

Wondering

with

God



Lent 2021

Wondering with God

This is an exercise based on "Lectio Divina," which is a process of reflecting upon Scripture that dates back to the 3rd century. "Lectio Divina" translates to "divine reading." The way it works is that you read the passage three times, or better yet have it read aloud to you through a website such as biblegateway.com or your favorite Bible app.

After the first reading take time to let the words sink in. After the second reading circle or underline any word or phrase that sticks out to you. After the third and final reading answer the question: "What might God be asking you to do?" This is intended to be an open ended question. It could be that God is asking you to have that conversation you've been avoiding. God might be asking you to pray for someone. Or it could be as simple as God wants you be in prayer more in general. We hope your time spent "wondering with God" will bring you a more tangible sense of Christ's peace and comfort.

--The Faith Formation Committee

Psalm 5

- ¹ Give ear to my words, O LORD;
give heed to my sighing.
- ² Listen to the sound of my cry,
my King and my God,
for to you I pray.
- ³ O LORD, in the morning you hear my voice;
in the morning I plead my case to you, and watch.
- ⁴ For you are not a God who delights in wickedness;
evil will not sojourn with you.
- ⁵ The boastful will not stand before your eyes;
you hate all evildoers.
- ⁶ You destroy those who speak lies;
the LORD abhors the bloodthirsty and deceitful.
- ⁷ But I, through the abundance of your steadfast love,
will enter your house,
I will bow down toward your holy temple
in awe of you.
- ⁸ Lead me, O LORD, in your righteousness
because of my enemies;
make your way straight before me.
- ⁹ For there is no truth in their mouths;
their hearts are destruction;
their throats are open graves;
they flatter with their tongues.
- ¹⁰ Make them bear their guilt, O God;
let them fall by their own counsels;
because of their many transgressions cast them out,
for they have rebelled against you.



- **First Reading:** Take a few moments to let the words sink in.
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Psalm 27

¹ The LORD is my light and my salvation;
whom shall I fear?

The LORD is the stronghold^[a] of my life;
of whom shall I be afraid?

² When evildoers assail me
to devour my flesh—
my adversaries and foes—
they shall stumble and fall.

³ Though an army encamp against me,
my heart shall not fear;
though war rise up against me,
yet I will be confident.

⁴ One thing I asked of the Lord,
that will I seek after:
to live in the house of the Lord
all the days of my life,
to behold the beauty of the Lord,
and to inquire in his temple.

⁵ For he will hide me in his shelter
in the day of trouble;
he will conceal me under the cover of his tent;
he will set me high on a rock.

⁶ Now my head is lifted up
above my enemies all around me,
and I will offer in his tent
sacrifices with shouts of joy;
I will sing and make melody to the Lord.

⁷ Hear, O Lord, when I cry aloud,
be gracious to me and answer me!
⁸ "Come," my heart says, "seek his face!"
Your face, Lord, do I seek.

⁹ Do not hide your face from me.

Do not turn your servant away in anger,
you who have been my help.

Do not cast me off, do not forsake me,
O God of my salvation!

¹⁰ If my father and mother forsake me,
the Lord will take me up.

¹¹ Teach me your way, O Lord,
and lead me on a level path
because of my enemies.

¹² Do not give me up to the will of my adversaries,
for false witnesses have risen against me,
and they are breathing out violence.

¹³ I believe that I shall see the goodness of the Lord
in the land of the living.

¹⁴ Wait for the Lord;
be strong, and let your heart take courage;
wait for the Lord!



