



Daily Prayer For Individuals and Families

Adopted from *The Lutheran Service Book* (p. 294)

August 6, 2023 A.D.

10th Sunday after Pentecost

This brief service is intended as a simple form of daily prayer for individuals and families. When more than one person is present, the versicles and responses may be spoken responsively, with one person reading the words in regular type and the others responding with the words in bold type. The Creed and Prayers that are in bold type are to be said by all.

The sign of the cross ✠ may be made by all in remembrance of their Baptism.

Invocation

In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Opening Psalm *Psalm 136:1-9*

Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good, for his steadfast love endures forever.

² Give thanks to the God of gods, for his steadfast love endures forever.

³ Give thanks to the Lord of lords, for his steadfast love endures forever;

⁴ to him who alone does great wonders, for his steadfast love endures forever;

⁵ to him who by understanding made the heavens, for his steadfast love endures forever;

⁶ to him who spread out the earth above the waters, for his steadfast love endures forever;

⁷ to him who made the great lights, for his steadfast love endures forever;

⁸ the sun to rule over the day, for his steadfast love endures forever;

⁹ the moon and stars to rule over the night,

for his steadfast love endures forever.

For those with access to the internet, you may now play today's worship video, located on Bethany's website (www.bethanycr.org) under the Worship Resources tab and then continue with the Nicene Creed. Everyone else may continue the service as printed....

Scripture Lesson

Matthew 14:13-21

¹³Now when Jesus heard [about the death of John], he withdrew from there in a boat to a desolate place by himself. But when the crowds heard it, they followed him on foot from the towns.

¹⁴When he went ashore he saw a great crowd, and he had compassion on them and healed their sick. ¹⁵Now when it was evening, the disciples came to him and said, "This is a desolate place, and the day is now over; send the crowds away to go into the villages and buy food for themselves."

¹⁶But Jesus said, "They need not go away; you give them something to eat." ¹⁷They said to him, "We have only five loaves here and two fish." ¹⁸And he said, "Bring them here to me." ¹⁹Then he ordered the crowds to sit down on the grass, and taking the five loaves and the two fish, he looked

up to heaven and said a blessing. Then he broke the loaves and gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the crowds. ²⁰And they all ate and were satisfied. And they took up twelve baskets full of the broken pieces left over. ²¹And those who ate were about five thousand men, besides women and children.

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Sermon ✠ *Christ's Compassion* ✠

The Nicene Creed

**I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth and of all things visible and invisible.
And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God,
begotten of His Father before all worlds,
God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God,
begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father,
by whom all things were made;
who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary and was made man;
and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate.
He suffered and was buried.
And the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures and ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of the Father.
And He will come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead, whose kingdom will have no end.
And I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified, who spoke by the prophets.
And I believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church,
I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins,
and I look for the resurrection of the dead
and the life ✠ of the world to come. Amen.**



The Lord's Prayer

**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 and ever. Amen.**

Prayers for Others and Ourselves

Entrusting into God's Care

- Francis (friend of Larsons) - hospice care
- Those in nursing homes/care centers
- Persecuted Christians and refugees
- Peace in Europe and throughout the world
- Project 24 students, Yvonne and Lorine

Healing

- Donna Stranathan - upcoming surgery 8/7
- Wendell (friend of Larsons) - health issues
- Cindy (friend of Larsons) - hospitalization
- Lucie (7-yr-old relative) - seizures, in drug induced coma
- Philip Hackbardt - recovering after surgery
- Dale Stonewall - recovering at Cottage Grove after fall
- Prudy Petersen - recovering at home
- Ethel Doehrmann - immunotherapy treatment
- Tom Stock - health issues
- Doug Knutson - immunotherapy treatment
- Rick Foreman - recovering at home after fall
- Deb Heitland - health issues
- Abi Clark - health issues

