

PRAYER SERVICE

CHAPTER 1—God’s Good Creation: The Beginning of Salvation History

Jesus: Source of Our Salvation

THEME

Reader One:

Creator God, you have made all things out of nothing. You have made our first parents in your image and likeness, and, after they fell from your grace, you devised a plan for them and their descendants to be saved by your beloved Son, through his life, Death and Resurrection. You sustain all of creation by the very breath of the Holy Spirit.

Since you have created all things true and good and beautiful and in your image, we can be assured that there is a true and good and beautiful plan for each of us and our lives.

Help us, Creator God, to discern that plan for our lives. We ask for the grace to put the gifts given to us by you at your service for the betterment of our world and our brothers and sisters.

All this we ask this through the Creator who made us, the Son who redeemed us, and the Holy Spirit who sustains us, leads us and guides. Amen.

FIRST READING: Genesis 2:18–25

Reader Two:

A reading from the Book of Genesis.

The LORD God said: It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suited to him. So the LORD God formed out of the ground all the wild animals and all the birds of the air, and he brought them to the man to see what he would call them; whatever the man called each living creature was then its name. The man gave names to all the tame animals, all the birds of the air, and all the wild animals; but none proved to be a helper suited to the man.

So the LORD God cast a deep sleep on the man, and while he was asleep, he took out one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. The LORD God then built the rib that he had taken from the man into a woman. When he brought her to the man, the man said:

“This one, at last, is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; This one shall be called ‘woman,’ for out of man this one has been taken.”

That is why a man leaves his father and mother and clings to his wife, and the two of them become one body. The man and his wife were both naked, yet they felt no shame.

The Word of the Lord.

Response: Thanks be to God.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM: Psalm 8:2–10

Third Reader:

Response: We give praise and worship to you, O Lord!

LORD, our Lord, how awesome is your name through all the earth!

I will sing of your majesty above the heavens

with the mouths of babes and infants.

You have established a bulwark against your foes,

to silence enemy and avenger.

Response: We give praise and worship to you, O Lord!

When I see your heavens, the work of your fingers,

the moon and stars that you set in place—

What is man that you are mindful of him,

and a son of man that you care for him?

Yet you have made him little less than a god,

crowned him with glory and honor.

Response: We give praise and worship to you, O Lord!

You have given him rule over the works of your hands,

put all things at his feet:

All sheep and oxen,

even the beasts of the field,

The birds of the air, the fish of the sea,

and whatever swims the paths of the seas.

O LORD, our Lord,

how awesome is your name through all the earth!

Response: We give praise and worship to you, O Lord!

SECOND READING: Hebrews 13:20–21

Reader Four:

A reading from the Letter to the Hebrews.

May the God of peace, who raised from the dead the Great Shepherd, Jesus Christ, by the blood of the eternal covenant, furnish you with all that is good, that

you may do his will. May God the Father carry out in you what is pleasing to him through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.

The Word of the Lord.

Response: Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL: Luke 9:23–25

Reader Five:

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke.

Then he said to all, “If anyone wishes to come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily* and follow me. For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will save it. What profit is there for one to gain the whole world yet lose or forfeit himself?”

The Gospel of the Lord.

Response: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

MEDITATION

Reader Six:

Lord, we thank you for the gift of life. May our lives be led by you.

Lord, we thank you for the gift of our parents who show us your love in countless ways. May their lives be abundantly blessed by your grace.

Lord, we thank you for the adults in our lives who provide us with inspiration and model a wholesome way of life for us. May they be strengthened in their love of you.

Lord, we thank you for our material blessings: our homes, our food, shelter, and clothing. May we be blessed with hearts that are generous and loving.

Lord, we thank you for our friends and relatives who provide us with all that we need to have a community of love. May they increase their desire to know you.

Lord, we thank you for the gifts and talents you have bestowed on us. May we use these in your service.

JOURNAL ENTRY (Optional)

A journal and writing materials are necessary. Quiet reflective music is very helpful here.

Directions:

Please compose an additional list of your personal blessings.

Make another list enumerating your special talents and abilities.

Then, after those lists are completed, write a short personal prayer of thanksgiving and gratitude in which you offer your gifts and talents to God in his service.

PETITIONS

Reader Seven:

Response: Hear us, O Lord.

That there may be a fresh outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon all young people.

Response: Hear us, O Lord.

That there be a renewed interest and increase in vocations to the priesthood, brotherhood, and sisterhood.

Response: Hear us, O Lord.

That the gifts of wisdom and understanding guide the political leaders of the entire world to seek peace and reconciliation.

Response: Hear us, O Lord.

That our families be filled with the gifts of peace, love, and joy and always be a welcoming place for those in need of God.

Response: Hear us, O Lord.

That we may all become increasingly aware of the presence of God in our lives and have the courage to follow the inspiration of the Holy Spirit regarding our future paths in life.

Response: Here us, O Lord.

CLOSING PRAYER:

Reader Eight:

God of heaven and earth, please look favorably upon our intentions to follow you, to love you, to serve you, and to serve others. Enlighten our minds with your Holy Spirit to choose wisely and prudently. Enflame our hearts with love of you, Spark us with enthusiasm to love and serve our neighbor. As we move through this year, may we see our efforts bear long-lasting fruit. We ask this in the name of the Father, who created us, the Son who redeemed us, and the Holy Spirit who sustains us, enlightens us and leads us to all that is good.

We ask this in your name.

Response: Amen