Bread for the Journey

Daily Readings and Prayers on the Revised Common Lectionary

Monday, November 25, 2013

READ - The Psalter: Psalm 122

Written for all Jewish pilgrims who hold Jerusalem as their holy city, the psalmist reminds them of the rich, yet painful history the city holds for them and offers a prayer of blessing for the city and its temple for peace and the good of the people who worship there.

REFLECT -

- The opening verse of this psalm is often used as a call to worship in our modern church services. Are you truly "glad" when you go to worship God? Is that time of worship each week a priority for you? When you come to worship, do you really focus on God and leave behind the other things that occupy your time?

PRAY -

Lord, thank you that I have the privilege to worship you freely with brothers and sisters in Christ. Help me never to take that lightly. Amen.

Tuesday, November 26, 2013

READ - Old Testament: Isaiah 2:1-5

This passage contains a well-known image of a future time of peace (vs. 4b) among the nations which is also found in Micah 4. The prophet longed for the time in which people will rely upon God's ways to settle their differences, walking in the "light of the Lord" (vs. 5).

REFLECT -

- Another Veteran's Day has just passed and we seem no closer to a time when war and violence between nations is a thing of the past than in Isaiah's time. Today, pray for the leaders of our nation and those around the world that peace and justice are their first priorities.

PRAY -

O God, empower the leaders of our nation and others to govern justly so that no group or nation will resort to violence in resistance to injustice or oppression. Make me an instrument of your peace today. Amen.

Wednesday, November 27, 2013

READ - The Epistle: Romans 13:11-14

Paul exhorts believers to constantly keep in mind the second coming of Christ and to live today in ways that exemplify the new life that Christ has given us. He uses the imagery of night and day to contrast our old sinful ways vs. the ways we are changed after accepting Christ as our Savior.

REFLECT -

- People in the Roman church to whom Paul was writing battled a culture filled with greed, immorality, sexual sin, and pleasure-seeking, much like our current American culture. In what ways is our culture influencing your priorities in life? What changes might you need to make in those priorities to conform to Christ's?

PRAY -

Father, teach me how to clear away the things that influence me that are not in your will for my life. Give me the insight, strength and courage to let them go. Amen.

Thursday, November 28, 2013

READ - The Gospel: Matthew 24:36-44

All three of the synoptic gospels record Jesus' teaching about the coming of the kingdom of God, swiftly and without warning, and the importance of us being ready at any time to stand before the throne of God. Even Christ himself does not know that time – only God.

REFLECT -

- If Christ returned today, would you be ready? Would you feel assurance as you looked into his eyes because you have accepted God's grace in your life and lived in response to that in ways that would please Jesus? If not, what needs to be different in your life?

PRAY -

O God, help me to make your priorities my priorities. Help me to live into Jesus' commands to love one another with my time and resources. Amen.

Friday, November 29, 2013

ACT -

Focus Verse: Isaiah 2:3

Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; that he may teach us his ways and that we may walk in his paths.

Begin a practice today of preparing yourself more intentionally to worship fully on Sunday morning. Read the scripture passages ahead of time that will be used in worship (found in the worship bulletins that are emailed out on Fridays) for better understanding. Read and study your Sunday School lesson so that you may participate fully in the learning and sharing that takes place there. When you enter your time of worship on Sunday, really focus your attention and intent on God and trying to hear and discern God's word for you in that time.