THE SEVENTH SUNDAY OF EASTER THE ASCENSION OF OUR LORD (observed) MAY 12, 2024

IN THE NAME OF JESUS, WELCOME TO ST. PAUL'S!

HHH

THE ENTRANCE RITE

PRELUDE

Adoro Te Devote

Setting: Charles Callahan

WELCOME

Alleluia! Christ is risen!

He is risen indeed! Alleluia!

ENTRANCE HYMN

Christ Is Made the Sure Foundation

LSB 909

- 1 Christ is made the sure foundation, Christ, our head and cornerstone, Chosen of the Lord and precious, Binding all the Church in one; Holy Zion's help forever And our confidence alone.
- 2 To this temple, where we call You, Come, O Lord of hosts, and stay; Come with all Your loving-kindness, Hear Your people as they pray; And Your fullest benediction Shed within these walls today.
- 3 Grant, we pray, to all Your faithful All the gifts they ask to gain; What they gain from You, forever With the blessèd to retain; And hereafter in Your glory Evermore with You to reign.
 - 4 Praise and honor to the Father,
 Praise and honor to the Son,

 Praise and honor to the Spirit,
 Ever three and ever one:

 One in might and one in glory
 While unending ages run!

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

LSB 151

In the name of the Father and of the \maltese Son and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. But if we confess our sins, God, who is faithful and just, will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Silence for reflection on God's Word and for self-examination.

Let us then confess our sins to God our Father.

Most merciful God, we confess that we are by nature sinful and unclean. We have sinned against You in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved You with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We justly deserve Your present and eternal punishment. For the sake of Your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in Your will and walk in Your ways to the glory of Your holy name. Amen.

Almighty God in His mercy has given His Son to die for you and for His sake forgives you all your sins. As a called and ordained servant of Christ, and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the A Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

KYRIE LSB 152

In peace let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For the peace from above and for our salvation let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of God, and for the unity of all let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For this holy house and for all who offer here their worship and praise let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.

Amen.

This is the feast of victory for our God.

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Worthy is Christ, the Lamb who was slain, whose blood set us free to be people of God.

This is the feast of victory for our God.

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Power, riches, wisdom, and strength, and honor, blessing, and glory are His.

This is the feast of victory for our God.

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Sing with all the people of God, and join in the hymn of all creation:

Blessing, honor, glory, and might be to God and the Lamb forever. Amen.

This is the feast of victory for our God.

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

For the Lamb who was slain has begun His reign. Alleluia.

This is the feast of victory for our God.

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

THE PRAYER OF THE DAY

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Let us pray. Almighty God,

as Your only-begotten Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, ascended into the heavens, so may we also ascend in heart and mind and continually dwell there with Him, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

FIRST LESSON (Be seated)

Acts 1:1-11

In the first book, O Theophilus, I have dealt with all that Jesus began to do and teach, until the day when he was taken up, after he had given commands through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom he had chosen. To them he presented himself alive after his suffering by many proofs, appearing to them during forty days and speaking about the kingdom of God.

And while staying with them he ordered them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father, which, he said, "you heard from me; for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now."

So when they had come together, they asked him, "Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?" He said to them, "It is not for you to know times or seasons that the Father has fixed by his own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth." And when he had said these things, as they were looking on, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. And while they were gazing into heaven as he went, behold, two men stood by them in white robes, and said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into heaven? This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven."

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM 47 (Sung responsively)

Clap your hands, all peoples!
Shout to God with loud songs of joy!
For the LORD, the Most High, is to be feared, a great king over all the earth.
He subdued peoples under us, and nations under our feet.
He chose our heritage for us, the pride of Jacob whom he loves.

God has gone up with a shout, the LORD with the sound of a trumpet. Sing praises to God, sing praises! Sing praises to our King, sing praises! For God is the King of all the earth; sing praises with a psalm!

God reigns over the nations;
God sits on his holy throne.
The princes of the peoples gather
as the people of the God of Abraham.
For the shields of the earth belong to God;
he is highly exalted!

