



Monday, May 5, 2014

READ- The Psalter: Psalm 23

The most familiar and beloved of all the psalms, this passage is a tremendous comfort in good times and in times of suffering. The image of God as our shepherd, always watching over us and never leaving us, gives us assurance of God's abiding love for his people.

REFLECT-

- Read the psalm aloud, slowly enough to call to mind the images painted by the psalmist in each verse. Was there a time in your life when this passage gave you special comfort? What words of assurance in the psalm are most meaningful for you and why?

PRAY-

Lord, I thank you for the words of your holy scripture which help us to know you and to feel your love for us. Amen.

Tuesday, May 6, 2014

READ- Acts of the Apostles: Acts 2:42-47

After the day of Pentecost, many of the new converts stayed in Jerusalem listening to the teaching of the disciples and learning what it means to live in community as Christ taught. Worship, education, service, fellowship and caring for one another are hallmarks of that community.

REFLECT-

- In what aspects of Christian community are you engaged as part of this church? Are regular worship, education, service, fellowship and care for those in need are part of your life? In what area might Christ be calling you to delve deeper and live more fully?

PRAY-

O God, I thank you for this community of faith. Help me to live faithfully alongside other believers to do the work of your church in the world. Amen.

Wednesday, May 7, 2014

READ- The Epistle: 1 Peter 2:19-25

The Christians to whom Peter was writing were enduring persecution from the Roman and Jewish communities and often suffered abuse through no wrongdoing of their own. Peter compared the suffering they endured to hold fast to their faith to Christ's suffering for us all.

REFLECT-

- We as Americans are taught from a young age that we have rights as American citizens and we should stick up for ourselves. Do Peter's words still apply to us today when people denigrate and criticize us for our Christian faith?

PRAY-

Father, help me to always use the teachings of Christ as my guide in the ways I think, speak, act and respond to others. Amen.

Thursday, May 8, 2014

READ- The Gospel: John 10:1-10

Jesus uses an analogy of his care for us compared with the care of a good shepherd for his sheep. Since few of us know much firsthand today about shepherding, we often don't get the full impact of the total dependence the sheep have on the shepherd.

REFLECT-

- In what areas of your life do you depend entirely upon God and in what areas do you still wrestle for control yourself? Jesus urges us to understand that any control we think we may have is only an illusion. Only by trusting and following him are we truly "safe".

PRAY-

O God, help me to set aside my own desires and priorities and listen for the voice of the Good Shepherd – and do my best to follow him. Amen.

Friday, May 9, 2014

ACT-

Focus Verse: 1 Peter 2:20a-21

But if you endure when you do right and suffer for it, you have God's approval. For to this you have been called because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example so that you should follow in his steps.

Is there something going on in our community, our common culture or even our congregation that you feel runs counter to Christ's teachings, yet you've never spoken out against it perhaps because you were afraid of what your friends and neighbors might think? Jesus calls us to speak and act against injustice and evil and in whatever forms we may find them. Sometimes, those injustices and evil things are readily accepted by our culture and society. Is your concern for "what people might think" impeding you from living out your Christian beliefs in some way? If so, what step might you need to take to change that?