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Psalm 22

1 My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?
Why are you so far from helping me, from the words of my groaning?
2 O my God, I cry by day, but you do not answer;
and by night, but find no rest.
3 Yet you are holy,
enthroned on the praises of Israel.
4 In you our ancestors trusted;
they trusted, and you delivered them.
5 To you they cried, and were saved;
in you they trusted, and were not put to shame.
6 But I am a worm, and not human;
scorned by others, and despised by the people.
7 All who see me mock at me;
they make mouths at me, they shake their heads;
8 "Commit your cause to the Lord; let him deliver—
let him rescue the one in whom he delights!"
9 Yet it was you who took me from the womb;
you kept me safe on my mother's breast.
10 On you I was cast from my birth,
and since my mother bore me you have been my God.
11 Do not be far from me,
for trouble is near
and there is no one to help.
12 Many bulls encircle me,
strong bulls of Bashan surround me;
13 they open wide their mouths at me,
like a ravening and roaring lion.
14 I am poured out like water,
and all my bones are out of joint;
my heart is like wax;
it is melted within my breast;
15 my mouth[a] is dried up like a potsherd,
and my tongue sticks to my jaws;
you lay me in the dust of death.
16 For dogs are all around me;
a company of evildoers encircles me.
My hands and feet have shriveled;^[b]
17 I can count all my bones.
They stare and gloat over me;
18 they divide my clothes among themselves,
and for my clothing they cast lots.
19 But you, O Lord, do not be far away!
O my help, come quickly to my aid!

20 Deliver my soul from the sword,
my life from the power of the dog!
21 Save me from the mouth of the lion!

From the horns of the wild oxen you have rescued^[d] me.

22 I will tell of your name to my brothers and sisters;^[e]
in the midst of the congregation I will praise you:

23 You who fear the Lord, praise him!
All you offspring of Jacob, glorify him;
stand in awe of him, all you offspring of Israel!

24 For he did not despise or abhor
the affliction of the afflicted;
he did not hide his face from me,^[f]
but heard when I^[g] cried to him.

25 From you comes my praise in the great congregation;
my vows I will pay before those who fear him.

26 The poor^[h] shall eat and be satisfied;
those who seek him shall praise the Lord.
May your hearts live forever!

27 All the ends of the earth shall remember
and turn to the Lord;
and all the families of the nations
shall worship before him.^[i]

28 For dominion belongs to the Lord,
and he rules over the nations.

29 To him,^[j] indeed, shall all who sleep in^[k] the earth bow down;
before him shall bow all who go down to the dust,
and I shall live for him.^[l]

30 Posterity will serve him;
future generations will be told about the Lord,

31 and^[m] proclaim his deliverance to a people yet unborn,
saying that he has done it.



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Psalm 119:73-80

- ⁷³Your hands have made and fashioned me;
give me understanding that I may learn your commandments.
- ⁷⁴Those who fear you shall see me and rejoice,
because I have hoped in your word.
- ⁷⁵I know, O LORD, that your judgments are right,
and that in faithfulness you have humbled me.
- ⁷⁶Let your steadfast love become my comfort
according to your promise to your servant.
- ⁷⁷Let your mercy come to me, that I may live;
for your law is my delight.
- ⁷⁸Let the arrogant be put to shame,
because they have subverted me with guile;
as for me, I will meditate on your precepts.
- ⁷⁹Let those who fear you turn to me,
so that they may know your decrees.
- ⁸⁰May my heart be blameless in your statutes,
so that I may not be put to shame.



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Psalm 34

- 1 I will bless the Lord at all times;
his praise shall continually be in my mouth.
- 2 My soul makes its boast in the Lord;
let the humble hear and be glad.
- 3 O magnify the Lord with me,
and let us exalt his name together.
- 4 I sought the Lord, and he answered me,
and delivered me from all my fears.
- 5 Look to him, and be radiant;
so your[a] faces shall never be ashamed.
- 6 This poor soul cried, and was heard by the Lord,
and was saved from every trouble.
- 7 The angel of the Lord encamps
around those who fear him, and delivers them.
- 8 O taste and see that the Lord is good;
happy are those who take refuge in him.
- 9 O fear the Lord, you his holy ones,
for those who fear him have no want.
- 10 The young lions suffer want and hunger,
but those who seek the Lord lack no good thing.
- 11 Come, O children, listen to me;
I will teach you the fear of the Lord.
- 12 Which of you desires life,
and covets many days to enjoy good?
- 13 Keep your tongue from evil,
and your lips from speaking deceit.
- 14 Depart from evil, and do good;
seek peace, and pursue it.
- 15 The eyes of the Lord are on the righteous,
and his ears are open to their cry.
- 16 The face of the Lord is against evildoers,
to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth.
- 17 When the righteous cry for help, the Lord hears,
and rescues them from all their troubles.
- 18 The Lord is near to the brokenhearted,
and saves the crushed in spirit.