SECOND LESSON 1 John 5:9-15

If we receive the testimony of men, the testimony of God is greater, for this is the testimony of God that he has borne concerning his Son. Whoever believes in the Son of God has the testimony in himself. Whoever does not believe God has made him a liar, because he has not believed in the testimony that God has borne concerning his Son. And this is the testimony, that God gave us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life.

I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God that you may know that you have eternal life. And this is the confidence that we have toward him, that if we ask anything according to his will he hears us. And if we know that he hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests that we have asked of him.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

10:30 CHILDREN'S SERMON

ALLELUIA VERSE (Stand)

LSB 156

Alleluia.
Lord, to whom shall we go?
You have the words of eternal life.
Alleluia, alleluia.

GOSPEL John 17:11b-19

The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the 17th chapter **Glory to You, O Lord.**

[Jesus said:] "Holy Father, keep them in your name, which you have given me, that they may be one, even as we are one. While I was with them, I kept them in your name, which you have given me. I have guarded them, and not one of them has been lost except the son of destruction, that the Scripture might be fulfilled. But now I am coming to you, and these things I speak in the world, that they may have my joy fulfilled in themselves. I have given them your word, and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. I do not ask that you take them out of the world, but that you keep them from the evil one. They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth. As you sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world. And for their sake I consecrate myself, that they also may be sanctified in truth."

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to You, O Christ

SERMON (Be seated)

Grace, mercy and peace be to you from God our Father and from our Lord and Savior Jesus. Amen. Dear friends in Christ:

Today is Mother's Day. And like many of you, I have a mother who now lives in heaven.

My mom has been there ten years now, and while I'm glad she lives with the Lord, I also miss her — especially on days like today. I've mostly gotten accustomed to being without her. And I don't really need her like I once did — which is in large part because she taught me so much of what I need to know. But I still miss her. In fact, recently it seems like I've been missing her even more.

Part of this, no doubt, is the recent passing of my dad. Both of my parents are now gone, which leaves an even bigger void. But it's more than that too. I miss my mom's knowledge of the past and her friendship in things we had in common. We both have a love of music and history and exploration, and it would be wonderful to have more conversations on these topics.

Perhaps what I miss most, however, is having someone so completely biased about me and someone so completely on my side. Yes, I've got others on my side... like my wife, of course. But as they say, no one loves you like your mother.

All this being said, I do have someone in my life who loves me even more than my mother. And that is the Lord Jesus – the one who loves you and me with a love greater than any other.

Today's Gospel reading opens a big window into this love of Jesus, for in it we hear him praying for us. The three chapters before it record a long teaching discourse of Jesus to his disciples – which was a great act of love too. In the chapters to come we see him going to the cross and offering his life for us – the greatest act of love anyone could ever give. But here in chapter 17 we get a prayer which shows us his heart. In it we hear both the specifics of what he prays for, as well as the urgency with which he prays.

I know that one of my mom's great acts of love was to pray for me. She prayed with me as a child, and she continued to pray for me as I grew up and left home. Sometimes I wonder if she prays for me still. We don't know exactly how this goes in heaven, but we do know there's praising going on. Lots of it! And praising is prayer. I'd like to think my mom still has a concern for me, and maybe even prays according to updates she gets on me.

One thing we do know is that Jesus continues to pray for us. Romans 8:34 says: "Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us." On this day when we celebrate his Ascension, let's rejoice that Christ is right there with the Father – at his right hand – interceding on our behalf.

The prayer of Jesus recorded in our text today is definitely one of intercession. In it Jesus prays for the many needs of his followers. And because of this intercessory focus, the prayer is usually called his "High Priestly Prayer." Priests intercede for people. And Jesus is the highest interceder of all.

To further understand what his intercession means, we need only look at the details of his prayer. We won't be able to cover all of these in one sermon. But by concentrating on today's verses we can still get a very good idea.

Our reading begins with Jesus praying: "Holy Father, keep them in your name, which you have given me, that they may be one, even as we are one."

Here we see, first of all, that Jesus is praying for us to be kept in God's name. And Jesus adds that this name is the one which was given to him. But this begs the question: "what is that name?"