Homebound

- Nadine Wax - at home

Mourning, friends and family of

- Alta Dort (former Bethany member) - died 7/14
- Raymond (father of Lora Raymon) - died 7/11
- Obie (brother of Ben Mims) - died 7/4

Serving Our Country

- Ben (son of Kroemers) - IA National Guard
- Devin (friend of Kroemers) - IA Army National Guard
- Jordan (grandson of Kim Neuhaus) - Army, deployed to Poland
- Mitchell & Benjamin (relatives of Schoens & Smiths) - US Navy
- Harrison (son of Siecks) - US Army, stationed in TX

Collect of the Day

Let us pray... Heavenly Father, though we do not deserve Your goodness, still You provide for all our needs of body and soul. Grant us Your Holy Spirit that we may acknowledge Your gifts, give thanks for all Your benefits, and serve You in willing obedience; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

Concluding Prayers

O God, most merciful Father, without Your care and preservation all things wither and die. Open the windows of heaven and send bountiful rain on us to revive and renew the land. Graciously hear our prayer that we may praise and glorify Your name forever and ever; through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Amen.

Together we pray... **I thank You, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Your dear Son, that You have kept me this night from all harm and danger; and I pray that you would keep me this day also from sin and every evil, that all my doings and life may please You. For into Your hands I commend myself, my body and soul, and all things. Let Your holy angel be with me, that the evil foe may have no power over me. Amen.**

Let us bless the Lord.

Thanks be to God.



✠ *Christ's Compassion* ✠

Grace, mercy, and peace to you from God – the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Jesus feeding the 5000 is the only miracle of Jesus, other than the resurrection, that is recorded in all four Gospel accounts of the Bible. Turning water into wine and raising Lazarus are only found in John's Gospel, while Jesus calming the storm on the Sea of Galilee is found only in Matthew's, Mark's, and Luke's. Even the explicit mention of Jesus's birth can only be found in two of the four Gospels. But the feeding of the 5000 is right there in Mark 6, Luke 9, John 6 and our text for today, Matthew 14. Which may lead us to ask...why? Why is this miracle, this account of Jesus' work so important that St. Mark, who never mentions Jesus being born, has to tell us about the feeding of the 5000? Or why is it so important that St. John, who never tells us about Jesus healing 10 lepers, cursing a fig tree, or calming a storm – believes that this miracle will help you believe that *Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in His name* (John 20:31)?

The answer to those questions may be found Matthew 14:14, just before Jesus tells the disciples to give the crowd something to eat. There we read, "*When He (Jesus) went ashore He saw a great crowd, and He had compassion on them...*" Many people believe that all four Gospel writers include this miracle because it shows us the heart of Jesus. It shows us His true nature, as it shows us His compassion for people. And being that *Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever* (Hebrews 13:8) we can be sure that Jesus' compassion for those who ran ahead of His boat to meet Him, will always be there for us as well.

But what does this compassion of Jesus, that moved Him to feed the hungry and heal the sick, mean for us today? What does Christ's COVID Compassion look like? Or His compassion for us as we face any number of other troubles in our lives? We of course know from our reading that when Jesus sees a real physical need, He moves and He acts. Our text tells us that Jesus healed

the sick and that He fed those who were hungry. But more than those, or perhaps we should say, in addition to, those physical needs, Jesus also has compassion on those who are in spiritual need.

In Matthew 9:36, we are told that as Jesus traveled around teaching and healing, He again saw the crowds and had compassion on them. But this time it was because they were *harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd*. The people desperately needed someone to guide and nurture them. Here it seems that Jesus has compassion for people who had a spiritual problem. But, just as He did in our text with the physical needs of the crowd, here in Matthew 9, He likewise moved and acted with compassion to take care of the spiritual problems as well.

