

PRAYER SERVICE

CHAPTER 7—Redemption through the Paschal Mystery

Jesus Christ: Source of Our Salvation

THEME:

Reader One:

We thank you, Lord, for the grace that helps us understanding the saving events of your Paschal Mystery. Thank you for the grace to understand that through your Death on the Cross, we are redeemed from the death of sin and that we are offered the possibility of Eternal Life. We participate in this truth by fully partaking in the life of the Church, the Body of Christ continued here on earth. We thank you, Lord, for the Sacraments which pour Your grace into our lives so that we may experience your mercy, compassion and love. Through living a sacramental life we realize that we can become true “partakers of the Divine nature.” Thank you, Lord for such a great privilege.

FIRST READING: Deuteronomy 6:1–9, 25

Reader Two:

A reading from the Book of Deuteronomy.

This, then, is the commandment, the statutes and the ordinances, which the LORD, your God, has commanded that you be taught to observe in the land you are about to cross into to possess, so that you, that is, you, your child, and your

grandchild, may fear the LORD, your God, by keeping, as long as you live, all his statutes and commandments which I enjoin on you, and thus have long life. Hear then, Israel, and be careful to observe them, that it may go well with you and that you may increase greatly; for the LORD, the God of your ancestors, promised you a land flowing with milk and honey.

Hear, O Israel! The LORD is our God, the LORD alone! Therefore, you shall love the LORD, your God, with your whole heart, and with your whole being, and with your whole strength. Take to heart these words which I command you today. Keep repeating them to your children. Recite them when you are at home and when you are away, when you lie down and when you get up. Bind them on your arm as a sign and let them be as a pendant on your forehead. Write them on the doorposts of your houses and on your gates.

This is our justice before the LORD, our God: to observe carefully this whole commandment he has enjoined on us.

The Word of the Lord.

Response: Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Psalm 24:1–6

Reader Three:

Response: The earth is the Lord's and all it holds.

The earth is the LORD's and all it holds,

the world and those who dwell in it.

For he founded it on the seas,

established it over the rivers.

Response: The earth is the Lord's and all it holds.

Who may go up the mountain of the LORD?

Who can stand in his holy place?

“The clean of hand and pure of heart,

who has not given his soul to useless things,

what is vain.”

Response: The earth is the Lord's and all it holds.

He will receive blessings from the LORD,

and justice from his saving God.

Such is the generation that seeks him,

that seeks the face of the God of Jacob.”

Response: The earth is the Lord's and all it holds.

READING TWO: 1 Corinthians 13:1–13

Reader Four:

A reading from the first Letter of St. Paul to the Corinthians.

If I speak in human and angelic tongues* but do not have love, I am a resounding gong or a clashing cymbal. And if I have the gift of prophecy and comprehend all mysteries and all knowledge; if I have all faith so as to move mountains but do not have love, I am nothing. If I give away everything I own, and if I hand my body over so that I may boast but do not have love, I gain nothing.

Love is patient, love is kind. It is not jealous, [love] is not pompous, it is not inflated, it is not rude, it does not seek its own interests, it is not quick-tempered, it does not brood over injury, it does not rejoice over wrongdoing but rejoices with the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

Love never fails. If there are prophecies, they will be brought to nothing; if tongues, they will cease; if knowledge, it will be brought to nothing. For we know partially and we prophesy partially, but when the perfect comes, the partial will pass away. When I was a child, I used to talk as a child, think as a child, reason as a child; when I became a man, I put aside childish things. At present we see indistinctly, as in a mirror, but then face to face. At present I know partially; then I shall know fully, as I am fully known. So faith, hope, love remain, these three;^h but the greatest of these is love.

GOSPEL: Matthew 25:31–46

Reader Five:

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew.

“When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit upon his glorious throne, and all the nation will be assembled before him. And he will separate them one from another, as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. He will place the sheep on his right and the goats on his left. 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, a stranger and you welcomed me, naked and you clothed me, ill and you cared for me, in prison and you visited me.’ Then the righteous will answer him and say, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? When did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? When did we see you ill or in prison, and visit you?’ And the king will say to them in reply, ‘Amen, I say to you, whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me.’ Then he will say to those on his left, ‘Depart from me, you accursed, 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, a stranger and you gave me no welcome, naked and you gave me no clothing, ill and in prison, and you did not care for me.’ Then they will answer and say, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or ill or in prison, and not minister to your needs?’ He will answer them, ‘Amen, I say to you, what you did not do for

one of these least ones, you did not do for me.’ And these will go off to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

Response: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

MEDITATION

This exercise may be done in a journal, or a piece of loose leaf paper.

Reader Six:

Write a short reflection on the following:

- Utilizing your imagination, consider coming face-to-face with the Lord at the end of time. The Lord says to you, “Well done, good and faithful Servant!” What were those events, circumstances, personal characteristics, past, present, or future for which the Lord has rewarded you?

Pause a few minutes allowing the students to complete their entry. Then, after a sufficient amount of time, continue.

- Reflect on those areas of personal sin for which you would like to repent, and strategize a game plan to help you.

After both reflections are completed continue.

Thank you, Lord, for the graces you have given us to see ourselves as you see us with wisdom, mercy and compassion.

Response: Amen.

PETITIONS

Reader Seven:

Response: Forgive us, O Lord.

For the times we have turned from you in our arrogance and pride, and thought we could “do it alone” we say:

Response: Forgive us, O Lord.

For the times, we have led others astray and been a blocked the operation of grace is the lives of others, we say:

Response: Forgive us, O Lord.

For the times we have ignored the reality of Eternity we say:

Response: Forgive us, O Lord.

For the times we have not appreciated the gifts of the Sacraments in our lives we say:

Response: Forgive us, O Lord.

CLOSING PRAYER

Reader Eight:

Thank you, Lord, for the many ways you have blessed us. We thank you especially for our Baptism which has initiated us into Your Divine Life. We pray for all those who do not know you. We pray for those who seek you, but do not know that it is you they are seeking. We pray for all our brothers and sisters who are not baptized and pray that they, too, may come to participate in your Divine

Life in a way that is beyond our human ability to comprehend. We ask this of the Father, through the Son, in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Response: Amen.