

PRAYER SERVICE

CHAPTER 7—Discipleship and Holiness

Jesus Christ: Source of Our Salvation

THEME

Reader One:

Lord, Jesus, we want to be your disciples. We want to learn from you and put into practice what you have taught in the Good News! We wish to follow you from the depths of our being. In order to follow you, we have been told that we must be “holy” but the word is incomprehensible to us. How can we be holy? We ask for the gift of the Holy Spirit which will allow us to understand that our very desire to follow you is pleasing to you. Thank you, Lord.

PROVERBS: 16:18–20

Reader Three:

A reading from the Book of Proverbs

Pride goes before disaster,

and a haughty spirit before a fall.

It is better to be humble with the poor

than to share plunder with the proud.

Whoever ponders a matter will be successful;

happy the one who trusts in the LORD!

RESPONSORIAL PSALM: Psalm 1:1–6

Response: Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked, nor stand in the way of sinner.

Blessed is the man who does not walk

in the counsel of the wicked,

Nor stand in the way of sinners,

nor sit in company with scoffers.

Rather, the law of the LORD is his joy;

and on his law he meditates day and night.

Response: Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked, nor stand in the way of sinner.

He is like a tree

planted near streams of water,

that yields its fruit in season;

Its leaves never wither;

whatever he does prospers.

Response: Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked, nor stand in the way of sinner.

SECOND READING: Philippians 3:7–11, 14

Reader Four:

A reading from the Letter of St. Paul to the Philippians.

Whatever gains I had, these I have come to consider a loss because of Christ.

More than that, I even consider everything as a loss because of the supreme good of knowing Christ Jesus, my Lord. For his sake I have accepted the loss of all things and I consider them so much rubbish, that I may gain Christ and be found in him.

I continue my pursuit toward the goal, the prize of God's upward calling, in Christ Jesus.

The Word of the Lord.

Response: Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL: John 15:9–17

Reader Five:

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John

As the Father loves me, so I also love you. Remain in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and remain in his love.

I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and your joy may be complete. This is my commandment: love one another as I love you. No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends. You are my friends if you do what I command you. I no longer call you slaves, because a slave does not know what his master is doing. I have called you friends, because I have told you everything I have heard from my Father. It was not you who chose me, but I who chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit that will remain, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name he may give you. This I command you: love one another.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Response: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

MEDITATION

Reader Six:

The virtue of charity enables us to follow Christ's plan of love for us, even love of our enemies. It helps us to practice all the other virtues and raise our natural

love to supernatural heights. True love is self-giving. Jesus is the perfect example. Let us reflect on the virtue of charity by writing or meditating on the following:

Read each section, pause, and allow students to write or reflect for several minutes. Then do the same for the other segments.

- Obedience—Love means obeying and following Jesus’ commands.
Consider in writing or thought, how you measure up in this area? Is it easy for you to obey, or do you tend to have resistance and a rebellious spirit. What situations cause you to be disobedient? What can you do follow Jesus’ way more often in your life?
- Reverence—Love means respecting and valuing God above all else, and then all others whom he has made in his image and likeness. In what ways have I been disrespectful to God? To his Church? My family? My friends? Have I been disrespectful in my use of social media? Have I bullied anyone, just for fun, or to be part of the crowd? Write a short prayer of repentance for all these circumstances and events.
- Sacrifice—Love requires commitment: walking the extra mile and never giving on God, other people, or myself. Devise a plan of spiritual sacrifice which includes things such as fasting, more praying, volunteering for those in need.

PETITIONS

Reader Seven:

Response: Lord, hear our prayer.

That we may have the grace to follow Jesus, our model, for this we pray to the Lord.

Response: Lord, hear our prayer.

That we make time and space for reflection and self-examination, for this we pray to the Lord.

Response: Lord, hear our prayer.

That we may take our crosses and follow you as we strive to do what is right despite criticism and ridicule, for this we pray to the Lord.

Response: Lord, hear our prayer.

That we may allow the Holy Spirit to lead and guide us, for this we pray to the Lord.

Response: Lord, hear our prayer.

That we may remain aware of the Father's presence in our lives.

Response: Lord, hear our prayer.

CLOSING PRAYER

All recite St. Augustine's Prayer to the Holy Spirit:

Breathe in me, O Holy Spirit,
that my thoughts may be all holy.

Act in me, O Holy Spirit,
that my work may be all holy.

Draw my heart, O Holy Spirit,
that I love but what is holy.

Strengthen me, O Holy Spirit,
to defend all that is holy.

Guard me, then, O Holy Spirit,
That I always may be holy.

Amen.