROSS MEMBER**

Father, we lift up Dave (Davis) before you this day, asking that You would give him your mercy all the days of his life. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

PRAYER OF THE WEEK (FROM SUNDAY)

Almighty and ever-living God, You have given exceedingly great and precious promises to those who trust in You. Dispel from us the works of darkness and grant us to live in the light of Your Son, Jesus Christ, that our faith may never be found wanting; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

LORD'S PRAYER

SATURDAY (November 25, 2023)

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

GOSPEL SENTENCE

"For you are all children of light, children of the day. We are not of the night or of the darkness." (1 Thessalonians 5:5)

READING

"He also who had received the one talent came forward, saying, 'Master, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you scattered no seed, so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here you have what is yours.' But his master answered him, 'You wicked and slothful servant! You knew that I reap where I have not sown and gather where I scattered no seed? Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and at my coming I should have received what was my own with interest. So take the talent from him and give it to him who has the ten talents. For to everyone who has will more be given, and he will have an abundance. But from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away. And cast the worthless servant into the outer darkness. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'" (Matthew 25:24-30)

MEDITATION

Oh, it is so easy to keep gifts to ourselves, for fear there won't be enough. Or, perhaps we keep them for ourselves because we fear we won't give them to others in the right way. It's sometimes easier just to live in scarcity and fear. But God is generous. With God there is always more. He invites us to participate in His life of generosity and mercy.

SILENCE**PRAYER FOR HOLY CROSS MEMBER**

O Lord, in Holy Baptism you put your Name upon Elaine (Olson). Bless her now with the forgiveness of sins and a firm trust in you. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

PRAYER OF THE WEEK (FROM SUNDAY)

Almighty and ever-living God, You have given exceedingly great and precious promises to those who trust in You. Dispel from us the works of darkness and grant us to live in the light of Your Son, Jesus Christ, that our faith may never be found wanting; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

LORD'S PRAYER

SUNDAY (November 26, 2023)

Last Sunday in the Church Year

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

GOSPEL SENTENCE

"But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep." (1 Corinthians 15:20)

READING

""For thus says the Lord GOD: Behold, I, I myself will search for my sheep and will seek them out. As a shepherd seeks out his flock when he is among his sheep that have been scattered, so will I seek out my sheep, and I will rescue them from all places where they have been scattered on a day of clouds and thick darkness. And I will bring them out from the peoples and gather them from the countries, and will bring them into their own land. And I will feed them on the mountains of Israel, by the ravines, and in all the inhabited places of the country. I will feed them with good pasture, and on the mountain heights of Israel shall be their grazing land. There they shall lie down in good grazing land, and on rich pasture they shall feed on the mountains of Israel. I myself will be the shepherd of my sheep, and I myself will make them lie down, declares the Lord GOD. I will seek the lost, and I will bring back the strayed, and I will bind up the injured, and I will strengthen the weak, and the fat and the strong I will destroy. I will feed them in justice." (Ezekiel 34:11-16)

MEDITATION

No matter where we are, no matter how far we have wandered or strayed, no matter how broken we are, God is the Good Shepherd who returns to find us. He will bind up the injured and strengthen the weak. He seeks and saves those who have wandered and are lost. None are beyond His reach.

SILENCE**PRAYER FOR HOLY CROSS MEMBER**

Let your grace be upon Bob (Brahmst), O Lord, and teach him to hope in the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

PRAYER OF THE WEEK

Eternal God, merciful Father, You have appointed Your Son as judge of the living and the dead. Enable us to wait for the day of His return with our eyes fixed on the kingdom prepared for Your own from the foundation of the world; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

LORD'S PRAYER

MONDAY (November 27, 2023)

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

GOSPEL SENTENCE

"But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep." (1 Corinthians 15:20)

READING

""Therefore, thus says the Lord GOD to them: Behold, I, I myself will judge between the fat sheep and the lean sheep. Because you push with side and shoulder, and thrust at all the weak with your horns, till you have scattered them abroad, I will rescue my flock; they shall no longer be a prey. And I will judge between sheep and sheep. And I will set up over them one shepherd, my servant David, and he shall feed them: he shall feed them and be their shepherd. And I, the LORD, will be their God, and my servant David shall be prince among them. I am the LORD; I have spoken." (Ezekiel 34:20-24)

MEDITATION

David is God's servant, a poor shepherd boy who God anoints as King. Jesus is the true Good Shepherd who guides and cares for His sheep. We need not fear, even when life overwhelms us, or troubles plague us. Jesus, the Good Shepherd feeds and nourishes us with His own body and blood. He keeps and sustains you, promising to never leave you.

SILENCE**PRAYER FOR HOLY CROSS MEMBER**

Heavenly Father, bless Jeffrey (Lange) with faith in you and fervent love toward all those who cross his path this day. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

PRAYER OF THE WEEK (FROM SUNDAY)

Eternal God, merciful Father, You have appointed Your Son as judge of the living and the dead. Enable us to wait for the day of His return with our eyes fixed on the kingdom prepared for Your own from the foundation of the world; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

LORD'S PRAYER

TUESDAY (November 28, 2023)

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

GOSPEL SENTENCE

"But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep." (1 Corinthians 15:20)

READING

"But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. For as by a man came death, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive. But each in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, then at his coming those who belong to Christ. Then comes the end, when he delivers the kingdom to God the Father after destroying every rule and every authority and power." (1 Corinthians 15:20-24)

MEDITATION

In fact, Christ has been raised from the dead. This is a fact, not a fairytale. Nor is it just wishful thinking. It's not the pious hopes of a religious person. It is a fact, as sure as the sun will rise tomorrow. This is the foundation of the Christian faith. Jesus' death and resurrection gives the certainty that you, who are baptized into Him, will be resurrected. Thanks be to God!