As his prayer makes clear, that name is "Father." This is the name for God which Jesus uses throughout the prayer. In our first verse today Jesus says: "Holy Father," and towards the end of the prayer he will use the name "Righteous Father." But mostly he simply says "Father."

This is the name Jesus uses most prominently throughout his ministry. And we should understand that this is mostly a new name for God. The Israelites were God's people but called Abraham their father. God's special name in the Old Testament was Yahweh – translated as "Lord."

Jesus not only used the name Father himself, but also taught us to use it in our prayer. He did this so that we would understand ourselves as God's children.

At the same time, Jesus' use of this name indicates that he has a special relationship with the Father. He was not just "a son" like we are, but "the Son" – the only-begotten Son. And in Jesus' High Priestly Prayer we hear much about this special relationship. We hear that Father glorifies the Son, loves the Son, sent the Son and is one with the Son. The special relationship between the two is clearly emphasized.

The previous three chapters in John's Gospel make clear that the Father will also send the Spirit. And we are told that the Spirit will be sent in Jesus' name as well. The Spirit, we see, has a special relationship with the Father just like the Son. The relationship between these three is in fact so close that they should all be seen as the "name" which Jesus had been given. That name is the Triune Name – Father, Son and Holy Spirit. At the end of his prayer, Jesus said: "I made known to them your name, and I will continue to make it known, that the love with which you have loved me may be in them, and I in them." This name which has continued to be made known is clearly the Triune Name.

Jesus prays that we be kept in God's name. And he does this so that we might have a right understanding about God.

At the same time, Jesus also wants us to be kept in God's name so that we would have a family identity. Having the same name keeps us together. As children of the same Heavenly Father, our identity is to be found in being Trinitarian Christians – those who received that name at their Baptism.

Notice that this idea of common identity is where Jesus' prayer goes next. Jesus says that he wants us to be kept in God's name so that we would be one. Reading ahead, we see the reasons for this desire of his.

First, unity will help us from being lost. Jesus prays that we be "kept" and not "lost." To be kept is to remain in God's kingdom through faith, while to be lost is to lose that faith and find oneself outside the kingdom. When we are one – meaning united – we can better support one another in faith. When we are divided, faith is more difficult.

As Jesus' prayer progresses, we see other reasons for this desired unity too. One of these is that Jesus wants us to have Christ's joy fulfilled in us. This is the joy we will find in Christian fellowship.

Another is to help overcome the world's hate. "The world has hated them because they are not of the world," notes Jesus. That hate is difficult to stand against. But it's easier when we are united together as a family of faith. Unity makes times of persecution far easier to endure.

Finally, Jesus prays – towards the end of the prayer (v. 23) – that we be one so that the world may know that God sent him and loved his people even as God loved him. In other words, Jesus prays for our unity for the sake of the witness we give. When we are united, we will give a stronger witness to the message of Christ.

Being one, as we know, is tough. And the church hasn't done very well with this, quite frankly. Think of how many denominations of the church there are. And think of all the disagreements that occur within these denominations.

At the same time, God has been able to keep a remarkable amount of unity among us as well. For as Jesus' prayer informs us, true unity isn't necessarily organizational. Rather, it's about support and joy and continuity and witness. All of these are happening among us, just as Jesus has prayed. Christians can have a healthy respect for one another even amidst their disagreements.

As a final item to note about Jesus' prayer, we should see that Jesus also prays for us to be sanctified in the truth. "Sanctify them in the truth," he prays. And then he adds a word of explanation about this, saying: "your word is truth."

As I think about my task of preaching and teaching here at St. Paul's, I don't think I could find any better guidance for this than Jesus' words of "sanctify them in the truth ... the truth of God's word."

The truth of God leads people to holiness. That's what it means to be sanctified. God's message of who he is and what he does for the world moves people to live out this holiness by treating one another rightly.

And, as Jesus said on another occasion, the truth also sets us free. Living in the truth gives us a peace in our hearts. And this is especially the case with the truth of what God has done for us in Jesus. Jesus died to pay the price of our sin so that we might be forgiven and become heirs of heaven. That's the greatest freedom of all.

