

Monday, November 26, 2012

READ - The Old Testament: Jeremiah 33:14-16

The prophet Jeremiah's words to the people of Israel predicted destruction and exile; yet they were not without hope. He assures the people if they will turn back to God, his covenant with them will be kept and they will be restored as God's people.

REFLECT-

• This passage is read during the advent season because Christians interpret the prophecy of that "righteous Branch" (vs.15) as fulfilled in Jesus. Jesus came to teach us how to live with justice and righteousness as Jeremiah foretold.

PRAY-

Lord, help me to live in such a way that I may be your hands and feet of love and compassion to all those I encounter. Amen.

Tuesday, November 27, 2012

RFAD-

The Psalter: Psalm 25:1-10

The psalmist asks for God's protection from those who wish him harm and from his own sinfulness. He asks that God teach him God's ways. He asks for God's mercy and love and then affirms God's faithfulness in the past.

REFLECT-

• We so often only seek God's presence when we are suffering or afraid. When our lives are filled with good things, we sometimes forget to give God praise and thanksgiving for those blessings. Lift everything up to God today – the pain and the plenty. Ask for what you need and give thanks for what you have.

PRAY-

O God, heal me, guide me, forgive me. Thank you for your love and mercy in my life and in this world. Amen.

Wednesday, November 28, 2012

READ - The Epistle: | Thessalonians 3:9-13

The people of Thessalonica had turned away from idol worship to place their trust in Christ. Paul's letter to them seeks to undergird their faith as they endure criticism and rejection by their community. He asks God to direct and strengthen them and encourages them to love and support one another.

REFLECT-

• As Christians, we do not isolate ourselves from those who do not believe as we do. Rather, we are called to be strong in our faith so that others may see it and be influenced for Christ. Our actions speak volumes about what we really believe. Is there someone who has no faith whom you can influence today?

PRAY-

Father, use me today to be a witness of my faith in some way to someone who needs to hear that good news. Amen.

Thursday, November 29, 2012

READ - The Gospel: Luke 21:25-36

Jesus' words to his disciples here reflect Old Testament predictions of the end time when God will bring justice and make all things right, but add that he will come again in glory when that occurs. He then warns the disciples to be "on guard" (vs. 34), watching for the signs, so that they will be ready for his return.

REFLECT-

• Do you live as if Christ might return any day? What are the distractions and temptations that keep you from staying focused on loving God and your neighbor? As you prepare for the coming of the Christ Child during Advent, what changes might you make to overcome those things?

PRAY-

O God, in the words of the prophet Micah, help me to "do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly" with you and with my neighbor. Amen.

Friday, November 30, 2012

ACT-

Focus Verse: Psalm 25:9

He teaches the humble in what is right, and teaches the humble his way.

Living in a way that is humble is counter to our culture. Our materialistic society emphasizes immediate self-gratification and "looking out for #1". Learning to be humble means putting others first, living simply, giving sacrificially, showing compassion, being slow to speak and quick to forgive. The psalmist affirms that when we live in this way, God teaches us and his way becomes clear to us. As you go about your day, let the word "humble" be your guide for your words, your actions, and your decisions. Pay attention to what God teaches you and the path that opens for you.