- 19 Many are the afflictions of the righteous,
but the Lord rescues them from them all.
20 He keeps all their bones;
not one of them will be broken.
21 Evil brings death to the wicked,
and those who hate the righteous will be condemned.
22 The Lord redeems the life of his servants;
none of those who take refuge in him will be condemned.

Hebrews 3:12-19

12 Take care, brothers and sisters, that none of you may have an evil, unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God. 13 But exhort one another every day, as long as it is called "today," so that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. 14 For we have become partners of Christ, if only we hold our first confidence firm to the end. 15 As it is said,

"Today, if you hear his voice,
do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion."

16 Now who were they who heard and yet were rebellious? Was it not all those who left Egypt under the leadership of Moses? 17 But with whom was he angry forty years? Was it not those who sinned, whose bodies fell in the wilderness? 18 And to whom did he swear that they would not enter his rest, if not to those who were disobedient? 19 So we see that they were unable to enter because of unbelief.



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John 3:16-21

16 "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.

17 "Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. 18 Those who believe in him are not condemned; but those who do not believe are condemned already, because they have not believed in the name of the only Son of God. 19 And this is the judgment, that the light has come into the world, and people loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil. 20 For all who do evil hate the light and do not come to the light, so that their deeds may not be exposed. 21 But those who do what is true come to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that their deeds have been done in God."



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Psalms 148

1 Praise the Lord!
Praise the Lord from the heavens;
praise him in the heights!
2 Praise him, all his angels;
praise him, all his host!
3 Praise him, sun and moon;
praise him, all you shining stars!
4 Praise him, you highest heavens,
and you waters above the heavens!
5 Let them praise the name of the Lord,
for he commanded and they were created.
6 He established them forever and ever;
he fixed their bounds, which cannot be passed.
7 Praise the Lord from the earth,
you sea monsters and all deeps,
8 fire and hail, snow and frost,
stormy wind fulfilling his command!
9 Mountains and all hills,
fruit trees and all cedars!
10 Wild animals and all cattle,
creeping things and flying birds!
11 Kings of the earth and all peoples,
princes and all rulers of the earth!
12 Young men and women alike,
old and young together!
13 Let them praise the name of the Lord,
for his name alone is exalted;
his glory is above earth and heaven.
14 He has raised up a horn for his people,
praise for all his faithful,
for the people of Israel who are close to him.
Praise the Lord!



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Psalm 121

- 1 I lift up my eyes to the hills—
from where will my help come?
- 2 My help comes from the Lord,
who made heaven and earth.
- 3 He will not let your foot be moved;
he who keeps you will not slumber.
- 4 He who keeps Israel
will neither slumber nor sleep.
- 5 The Lord is your keeper;
the Lord is your shade at your right hand.
- 6 The sun shall not strike you by day,
nor the moon by night.
- 7 The Lord will keep you from all evil;
he will keep your life.
- 8 The Lord will keep
your going out and your coming in
from this time on and forevermore.



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Romans 1:16-25

16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel; it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who has faith, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. 17 For in it the righteousness of God is revealed through faith for faith; as it is written, "The one who is righteous will live by faith."

18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and wickedness of those who by their wickedness suppress the truth. 19 For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. 20 Ever since the creation of the world his eternal power and divine nature, invisible though they are, have been understood and seen through the things he has made. So they are without excuse; 21 for though they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their senseless minds were darkened. 22 Claiming to be wise, they became fools; 23 and they exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling a mortal human being or birds or four-footed animals or reptiles.

24 Therefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, to the degrading of their bodies among themselves, 25 because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever! Amen.



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John 5:1-18

After this there was a festival of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.