The High Priestly Prayer of Jesus reveals his identity and his heart. But the prayer can also be a guide for us as well. God has called us to be a holy priesthood of believers (1 Peter 2:5). And we have been sent into the world – as Jesus noted in this prayer. This means that we are to intercede for the world with our prayers. Our prayer for the world is an essential part of our calling.

Jesus is praying for you. He is praying for you to be kept in faith and sanctified in the truth, so that you will find joy in this world and make it safely to the next. Knowing of this great blessing of Jesus' prayer, let us then pray for one another. In the name of Jesus. Amen.

HYMN OF THE DAY (Stand) Up through Endless Ranks of Angels

LSB 491

- 1 Up through endless ranks of angels, Cries of triumph in His ears, To His heav'nly throne ascending, Having vanquished all their fears, Christ looks down upon His faithful, Leaving them in happy tears.
- 2 Death-destroying, life-restoring, Proven equal to our need, Now for us before the Father As our brother intercede; Flesh that for our world was wounded, Living, for the wounded plead!
- 3 To our lives of wanton wand'ring Send Your Spirit, promised guide; Through our lives of fear and failure With Your pow'r and love abide; Welcome us, as You were welcomed, To an endless Eastertide.
 - 4 Alleluia, alleluia!
 Oh, to breathe the Spirit's grace!
 Alleluia, alleluia!
 Oh, to see the Father's face!
 Alleluia, alleluia!
 Oh, to feel the Son's embrace!

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth.

And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died and was buried.
He descended into hell.
The third day He rose again from the dead.
He ascended into heaven
and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.
From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy Christian Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life

everlasting. Amen.

OFFERING

Offerings support the church's mission work – both here and through our many partners. Offerings may be placed in the box at the sanctuary entrance or sent to the church through our website or the mail. **Fellowship Cards** help us welcome new people and track participation. Please fill one out and place it in the offering box following the service.

PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

In peace, let us pray to the Lord: Lord, have mercy.

For lips to sing praises to our ascended Lord and King; and for confidence to live in His victory, drawing from His Spirit and the promises given at our Baptism, let us pray to the Lord: **Lord, have mercy.**

For all of us who are gathered again in the presence of the King, that we may dwell in His house all the days of our lives and gaze upon His beauty here and in the life to come, let us pray to the Lord: **Lord, have mercy.**

For all the ministers and witnesses of the Church, that they would be sent to proclaim God's name, just as the Father sent His Son and the Son sent His apostles, let us pray to the Lord: **Lord, have mercy.**

For all God's children who are hated by the world because they are not of the world, that holding fast to His sure Word, not one of them would be lost, let us pray to the Lord: Lord, have mercy.

For our president, governor, Congress, legislature, diplomats and judges, that the Lord would teach them the testimony of the truth and make them wise and effective in their offices, let us pray to the Lord: **Lord, have mercy.**

For all those who are sick and in distress, especially those on our prayer list and those we name in our hearts at this time... that holding the Son of God in faithful hearts, they may have eternal life and answers to their prayers, let us pray to the Lord: **Lord, have mercy.**

For all who commune this day at the Lord's altar, that they would receive His light and salvation, grow strong and courageous in heart, and never fail to have hope as they await His deliverance, let us pray to the Lord: **Lord, have mercy.**

For all who call on the name of the Lord, that they would be one, just as the Father and Son are one; and that they would be sanctified in the truth of God's Word, let us pray to the Lord: **Lord, have mercy.**

Heavenly Father, Your Son in His incarnation took on our human flesh and was born of the Virgin Mary. He submitted to His mother, honoring and obeying her, and so fulfilled the commandment where we have not. On this Mother's Day, graciously accept our thanksgiving for our mothers, whom You have given to us. Teach us to honor them aright — loving, obeying and giving thanks for them, as is fitting in Your sight.

And into your hands, O Lord, we commend all for whom we pray – trusting in your goodness and mercy, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**.

SERVICE OF THE SACRAMENT

OFFERTORY LSB 159

What shall I render to the Lord for all His benefits to me?

