



Monday, October 7, 2013

READ- The Psalter: Psalm 66:1-12

This psalm begins with great rejoicing and praise for a God who reigns forever. It asks for God's blessing for the people; yet acknowledges that God "tries us" as the precious metal silver is tested by the silversmith to insure that it is true and pure.

REFLECT-

- Look at verses 11-12. Have you ever felt like God has "laid burdens on your back" or "let people ride over our heads" or put you through "fire and water"? If so, do you also know what it feels like for God to bring you out of those trials to a "spacious place"? How have those experiences changed your faith?

PRAY-

Lord, I offer you my praise and thanksgiving that at Amen.

Tuesday, October 8, 2013

READ- Old Testament: Jeremiah 29:1, 4-7

This letter to the Jews taken away to exile in Babylonian must have astounded their readers. They were focused on returning to their homeland and Jeremiah tells them to make a home, earn a living, have a family in this new land – yet all the while honoring and obeying their God.

REFLECT-

- Have you ever felt like an exile from all you held dear because of the loss of loved ones or circumstances in which you find yourself? Jeremiah reminds the people that where there is faith in God, there is hope and we should live as God's people in whatever situation we find ourselves. Circumstances may change, but God does not.

PRAY-

Father, help me to keep my "roots" firmly planted in you and your will for my life so that no matter where winds of life's circumstances may take me, I am always at home in your love. Amen.

Wednesday, October 9, 2013

READ- The Epistle: II Timothy 2:8-15

This letter to Timothy reminds us that if we really try to live as followers of Christ, there is likely to be suffering and hardship. If we hold true to Christ's teachings and values, life will not always be easy for us. Yet, we must always keep foremost in our hearts Jesus' example and the gift of salvation that was bought for us by his suffering.

REFLECT-

- Are there certain people and situations in which you "hide" your Christian faith and values? Are you sometimes faced with choices in which you take the easy way out rather than stand up for what Christ would have you to do? Are you reluctant to share your faith in certain circumstances for fear of rejection or ridicule?

PRAY-

Gracious God, give me courage to live completely for you as your representative in all things and with all people. If I am ashamed of you – you will be ashamed of me before God. Forgive me and help me. Amen.

Thursday, October 10, 2013

READ- The Gospel: Luke 17:11-19

Leprosy, a horrific disease, brought with it not only a physical toll, but an emotional, social and spiritual one. Those who had it were forced to live apart from their family and community and were excluded from all religious activities. The healing Jesus offered them restored all those aspects of their lives.

REFLECT-

- Who are the "lepers" in your family and community? Who are the people who are shut out for some reason? What would Jesus have us to offer them? Although we may not be physical healers, we can offer kindness, acceptance, and inclusion in a loving community.

PRAY-

O God, help me to see the poor and marginalized through your eyes and offer them the healing love of Jesus Christ. Amen.

Friday, October 11, 2013

ACT-

Focus Verse: Luke 17:19

"Get up and go on your way; your faith has made you well."

Jesus' words to the one leper who returned to give thanks speak volumes about the role thanksgiving plays in our spiritual life. All the men were healed of their physical illness; yet the one who returned to Jesus to give thanks was given a greater gift. What is translated as "made well" in English has a broader meaning in the original Greek – the word used meant to be made "whole" or "complete". His act of thanksgiving offered him spiritual wholeness because he established a relationship of gratitude and praise toward God for his blessings. Today, you can be "made whole" by offering thanksgiving all day long for each blessing you encounter – watch for them, no matter how tiny, and offer praise to God.