2 Now in Jerusalem by the Sheep Gate there is a pool, called in Hebrew[a] Beth-zatha,[b] which has five porticoes. 3 In these lay many invalids—blind, lame, and paralyzed.[c] 5 One man was there who had been ill for thirty-eight years. 6 When Jesus saw him lying there and knew that he had been there a long time, he said to him, "Do you want to be made well?" 7 The sick man answered him, "Sir, I have no one to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up; and while I am making my way, someone else steps down ahead of me." 8 Jesus said to him, "Stand up, take your mat and walk." 9 At once the man was made well, and he took up his mat and began to walk.

Now that day was a sabbath. 10 So the Jews said to the man who had been cured, "It is the sabbath; it is not lawful for you to carry your mat." 11 But he answered them, "The man who made me well said to me, 'Take up your mat and walk.'" 12 They asked him, "Who is the man who said to you, 'Take it up and walk?'" 13 Now the man who had been healed did not know who it was, for Jesus had disappeared in[d] the crowd that was there. 14 Later Jesus found him in the temple and said to him, "See, you have been made well! Do not sin any more, so that nothing worse happens to you." 15 The man went away and told the Jews that it was Jesus who had made him well. 16 Therefore the Jews started persecuting Jesus, because he was doing such things on the sabbath. 17 But Jesus answered them, "My Father is still working, and I also am working." 18 For this reason the Jews were seeking all the more to kill him, because he was not only breaking the sabbath, but was also calling God his own Father, thereby making himself equal to God.



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John 5:19-29

19 Jesus said to them, "Very truly, I tell you, the Son can do nothing on his own, but only what he sees the Father doing; for whatever the Father[a] does, the Son does likewise. 20 The Father loves the Son and shows him all that he himself is doing; and he will show him greater works than these, so that you will be astonished. 21 Indeed, just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, so also the Son gives life to whomever he wishes. 22 The Father judges no one but has given all judgment to the Son, 23 so that all may honor the Son just as they honor the Father. Anyone who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent him. 24 Very truly, I tell you, anyone who hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life, and does not come under judgment, but has passed from death to life.

25 "Very truly, I tell you, the hour is coming, and is now here, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live. 26 For just as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son also to have life in himself; 27 and he has given him authority to execute judgment, because he is the Son of Man. 28 Do not be astonished at this; for the hour is coming when all who are in their graves will hear his voice 29 and will come out—those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation.



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John 5:30-47

30 "I can do nothing on my own. As I hear, I judge; and my judgment is just, because I seek to do not my own will but the will of him who sent me.

31 "If I testify about myself, my testimony is not true. 32 There is another who testifies on my behalf, and I know that his testimony to me is true. 33 You sent messengers to John, and he testified to the truth. 34 Not that I accept such human testimony, but I say these things so that you may be saved. 35 He was a burning and shining lamp, and you were willing to rejoice for a while in his light. 36 But I have a testimony greater than John's. The works that the Father has given me to complete, the very works that I am doing, testify on my behalf that the Father has sent me. 37 And the Father who sent me has himself testified on my behalf. You have never heard his voice or seen his form, 38 and you do not have his word abiding in you, because you do not believe him whom he has sent.

39 "You search the scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that testify on my behalf. 40 Yet you refuse to come to me to have life. 41 I do not accept glory from human beings. 42 But I know that you do not have the love of God in[a] you. 43 I have come in my Father's name, and you do not accept me; if another comes in his own name, you will accept him. 44 How can you believe when you accept glory from one another and do not seek the glory that comes from the one who alone is God? 45 Do not think that I will accuse you before the Father; your accuser is Moses, on whom you have set your hope. 46 If you believed Moses, you would believe me, for he wrote about me. 47 But if you do not believe what he wrote, how will you believe what I say?"



