

5 PRAY THE PSALM OF THE WEEK **Isaiah 40:20, Psalm 66:1, 17, 19-20**

With a voice of singing, declare, proclaim this, utter it to the end of the earth. Alle- | luia.*

The Lord has redeemed His servant Jacob! Alle- | luia.

Make a joyful shout to God, | all the earth!*

Sing out the honor | of His name.

I cried to Him | with my mouth,*

and He was extolled | with my tongue.

Certainly God has | heard me;*

He has attended to the voice | of my prayer.

Blessed be God, who has not turned a- | way my prayer,*

nor His mer- | cy from me!

6 SAY TOGETHER THE VERSE OF THE WEEK **Romans 8:29**

“Those He foreknew, He predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son ... those whom He predestined He called, those whom He called He justified, and those whom He justified He glorified.”

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

8 PRAY THE PRAYER OF THE WEEK

O heavenly Father, as You gladden our hearts again to celebrate the birth of Your only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ, mercifully bestow on us the joy to receive Him as our Redeemer and so welcome Him when He comes again to be our judge; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

9 PRAYER FOR OURSELVES AND OTHERS

10 SING OR SAY THE HYMN OF THE WEEK
Our Father, Thou in Heaven Above

TLH 103

Martin Luther



- 1. Our Father, Thou in heaven above,
Who biddest us to dwell in love,
As brethren of one family,
To cry in every need to Thee,
Teach us no thoughtless word to say,
But from our inmost heart to pray.
- 2. Thy name be hallowed, Help us, Lord,
In purity to keep Thy Word,
That to the glory of thy name
We walk before Thee free from blame.
Let no false doctrine us pervert;
All poor, deluded souls convert.

- 8. From evil, Lord, deliver us:
The times and days are perilous.
Redeem us from eternal death,
And when we yield our dying breath,
Console us, grant us calm release,
And take our souls to Thee in peace.
- 9. Amen, that is, So shall it be.
Confirm our faith and hope in Thee
That we may doubt not, but believe
What here we ask we shall receive.
Thus in Thy name and at Thy word
We say: Amen. Oh, hear us, Lord!
Amen.



“He is Risen to Carry the Prayers of Believers to God”

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

2 SAY THE APOSTLES' CREED
I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
Maker of heaven and earth.
And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our
Lord, who was conceived by the Holy
Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered
under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died
and was buried. He descended into hell.
The third day He rose again from the
dead. He ascended into heaven and sits at
the right hand of God, the Father
Almighty. From thence He will come to
judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy
Christian church, the communion of
saints, the forgiveness of sins, the
resurrection of the body, and the life
everlasting. Amen.

3 PRAY THE 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.

4 PRAY THE MORNING OR EVENING PRAYER

Morning. I thank You, my
heavenly Father, through Jesus
Christ, Your dear Son, that You
have kept me this night from all
harm and danger; and I pray that
You would keep me this day also
from sin and every evil, that all my
doings and life may please You.
For into Your hands I commend
myself, my body and soul, and all
things. Let Your holy angel be with
me, that the evil foe may have no
power over me. Amen.

Evening. I thank you, my
heavenly Father, through Jesus
Christ, Your dear Son, that You
have graciously kept me this day;
and I pray that You would forgive
me all my sins where I have done
wrong, and graciously keep me this
night. For into Your hands, I
commend myself, my body and
soul, and all things. Let Your holy
angel be with me, that the evil foe
may have no power over me. Amen.

THEME OF THE WEEK: He is Risen to Carry the Prayers of Believers to God

As the Easter Season draws to a close, we continue to ponder the reality of the resurrection: Jesus is risen from the dead! A Man has destroyed the chief power of the Devil. A Man has conquered death. A Man has put away our sins. A Man has ascended into Heaven and sits on the throne of God. A Man carries our prayers to God. A Man teaches us what it means to be truly human – no longer human in the image of a fallen man – but human in the image of a risen Man – human in the image of God. He became as we are, that we might become as He is. Let us rejoice in Christ and live as Christians.

SUN

SCRIPTURE: John 16:23-30 d The Joy of Contemplation

There are many places in the Scriptures that call us to contemplation. These are often identifiable because, despite all efforts, no simple and comprehensive explanation is possible. In John chapter 16, our Lord calls us to contemplate things too great for us. So perfectly does the Son restore us to the Father that our very being changes, our relationship to the Father changes, the nature of our prayer changes. The disciples think they know and believe all this already. They don't – and we don't either. "For the Father Himself loves you because you have loved Me." All the mysteries of the cosmos are as nothing before such words.