This is the compassion that Jesus has for you today. Regardless of what your need is, if it is a result of living in a broken and sinful world, Jesus has compassion on you. If you are in need of healing – Jesus has compassion. If you are hungry or lonely – Jesus has compassion. If you are a sinner – Jesus has compassion on you. This is not to say that we will not suffer under Christ’s compassion. This doesn’t mean that we will not die from illness or that we will never be hungry or lonely. Sometimes, with Christ in control, things do not always work out the way that we want them to. (If they did, I seriously doubt we would ever be talking about the cross.) But do not let that fool you into thinking that Christ is not in control. Or that He doesn’t have compassion for you. Because the suffering, death and resurrection of Jesus is all about His compassion and His restoration of everything that is fallen and broken in this world right now.

As Christians, we can find incredible comfort in the midst of our suffering and sorrows, by seeing Jesus feed the 5000. Because regardless of our problems, like the hungry in our text today, we know that Jesus has compassion on us and has already begun to restore our fallen creation through His death and resurrection.

However, as Christians today we must also remember that we are not just like those who were fed in our text - we are also like the disciples. In Matthew 9, when Jesus has compassion on the crowd because they were like sheep without a shepherd, He commissions and sends out the 12. In our text today, when Jesus sees the hungry crowd, He tells the disciples to give them something to eat. And while they are unable to do this by themselves, it is ultimately the disciples who move among the people to distribute the miraculous meal and gather up what is left. As the world suffers today, Christians need to know that Christ has compassion on all who suffer, but that compassion very often must come through those who are Jesus’ disciples right now.

Now this reminds me of a few summers ago when I began to ask my son, Aiden, to cut our grass. He was old enough and strong enough to push our mower so he could, technically, mow the lawn. But of course, as he was just a young boy at the time, he couldn’t afford to buy a lawn mower or the gas that it needed to run. He couldn’t check the oil, grease the wheels, or sharpen the blade. At that time, he couldn’t even start the mower by himself. Yes, it is true that he could cut the grass, but his father had to do a lot of work in order for it to happen.

In our text today, Jesus tells the disciples to give the crowd something to eat – and eventually they do. But without God’s help, they’re unable even to feed themselves. Like Aiden cutting the grass when he was younger, the disciples couldn’t do the job Christ called them to do by themselves, but they had to rely upon someone else - Christ and His compassion, so that they could have compassion themselves on those who were in need.

The link for disciples today I hope is clear. As people suffer from all types of problems, they may wonder where Christ’s compassion is. And the answer is, it is in the Church. Not only with Christ Himself, as He comes to us in His Word and Sacrament and promises to return again in glory, but also in the church with Christ’s disciples. We are called as Jesus’ disciples to be the salt of the earth. We are called as Jesus’ disciples to be the light of the world (Matthew 5:13-14).

And do you think you are only to let your light shine in the daylight, that is when things are going well for people? Of course not! It is in the darkest of times – times of pandemic and times of death and times of deep sorrow and hurt – that Jesus’s disciples must bring His compassion into the world because that is when it is needed the most.

But we can’t do it by ourselves. We can’t bring Christ’s compassion into the world apart from Christ anymore than we can feed 5000 people with 5 loaves of bread and two small fish. Oh, we can try and people have. And sometimes it even appears to work. (I would imagine that if the disciples started to feed the people in our text without Jesus performing the miracle, the first few people they handed the fish and bread to would have been just fine. But how long would that have lasted?) Apart from Christ, we can do nothing. Apart from Christ, disciples will stumble and fall themselves. Their salt will lose its’ saltiness. Their baskets of bread will run empty. Or apart from Christ they may drift away from God’s plans, trying to restore creation to their own liking. And all of that will be a disaster for them and people in need.

But when we rely upon Christ – when we come to others with the compassion of Christ that we ourselves have received; when we comfort with the comfort we ourselves have received; when we forgive as we ourselves have been forgiven – then no longer will anyone ask, “Where is Christ’s compassion today?” Because they will look at His disciples and clearly see Christ at work. Whether they are hungry or thirsty, lonely or sick, or facing any other serious problem, when the Church is being strengthened by Christ, there will more than enough of Christ’s compassion to take care of whatever the need. Amen.