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Psalm 145

- 1 I will extol you, my God and King,
and bless your name forever and ever.
 - 2 Every day I will bless you,
and praise your name forever and ever.
 - 3 Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised;
his greatness is unsearchable.
 - 4 One generation shall laud your works to another,
and shall declare your mighty acts.
 - 5 On the glorious splendor of your majesty,
and on your wondrous works, I will meditate.
 - 6 The might of your awesome deeds shall be proclaimed,
and I will declare your greatness.
 - 7 They shall celebrate the fame of your abundant goodness,
and shall sing aloud of your righteousness.
 - 8 The Lord is gracious and merciful,
slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.
 - 9 The Lord is good to all,
and his compassion is over all that he has made.
 - 10 All your works shall give thanks to you, O Lord,
and all your faithful shall bless you.
 - 11 They shall speak of the glory of your kingdom,
and tell of your power,
 - 12 to make known to all people your[a] mighty deeds,
and the glorious splendor of your[b] kingdom.
 - 13 Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom,
and your dominion endures throughout all generations.
- The Lord is faithful in all his words,
and gracious in all his deeds.[c]
- 14 The Lord upholds all who are falling,
and raises up all who are bowed down.
 - 15 The eyes of all look to you,
and you give them their food in due season.
 - 16 You open your hand,
satisfying the desire of every living thing.

17 The Lord is just in all his ways,
and kind in all his doings.
18 The Lord is near to all who call on him,
to all who call on him in truth.
19 He fulfills the desire of all who fear him;
he also hears their cry, and saves them.
20 The Lord watches over all who love him,
but all the wicked he will destroy.
21 My mouth will speak the praise of the Lord,
and all flesh will bless his holy name forever and ever.

John 7:37-52

37 On the last day of the festival, the great day, while Jesus was standing there, he cried out, "Let anyone who is thirsty come to me, 38 and let the one who believes in me drink. As the scripture has said, 'Out of the believer's heart shall flow rivers of living water.'" 39 Now he said this about the Spirit, which believers in him were to receive; for as yet there was no Spirit, because Jesus was not yet glorified.

40 When they heard these words, some in the crowd said, "This is really the prophet." 41 Others said, "This is the Messiah." But some asked, "Surely the Messiah does not come from Galilee, does he? 42 Has not the scripture said that the Messiah is descended from David and comes from Bethlehem, the village where David lived?" 43 So there was a division in the crowd because of him. 44 Some of them wanted to arrest him, but no one laid hands on him.

45 Then the temple police went back to the chief priests and Pharisees, who asked them, "Why did you not arrest him?" 46 The police answered, "Never has anyone spoken like this!" 47 Then the Pharisees replied, "Surely you have not been deceived too, have you? 48 Has any one of the authorities or of the Pharisees believed in him? 49 But this crowd, which does not know the law—they are accursed." 50 Nicodemus, who had gone to Jesus before, and who was one of them, asked, 51 "Our law does not judge people without first giving them a hearing to find out what they are doing, does it?" 52 They replied, "Surely you are not also from Galilee, are you? Search and you will see that no prophet is to arise from Galilee."



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Romans 5:1-11

5 Therefore, since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, 2 through whom we have obtained access to this grace in which we stand; and we boast in our hope of sharing the glory of God. 3 And not only that, but we also boast in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, 4 and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, 5 and hope does not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us.

6 For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. 7 Indeed, rarely will anyone die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person someone might actually dare to die. 8 But God proves his love for us in that while we still were sinners Christ died for us. 9 Much more surely then, now that we have been justified by his blood, will we be saved through him from the wrath of God. 10 For if while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son, much more surely, having been reconciled, will we be saved by his life. 11 But more than that, we even boast in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.



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Romans 5:12-21

12 Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death came through sin, and so death spread to all because all have sinned— 13 sin was indeed in the world before the law, but sin is not reckoned when there is no law. 14 Yet death exercised dominion from Adam to Moses, even over those whose sins were not like the transgression of Adam, who is a type of the one who was to come.

15 But the free gift is not like the trespass. For if the many died through the one man's trespass, much more surely have the grace of God and the free gift in the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, abounded for the many. 16 And the free gift is not like the effect of the one man's sin. For the judgment following one trespass brought condemnation, but the free gift following many trespasses brings justification. 17 If, because of the one man's trespass, death exercised dominion through that one, much more surely will those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness exercise dominion in life through the one man, Jesus Christ.

