



Celebrate

Sunday, November 17, 2024

26th Sunday after Pentecost

November begins with All Saints Day and ends in or near Advent, when we anticipate Christ's coming again. It is fitting, then, that the readings today tell of the final resurrection and the end time. In the turmoil of hope, fear, and disbelief that these predictions provoke in us, Hebrews sounds a note of confident trust. Christ makes a way for us where there is no way, and we walk it confidently, our hearts and bodies washed in baptismal water, trusting the one who has promised forgiveness. The more we see the last day approaching, the more important it is to meet together to provoke one another to love.

Prayer of the Day

Almighty God, your sovereign purpose brings salvation to birth. Give us faith to be steadfast amid the tumults of this world, trusting that your kingdom comes and your will is done through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

First Reading

Daniel 12:1-3

The book of Daniel is an example of apocalyptic literature, which is full of strange visions and symbolism. Arising during times of great persecution, apocalyptic literature is concerned with God's revelation about the end time and the coming kingdom of God, when God will vindicate the righteous who have been persecuted.

“At that time Michael, the great prince, the protector of your people, shall arise. There shall be a time of anguish, such as has never occurred since nations first came into existence. But at that time your people shall be delivered, everyone who is found written in the book. ²Many of

those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. ³Those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the sky, and those who lead many to righteousness, like the stars forever and ever.”

My heart is glad and my spir - it re-joic - es; my
bod - y shall rest in hope.

Protect me, O God, for I take ref-^luge in you;

I have said to the LORD,

“You are my LORD, my good a-^lbove all other.”

²All my delight is in the godly that are ^lin the land,
upon those who are noble a-^lmong the people.

³But those who run after ^lother gods
shall have their troubles ^lmultiplied.

⁴I will not pour out drink offerings ^lto such gods,
never take their names up-^lon my lips. **R**

⁵O LORD, you are my portion ^land my cup;
it is you who up-^lhold my lot.

⁶My boundaries enclose a ^lpleasant land;
indeed, I have a ^lrich inheritance.

⁷I will bless the LORD who ^lgives me counsel;
my heart teaches me night ^lafter night.

⁸I have set the LORD al-^lways before me;
because God is at my right hand, I shall ^lnot be shaken. **R**

⁹My heart, therefore, is glad, and my spir-^lit rejoices;
my body also shall ^lrest in hope.

¹⁰For you will not abandon me ^lto the grave,
nor let your holy one ^lsee the pit.

¹¹You will show me the ^lpath of life;
in your presence there is fullness of joy,
and in your right hand are pleasures for-^levermore. **R**

Images of worship and sacrifice are used throughout Hebrews to highlight what Christ has uniquely accomplished through his death. Because we have received forgiveness through Christ's death, we live with sincere hearts by trusting in God's promises and encouraging love and good works from each other.

Every priest stands day after day at his service, offering again and again the same sacrifices that can never take away sins. ¹²But when Christ had offered for all time a single sacrifice for sins, "he sat down at the right hand of God," ¹³and since then has been waiting "until his enemies would be made a footstool for his feet." ¹⁴For by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are sanctified. [¹⁵And the Holy Spirit also testifies to us, for after saying,

¹⁶"This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, says the Lord: I will put my laws in their hearts, and I will write them on their minds,"

¹⁷he also adds,

"I will remember their sins and their lawless deeds no more."

¹⁸Where there is forgiveness of these, there is no longer any offering for sin.]

¹⁹Therefore, my friends, since we have confidence to enter the sanctuary by the blood of Jesus, ²⁰by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain (that is, through his flesh), ²¹and since we have a great priest over the house of God, ²²let us approach with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. ²³Let us hold fast to the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who has promised is faithful. ²⁴And let us consider how to provoke one another to love and good deeds, ²⁵not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

Gospel

Mark 13:1-8

In the last week of his life, Jesus warned his disciples concerning trials that were to come upon them and upon the world. He exhorts the listener: Do not be alarmed.

As [Jesus] came out of the temple, one of his disciples said to him, "Look, Teacher, what large stones and what large buildings!" ²Then Jesus asked him, "Do you see these great buildings? Not one stone will be left here upon another; all will be thrown down."

³When he was sitting on the Mount of Olives opposite the temple, Peter, James, John, and Andrew asked him privately, ⁴"Tell us, when will this be, and what will be the sign that all these

things are about to be accomplished?"

⁵Then Jesus began to say to them, "Beware that no one leads you astray.

⁶Many will come in my name and say, 'I am he!' and they will lead many astray. ⁷When you hear of wars and rumors of wars, do not be alarmed; this

must take place, but the end is still to come. ⁸For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; there will be earthquakes in various

places; there will be famines. This is but the beginning of the birth pangs."

Prayers of Intercession

The prayers are prepared locally for each occasion. The following examples may be adapted or used as appropriate.

Rooted in God's abundant love for the world, let us pray for our neighbors, the church, and all of creation.

A brief silence.

O God, in the washing of water you set us free from the power of sin and death. Unite all the baptized in the covenant you have made with us, as we strive for your justice and peace in all the earth. Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

By your merciful might you sustain all creation. Stir us from complacency with the harm we inflict on the earth, and urge us to adopt sustainable ways of life that protect and restore our planet. Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

With a selfless power you protect all who take refuge in you. As nations rise against nations, defend all who are displaced or affected by war or violence (*especially*). Empower all people and nations to pursue peace. Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

In your presence you give fullness of joy. Care for all for whom joy feels distant. Be present with persons experiencing depression, anxiety, addiction, or any mental illness. Bring them healing and wholeness. Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

Through the years you have gathered your church and this community for worship, fellowship, formation, and service. Enable us to look beyond the walls of our building to perceive where you are calling us forward. Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

With thanksgiving we remember (*Elizabeth of Hungary and all*) saints and angels who delight in your everlasting presence. As their lives inspire ours, provoke us always to love, holding fast to the confession of our hope in you. Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

We offer our prayers to you, gracious God, trusting in your boundless love for all that you have made, through Jesus Christ our Savior.
Amen.

Preparing for Next Week

Monday Psalm 13. **Tuesday** Hebrews 10:32-39. **Wednesday** Zechariah 12:1—13:1. **Thursday** Psalm 93. **Friday** 1 Corinthians 15:20-28. **Saturday** (commemoration of Clement, Bishop of Rome, c. 100; Miguel Agustín Pro, martyr, 1927) John 3:31-36. **Christ the King** (commemoration of Justus Falckner, 1723; Jehu Jones, 1852; William Passavant, 1894; pastors in North America) Daniel 7:9-10, 13-14; Psalm 93; Revelation 1:4b-8; John 18:33-37.

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