



Monday, December 30, 2013

READ- The Psalter: Psalm 72:1-7, 10-14

Written as a prayer for a king, the psalmist asks that God guide the king to rule with justice for the poor and oppressed and that act of righteousness will bring peace for all the people. Throughout the Hebrew scripture, there is a constant call to help those who are in need or are suffering. Jesus reflected this priority as well in the way he lived.

REFLECT-

- How does this call to the king in that day compare with what we expect of our government and its leaders today? Is it their role to provide help for the poor and the oppressed? What is the role of the church in helping those who are poor and suffering?

PRAY-

Lord, there is so much need and suffering in our community. Help me to use my time and resources to help meet the need and ease the suffering. Amen.

Tuesday, December 31, 2013

READ- Old Testament: Isaiah 60:1-6

This Sunday is Epiphany when we celebrate the coming of the wise men to see the child Jesus. They followed a great light which indicated the coming of a great king. Isaiah looks to the future in this passage when a great light would shine for the people of Israel and redeem them from their disgrace and suffering.

REFLECT-

- This passage speaks of hope and the promise of God making all things right. You may be in a time of deep darkness now in your life or perhaps you remember a time when you needed God's light to shine upon you. We have hope for the future and strength for today in the "great light" of Jesus Christ.

PRAY-

God of light, thank you for sending your Son into our world of darkness. Help me to be a "light" to those around me today. Amen.

Wednesday, January 1, 2014

READ- The Epistle: Ephesians 3:1-12

Paul expresses here the essence of what he understands to be his mission in the world – to share the gospel of Christ with those who are not Jewish and to help the Jewish world understand that salvation is for all people, not just the Jews. Paul was a Jew himself, so this was a radical message for all those to whom he preached – both Jews and Gentiles.

REFLECT-

- Distinctions between people based on ethnic origin, economic status, and disability were sharp in that day. People did not mix with those who were different from them. Are we so different today? To whom are we reluctant to reach out because they are very different from us? What does God call us to do?

PRAY-

Father, help me let go of my biases and fears of people who are not like me, to realize that they are also your beloved child, and act accordingly. Amen.

Thursday, January 2, 2014

READ- The Gospel: Matthew 2:1-12

The wise men followed the path of the star to the great city of Jerusalem, perhaps expecting that a king would naturally be born there. But when they sought more specific directions from the religious leaders in Herod's court, they learned that the small town of Bethlehem was their destination based upon ancient Hebrew prophecies.

REFLECT-

- The wise men offered precious, expensive gifts to the child king Jesus. You have gifts to offer Jesus, provided to you by God. Are you giving them fully or are you holding back, fearful that the cost to you will be too great of your time or resources?

PRAY-

O God, help me to honor Jesus in the ways I use the gifts you have given me. Guide me as I serve you and share what I have with others that it all may be to your glory. Amen

Friday, January 3, 2014

ACT-

Focus Verse: Isaiah 60:1

Arise, shine; for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you.

A new year is beginning. Many of us may be taking stock of the year that has come to a close and think about how we want to live in the new year. Are you "letting your light shine" for Christ in your daily life? Are you living faithfully in worshipping God, reading the Bible and praying daily, and finding ways of serving and loving others, especially those who are suffering or in need? Where are your areas of growth for you spiritually in this new year? Put them down in writing in your journal so that they can become your priorities. "Arise, shine; for your light has come!"