18 Therefore just as one man's trespass led to condemnation for all, so one man's act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all. 19 For just as by the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous. 20 But law came in, with the result that the trespass multiplied; but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more, 21 so that, just as sin exercised dominion in death, so grace might also exercise dominion through justification leading to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.



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Psalm 130

1 Out of the depths I cry to you, O Lord.

2 Lord, hear my voice!

Let your ears be attentive
to the voice of my supplications!

3 If you, O Lord, should mark iniquities,
Lord, who could stand?

4 But there is forgiveness with you,
so that you may be revered.

5 I wait for the Lord, my soul waits,
and in his word I hope;

6 my soul waits for the Lord
more than those who watch for the morning,
more than those who watch for the morning.

7 O Israel, hope in the Lord!

For with the Lord there is steadfast love,
and with him is great power to redeem.

8 It is he who will redeem Israel
from all its iniquities.



- **First Reading:** Take a few moments to let the words sink in.
- **Second Reading:** Take a few minutes to circle or underline any words or phrases that stick out to you.
- **Third Reading:** Take a few minutes to prayerfully ponder what Christ might be asking you to do based on your reading of this passage.

John 6:1-15

6 After this Jesus went to the other side of the Sea of Galilee, also called the Sea of Tiberias. 2 A large crowd kept following him, because they saw the signs that he was doing for the sick. 3 Jesus went up the mountain and sat down there with his disciples. 4 Now the Passover, the festival of the Jews, was near. 5 When he looked up and saw a large crowd coming toward him, Jesus said to Philip, "Where are we to buy bread for these people to eat?" 6 He said this to test him, for he himself knew what he was going to do. 7 Philip answered him, "Six months' wages would not buy enough bread for each of them to get a little." 8 One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, said to him, 9 "There is a boy here who has five barley loaves and two fish. But what are they among so many people?" 10 Jesus said, "Make the people sit down." Now there was a great deal of grass in the place; so they sat down, about five thousand in all. 11 Then Jesus took the loaves, and when he had given thanks, he distributed them to those who were seated; so also the fish, as much as they wanted. 12 When they were satisfied, he told his disciples, "Gather up the fragments left over, so that nothing may be lost." 13 So they gathered them up, and from the fragments of the five barley loaves, left by those who had eaten, they filled twelve baskets. 14 When the people saw the sign that he had done, they began to say, "This is indeed the prophet who is to come into the world."

15 When Jesus realized that they were about to come and take him by force to make him king, he withdrew again to the mountain by himself.



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Psalm 25

1 To you, O Lord, I lift up my soul.
2 O my God, in you I trust;
do not let me be put to shame;
do not let my enemies exult over me.
3 Do not let those who wait for you be put to shame;
let them be ashamed who are wantonly treacherous.
4 Make me to know your ways, O Lord;
teach me your paths.
5 Lead me in your truth, and teach me,
for you are the God of my salvation;
for you I wait all day long.
6 Be mindful of your mercy, O Lord, and of your steadfast love,
for they have been from of old.
7 Do not remember the sins of my youth or my transgressions;
according to your steadfast love remember me,
for your goodness' sake, O Lord!
8 Good and upright is the Lord;
therefore he instructs sinners in the way.
9 He leads the humble in what is right,
and teaches the humble his way.
10 All the paths of the Lord are steadfast love and faithfulness,
for those who keep his covenant and his decrees.
11 For your name's sake, O Lord,
pardon my guilt, for it is great.
12 Who are they that fear the Lord?
He will teach them the way that they should choose.
13 They will abide in prosperity,
and their children shall possess the land.
14 The friendship of the Lord is for those who fear him,
and he makes his covenant known to them.
15 My eyes are ever toward the Lord,
for he will pluck my feet out of the net.
16 Turn to me and be gracious to me,
for I am lonely and afflicted.

