

ASTORAL PRAYER: March 13, 1988

MAKE US sensitive; O God, to Your nearness and Your presence in these quiet moments. Remind us, once again, "that more things are wrought by prayer than this world has ever dreamed."

Here we would lift up our hearts unto You, O God - Father and Mother of us all. We come seeking faith and courage, light and strength... "for the living of these days".

SO OFTEN, under the stress and tension of this life in this great city, we find ourselves yielding to selfish ease and to mean ambition. We become entangled so easily with the things of earth that we end up losing a sense of life's simplicity and nobility.

Help us to set our affections on things "above" that we may let go of those nagging doubts and gnawing fears that can cripple a soul and destroy a life.

Here - for a few brief moments on this Lord's Day - we would "center down", look up and see life from higher ground.

FORGIVE US, LORD - each of us - for the unkind words that we may have spoken in anger this past week... for the hurt that we needlessly may have caused... for the careless way we handle our precious human relationships.

We would not be weary in our well-doing. With Your help we would be faithful to the responsibilities that have been entrusted to us, and loyal to those commitments we have made. Deepen our commitment to Christ. And,

Remind us - as we worship Thee - that we cannot fellowship with You if in our hearts we reject, or neglect our brother or sister who is in need. And so we pray for those who have never really had a chance in life - the hungry, the hurt, the homeless, the helpless.

We pray, too, for the person who sits near us or next to us in the pew this hour. The person... to our left... to our right.

HELP US to remember that life is a precious gift. Help us to use it wisely... help us to remember that love heals, hate destroys, trust strengthens, distrust weakens. Now -

Fortify our spirits. Enlighten our reason. Elevate our aims. Let our ideals pervade our thoughts. Flood our hearts with peace.

ALL THIS WE ask in the spirit of Christ, our Lord, Master and Saviour... in whom we see life's highest hope and its deepest meaning.

"And all things...whatsoever you shall ask in prayer, believing...you shall receive. And as many as touched Him were made whole!"

"Wait on the Lord. Be of good course and He shall strengthen thine heart. For we dwell in the shelter of the Almighty. He is our refuge and our strength."

"We know that in everything, God works together for good with those who love Him!"

"But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength. They shall mount up with wings as eagles. They shall run and not be weary. They shall walk and not faint".

"God so love the world that He gave His only Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life".

"Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits: who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases".

"Thou wilt keep Him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on Thee: because he trusteth in thee".

"In the name of Jesus Christ, I share with you the Good News: We are forgiven".

PRAYERS / LORD'S PRAYER

O Thou, who hearest prayer, hear our prayers...for others, as well as for ourselves. Touch with healing, O God...Father of us all, those whom we mention in our prayers this hour:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____

...beloved members and friends of this congregation. Comfort the bereaved and the broken hearted among us...and especially be close to _____ who in recent days has lost a loved one. Abide among us as a healing benediction. Heal each of us at the point of our deepest need. _____ the family, the friends and loved ones of Gene West who passed away on Friday....

Answer the upspoken prayers now offered to thee on the altars of our hearts, spoken in the name and spirit of Jesus, who taught us to say when we pray.... For we ask all of this in the powerful name and lifting spirit of Jesus who taught us to say when we pray...

"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. Amen"

FIRST INTRODUCTION

The week of toil has ended. Our day of rest is at hand. May the rest and the quiet of this hour of worship refresh our inner life. And may it renew in all of us a sense of God's holy and abiding Presence.

In silence, let each now pray as the heart may prompt.

SECOND INTRODUCTION

Remaining in a prayerful spirit, let us enter now into a time of silent meditation....a time in which we prepare ourselves expectantly...that the Spirit of the living God may be made real to us in this hour of worship.

In quietness, let each now pray as the heart may prompt.

THIRD INTRODUCTION

Remaining in a prayerful spirit, let us enter into a time of silent meditation as we come into the Presence of Him whom our faith declares to be the Source of all life and love, all peace and power, the Source of all hope and healing.

In silence, let each now pray as the heart may prompt.

FOURTH INTRODUCTION

Remaining in a prayerful spirit, let us enter now into a time of silent meditation. In these moments, let us ponder the pattern our lives have been weaving as we come into the Presence of Him whom our Faith declares to be the Source of all life and love, all peace and power, the Source of all hope and healing.

In silence, let each now pray as the heart may prompt.

MEDITATION

We rest our hearts in the Promise of Jesus who said:

"Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn of Me, for My yoke is easy and My burden is light".

"Ask, and it will be given you. Seek and you will find. Knock, and it will be open unto you."

"I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life. No one comes to the Father, but by Me. If you love Me, you will keep my commandments"

"For I tell you...do not be anxious about your life, what you shall eat...or drink..nor about your body, what you shall put on. Is not life more than food? And the body more than raiment."

"But seek ye first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things shall be yours as well."

"For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present...to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature - shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus, Our Lord."

LAY READER: Sharon Johnson

DATE: _____

BEFORE

"The Scripture Reading for today is taken from the
Gospel of St. Luke _____, Chapter 22, verses 39 - 46
It is found on page 917 .

AFTER

"Thus endeth the reading taken from the Holy Scripture.
May God add His Blessing to the reading of His Word and to our
understanding of it. Thanks be to God! Amen!"

INSTRUCTIONS

1. The minister will give you a nod when to come forward. He will make sure the Bible is open to the proper page for you.
2. After announcing the passage to be read, PAUSE...for about 15 seconds to give people the opportunity to locate the reading in the Bible in the pews.
3. Read slowly. Don't rush it. Keep your voice "up"... smile a bit if you can remember to. Be sure to project your voice out...the person on the last row has to be able to hear you.
4. Careful walking up....careful walking back down. Go slowly.