SILENCE**PRAYER FOR HOLY CROSS MEMBER**

Lord Jesus Christ, be with Norb (Huber) this week. Give him your grace and teach him to learn more of your mercy with each passing day. Amen.

PRAYER OF THE WEEK (FROM SUNDAY)

Eternal God, merciful Father, You have appointed Your Son as judge of the living and the dead. Enable us to wait for the day of His return with our eyes fixed on the kingdom prepared for Your own from the foundation of the world; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

LORD'S PRAYER

WEDNESDAY (November 29, 2023)

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

GOSPEL SENTENCE

"But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep." (1 Corinthians 15:20)

READING

"For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. The last enemy to be destroyed is death. For "God has put all things in subjection under his feet." But when it says, "all things are put in subjection," it is plain that he is excepted who put all things in subjection under him. When all things are subjected to him, then the Son himself will also be subjected to him who put all things in subjection under him, that God may be all in all." (1 Corinthians 15:25-28)

MEDITATION

Death is the enemy. Make no mistake about it. Death is a direct consequence of the sin of Adam and Eve. No matter how much we try to dress it up or make death into a good thing, it is, ultimately, the enemy. Christ has defeated all enemies, sin, death and the devil. He is our champion who conquers all for us. He brings the sure victory to you in His Gospel, spoken to you, and in your Baptism, which now saves you from all your enemies.

SILENCE

PRAYER FOR HOLY CROSS MEMBER

Be with Andrew (Zavala) this day, O Lord, and show him your great love throughout all the days of his life. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

PRAYER OF THE WEEK (FROM SUNDAY)

Eternal God, merciful Father, You have appointed Your Son as judge of the living and the dead. Enable us to wait for the day of His return with our eyes fixed on the kingdom prepared for Your own from the foundation of the world; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

LORD'S PRAYER

THURSDAY (November 30, 2023)

St. Andrew, Apostle

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

GOSPEL SENTENCE

"But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep." (1 Corinthians 15:20)

READING

"When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne. Before him will be gathered all the nations, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. And he will place the sheep on his right, but the goats on the left." (Matthew 25:31-33)

MEDITATION

God desires all to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth. Until He comes again, now is the time of salvation. Now is the time of mercy, where God's compassion calls out to one and all. But at the Last Day, there will be a gathering (literally, a congregating). Those who received Him in mercy will be on His right; those who rejected Him on His left. But He calls you today with the voice of His Gospel: "Come to me, all you who labor and are heavy burdened, and I will give you rest." Hear and receive His call. Believe His Word of comfort, for now is the time of salvation.

SILENCE**PRAYER FOR HOLY CROSS MEMBER**

Show your grace to John-Paul (Meyer) this day, as he goes about the callings you have given to him. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

PRAYER FOR THE FEAST OF ST. ANDREW, APOSTLE

Almighty God, by Your grace the apostle Andrew obeyed the call of Your Son to be a disciple. Grant us also to follow the same Lord Jesus Christ in heart and life, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

FRIDAY (December 1, 2023)

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

GOSPEL SENTENCE

"But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep." (1 Corinthians 15:20)

READING

"Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.' Then the righteous will answer him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? And when did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? And when did we see you sick or in prison and visit you?' And the King will answer them, 'Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.'" (Matthew 25:34-40)

MEDITATION

Our good works do not save us, only Jesus saves us. Good works flow from faith in His Promise. As we hear God's Word and receive His gifts through the waters of Baptism and His Body and Blood at His table, we are given to serve our neighbor. We are to serve our neighbor as those served by God Himself. Good works, or acts of love and mercy, flow from the giving of Jesus.

SILENCE

PRAYER FOR HOLY CROSS MEMBER

Father, we lift up Zachary (Creiglow) before you this day, asking that You would give him your mercy all the days of his life. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

PRAYER OF THE WEEK (FROM SUNDAY)

Eternal God, merciful Father, You have appointed Your Son as judge of the living and the dead. Enable us to wait for the day of His return with our eyes fixed on the kingdom prepared for Your own from the foundation of the world; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

LORD'S PRAYER

SATURDAY (December 2, 2023)

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

GOSPEL SENTENCE

"But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep." (1 Corinthians 15:20)

READING

""Then he will say to those on his left, 'Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. For I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me no drink, I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not clothe me, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.' Then they also will answer, saying, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to you?' Then he will answer them, saying, 'Truly, I say to you, as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me.' And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."" (Matthew 25:41-46)

MEDITATION

Without faith, we cannot please God. Our deeds, even if judged "good" by the world hold no merit before Christ, because of original sin. We can't clean up our "good" deeds; it's impossible. In faith, however, we *are* clean before God and free to love one another, even as God in Christ has loved us. In fact, in loving our neighbor, we serve Jesus.

SILENCE**PRAYER FOR HOLY CROSS MEMBER**

O Lord, in Holy Baptism you put your Name upon Robert (Mitchell). Bless him now with the forgiveness of sins and a firm trust in you. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

PRAYER OF THE WEEK (FROM SUNDAY)

Eternal God, merciful Father, You have appointed Your Son as judge of the living and the dead. Enable us to wait for the day of His return with our eyes fixed on the kingdom prepared for Your own from the foundation of the world; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

LORD'S PRAYER



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