17 Relieve the troubles of my heart,
and bring me out of my distress.
18 Consider my affliction and my trouble,
and forgive all my sins.
19 Consider how many are my foes,
and with what violent hatred they hate me.
20 O guard my life, and deliver me;
do not let me be put to shame, for I take refuge in you.
21 May integrity and uprightness preserve me,
for I wait for you.
22 Redeem Israel, O God,
out of all its troubles.



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Jeremiah 18:1-11

18 The word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord: 2 "Come, go down to the potter's house, and there I will let you hear my words." 3 So I went down to the potter's house, and there he was working at his wheel. 4 The vessel he was making of clay was spoiled in the potter's hand, and he reworked it into another vessel, as seemed good to him.

5 Then the word of the Lord came to me: 6 Can I not do with you, O house of Israel, just as this potter has done? says the Lord. Just like the clay in the potter's hand, so are you in my hand, O house of Israel. 7 At one moment I may declare concerning a nation or a kingdom, that I will pluck up and break down and destroy it, 8 but if that nation, concerning which I have spoken, turns from its evil, I will change my mind about the disaster that I intended to bring on it. 9 And at another moment I may declare concerning a nation or a kingdom that I will build and plant it, 10 but if it does evil in my sight, not listening to my voice, then I will change my mind about the good that I had intended to do to it. 11 Now, therefore, say to the people of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem: Thus says the Lord: Look, I am a potter shaping evil against you and devising a plan against you. Turn now, all of you from your evil way, and amend your ways and your doings.



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Romans 8:12-27

12 So then, brothers and sisters, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh— 13 for if you live according to the flesh, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. 14 For all who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God. 15 For you did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received a spirit of adoption. When we cry, "Abba! Father!" 16 it is that very Spirit bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God, 17 and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ—if, in fact, we suffer with him so that we may also be glorified with him.

18 I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory about to be revealed to us. 19 For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the children of God; 20 for the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope 21 that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and will obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. 22 We know that the whole creation has been groaning in labor pains until now; 23 and not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly while we wait for adoption, the redemption of our bodies. 24 For in hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what is seen? 25 But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.

26 Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words. 27 And God, who searches the heart, knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.



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Romans 8:28-39

28 We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose. 29 For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn within a large family. 30 And those whom he predestined he also called; and those whom he called he also justified; and those whom he justified he also glorified.

31 What then are we to say about these things? If God is for us, who is against us? 32 He who did not withhold his own Son, but gave him up for all of us, will he not with him also give us everything else? 33 Who will bring any charge against God’s elect? It is God who justifies. 34 Who is to condemn? It is Christ Jesus, who died, yes, who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us. 35 Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will hardship, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? 36 As it is written,

“For your sake we are being killed all day long; we are accounted as sheep to be slaughtered.”

37 No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. 38 For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, 39 nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.



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Psalms 6

O Lord, do not rebuke me in your anger, or discipline me in your wrath.

2 Be gracious to me, O Lord, for I am languishing; O Lord, heal me, for my bones are shaking with terror.

3 My soul also is struck with terror, while you, O Lord—how long?

4 Turn, O Lord, save my life; deliver me for the sake of your steadfast love.

5 For in death there is no remembrance of you; in Sheol who can give you praise?

6 I am weary with my moaning; every night I flood my bed with tears; I drench my couch with my weeping.

7 My eyes waste away because of grief; they grow weak because of all my foes.

8 Depart from me, all you workers of evil, for the Lord has heard the sound of my weeping.

9 The Lord has heard my supplication; the Lord accepts my prayer.

10 All my enemies shall be ashamed and struck with terror; they shall turn back, and in a moment be put to shame.



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Psalm 91

You who live in the shelter of the Most High,
 who abide in the shadow of the Almighty,
 2 will say to the Lord, "My refuge and my fortress;
 my God, in whom I trust."
 3 For he will deliver you from the snare of the fowler
 and from the deadly pestilence;
 4 he will cover you with his pinions,
 and under his wings you will find refuge;
 his faithfulness is a shield and buckler.
 5 You will not fear the terror of the night,
 or the arrow that flies by day,
 6 or the pestilence that stalks in darkness,
 or the destruction that wastes at noonday.