I will offer the sacrifice of thanksgiving and will call on the name of the Lord.

I will take the cup of salvation and will call on the name of the Lord.

I will pay my vows to the Lord now in the presence of all His people, in the courts of the Lord's house, in the midst of you, O Jerusalem.

PREFACE LSB 160

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give Him thanks and praise.

It is truly good right and salutary...evermore praising You and saying:

SANCTUS LSB 161

Holy, holy, holy Lord God of pow'r and might:

Heaven and earth are full of Your glory.

Hosanna. Hosanna.

Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest.

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

LSB 161

THE WORDS OF OUR LORD

PROCLAMATION OF CHRIST

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.

PAX DOMINI LSB 163

The peace of the Lord be with you always. Amen.

AGNUS DEI LSB 163

Lamb of God, You take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, You take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, You take away the sin of the world; grant us peace.

THE COMMUNION (Be seated)

Those wishing to commune at the foot of the steps should come forward first. Those wishing to commune at the altar rail should come forward after these, front rows first, from both sides of the aisle. After receiving, all should return to their seats. A common dismissal will be given at the end.

- Thee we adore, O hidden Savior, Thee, Who in Thy Sacrament art pleased to be; Both flesh and spirit in Thy presence fail, Yet here Thy presence we devoutly hail.
- In this memorial of Thy death, O Lord, Thou dost Thy body and Thy blood afford: Oh, may our souls forever feed on Thee, And Thou, O Christ, forever precious be.
- Thou, like the pelican to feed her brood,
 Didst pierce Thyself to give us living food;
 Thy blood, O Lord, one drop has pow'r to win
 Forgiveness for our world and all its sin.
- 4 Fountain of goodness, Jesus, Lord and God: Cleanse us, unclean, with Thy most cleansing blood; Increase our faith and love, that we may know The hope and peace which from Thy presence flow.
- O Christ, whom now beneath a veil we see,
 May what we thirst for soon our portion be:
 To gaze on Thee unveiled and see Thy face,
 The vision of Thy glory, and Thy grace.
 Amen.

PRAYER (Stand)

BENEDICTION

- 1 Look, ye saints, the sight is glorious; See the Man of Sorrows now! From the fight returned victorious. Ev'ry knee to Him shall bow. Crown Him! Crown Him! Crown Him! Crown Him! Crown Him! Crown Him! Crowns become the victor's brow. Crowns become the victor's brow.
- 2 Crown the Savior! Angels, crown Him! Rich the trophies Jesus brings; On the seat of pow'r enthrone Him While the vault of heaven rings. Crown Him! Crown Him! Crown Him! Crown Him! Crown Him! Crown Him! Crown the Savior King of kings. Crown the Savior King of kings.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

- 3 Sinners in derision crowned Him, Mocking thus the Savior's claim; Saints and angels crowd around Him, Own His title, praise His name. Crown Him! Crown Him! Crown Him! Crown Him! Crown Him! Crown Him! Spread abroad the victor's fame. Spread abroad the victor's fame.
- 4 Hark, those bursts of acclamation! Hark, those loud triumphant chords! Jesus takes the highest station; Oh, what joy the sight affords! Crown Him! Crown Him! Crown Him! Crown Him! Crown Him! Crown Him! King of kings and Lord of lords! King of kings and Lord of lords!

Thaxted Setting: Holst/Cherwien

FLOWERS: Happy Mother's Day to All Mothers, and in celebration of our Son's (Norm's) birthday, and in Loving Memory of our beloved Grandson's (Trey's) first Heavenly Birthday on May 15th. The Armstrong Family

And By Jennifer Zambone

FELLOWSHIP – Preschool Committee

Those serving:

Sunday, 8:00 a.m.:

Greeter: Jim Easterly

Comm. assist: Judy Koucky Reader: Rich Kauzlarich

10:30 a.m.:

Greeter: Jason Starck Comm. assist: Jill Hecht

Reader: Bill Muller Acolyte: Noah Starck

AV Assist: Hannes Buuck, Andreas Buuck

8:00/10:30 Trumpet: Augie Jansen

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