Slow us down, *Lord Jesus, and teach us the joy of contemplation. Amen.*

MON

SCRIPTURE: Psalm 84 The Highways to Zion

"Blessed are those whose strength is in You, in whose heart are the highways to Zion." The word and sacraments are outside of us (*extra nos*) but they have their affect inside of us (*intra nos*). The interior life cannot be neglected for it is the very means by which we perceive all things, likewise it is created by God for God. Blessed are those in whose heart is a highway to Zion, to the Temple, to our God. He is at once the Lord of Hosts (Armies) and the One at whose altars baby birds find rest. The highway to Him is in your heart. The highway is Jesus. The courts of the Lord, His dwelling place and home, are within you (Jn. 14:23).

O Lord, I am unworthy of such honor, yet You come and make Your home within me. Amen.

TUE

SCRIPTURE: James 1:22-27 Losing Our Religion?

James was the pastor of people who refused to do acts of mercy, even for fellow Christians. Their rationale? We don't need to do anything because we are justified by faith without works! No wonder James told them that such "faith" without works is dead, that such "faith" without works does not justify. These "Christians" are like men who look into a mirror, see that they are Christians, and then immediately forget that they are Christians. They are hearers, but not doers. They speak great, swelling words about their "faith" and "religion" but can't direct (bridle) their tongues in mercy toward neighbor, or trouble themselves to visit the helpless in their suffering. *Lord, forgive us, and lead us to faith that is true and religion that is pure and undefiled. Amen.*

WED

SCRIPTURE: Jeremiah 29:11-14 Whose Plans?

"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope." But what plans are these? So often we find Christians who think these plans entail worldly success and riches, an easy life that ends with a golden retirement. Of course, the Lord says nothing about such things. His plans for His people (us included) is that we will turn to Him in repentance and faith, call upon Him, come to Him, pray to Him, and seek Him. He promises that we will find Him, that He will hear us, and that in due time He will bring us out of our exile (life in this fallen world) and gather us to Himself in the new heavens and earth. *Father, thank You for Your promises, and for all that is to come! Amen.*

THU

SCRIPTURE: Mark 16:14-20 A Man on God's Throne

The Ascension of our Lord may be the most underappreciated and undervalued of all our Lord's deeds. When, as Mark writes, Jesus was "taken up into heaven and sat down at the right hand of God" the entire cosmos changed. A Man is enthroned in heaven as High King over all creation. A Man is made High Priest over the liturgy of the cosmos. Wherever God's "right hand" is at work, it is through this Man, Jesus Christ. So our human nature is not only restored, but elevated above demons and divided tongues, serpents, poison, and sickness – temporally, in the case of the apostles – and eternally, for all believers, as we rise from the dead. Jesus is ascended, a Man is on the throne of God! *Lord Jesus, be with us and work through us all our days! Amen.*

FRI

SCRIPTURE: Romans 8:24-28 Come, Holy Spirit

"For those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to His purpose." We Christians know this, but we do not yet see it. We know it, but only by faith – that is, by trust that God can indeed work all things for good and that He will do this. So good is God that even in our weakness of faith, in our ignorance of what to pray for, and in our unwillingness to pray as we ought, He sends His beloved Holy Spirit – kind and gentle – to intercede for us, to cry out to the Father and pray for us with groanings too deep for words, to pray for us exactly what needs to be prayed. *Blessed Spirit, forgive us for all the times that we have grieved You. Indwell us and fill us with Your graces. Amen.*

SAT

SCRIPTURE: Psalm 124 Don't Forget: We Win!

"Our help is in the name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth." Want proof? The god of this world along with the cosmic powers of darkness and the spiritual forces of evil are all hellbent on destroying the Church of God. In the fallen nations and peoples of the world, in the fallen flesh within us and those around us, the forces of evil find powerful and willing allies. If God Himself was not on our side, the Church – and we with it – would have been swallowed up long ago. Let us trust in the Lord and rejoice in Him, for truly: "Our help is in the name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth." Blessed are You, *O Lord, for You daily defend Your Holy Church. Hear and answer our prayers, and, in due time, You will give us the promised victory! Amen.*

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