7 A thousand may fall at your side,
 ten thousand at your right hand,
 but it will not come near you.
 8 You will only look with your eyes
 and see the punishment of the wicked.

9 Because you have made the Lord your refuge,
 the Most High your dwelling place,
 10 no evil shall befall you,
 no scourge come near your tent.

11 For he will command his angels concerning you
 to guard you in all your ways.
 12 On their hands they will bear you up,
 so that you will not dash your foot against a stone.
 13 You will tread on the lion and the adder,
 the young lion and the serpent you will trample under foot.

14 Those who love me, I will deliver;
 I will protect those who know my name.
 15 When they call to me, I will answer them;
 I will be with them in trouble,
 I will rescue them and honor them.
 16 With long life I will satisfy them,
 and show them my salvation.



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John 10:1-18

10 "Very truly, I tell you, anyone who does not enter the sheepfold by the gate but climbs in by another way is a thief and a bandit. 2 The one who enters by the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. 3 The gatekeeper opens the gate for him, and the sheep hear his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. 4 When he has brought out all his own, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow him because they know his voice. 5 They will not follow a stranger, but they will run from him because they do not know the voice of strangers." 6 Jesus used this figure of speech with them, but they did not understand what he was saying to them.

7 So again Jesus said to them, "Very truly, I tell you, I am the gate for the sheep. 8 All who came before me are thieves and bandits; but the sheep did not listen to them. 9 I am the gate. Whoever enters by me will be saved, and will come in and go out and find pasture. 10 The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly.

11 "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. 12 The hired hand, who is not the shepherd and does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and runs away—and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. 13 The hired hand runs away because a hired hand does not care for the sheep. 14 I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, 15 just as the Father knows me and I know the Father. And I lay down my life for the sheep. 16 I have other sheep that do not belong to this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd. 17 For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life in order to take it up again. 18 No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it up again. I have received this command from my Father."



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Psalm 126

When the Lord restored the fortunes of Zion,
we were like those who dream.
2 Then our mouth was filled with laughter,
and our tongue with shouts of joy;
then it was said among the nations,
"The Lord has done great things for them."
3 The Lord has done great things for us,
and we rejoiced.
4 Restore our fortunes, O Lord,
like the watercourses in the Negeb.
5 May those who sow in tears
reap with shouts of joy.
6 Those who go out weeping,
bearing the seed for sowing,
shall come home with shouts of joy,
carrying their sheaves.



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Jeremiah 29:1-14

29 These are the words of the letter that the prophet Jeremiah sent from Jerusalem to the remaining elders among the exiles, and to the priests, the prophets, and all the people, whom Nebuchadnezzar had taken into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon. 2 This was after King Jehoiachin, and the queen mother, the court officials, the leaders of Judah and Jerusalem, the artisans, and the smiths had departed from Jerusalem. 3 The letter was sent by the hand of Elasah son of Shaphan and Gemariah son of Hilkiyah, whom King Zedekiah of Judah sent to Babylon to King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon. It said: 4 Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, to all the exiles whom I have sent into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon: 5 Build houses and live in them; plant gardens and eat what they produce. 6 Take wives and have sons and daughters; take wives for your sons, and give your daughters in marriage, that they may bear sons and daughters; multiply there, and do not decrease. 7 But seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the Lord on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare. 8 For thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: Do not let the prophets and the diviners who are among you deceive you, and do not listen to the dreams that they dream, 9 for it is a lie that they are prophesying to you in my name; I did not send them, says the Lord.

10 For thus says the Lord: Only when Babylon's seventy years are completed will I visit you, and I will fulfill to you my promise and bring you back to this place. 11 For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope. 12 Then when you call upon me and come and pray to me, I will hear you. 13 When you search for me, you will find me; if you seek me with all your heart, 14 I will let you find me, says the Lord, and I will restore your fortunes and gather you from all the nations and all the places where I have driven you, says the Lord, and I will bring you back to the place from which I sent you into exile.



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Philippians 3:1-14

3 Finally, my brothers and sisters, rejoice in the Lord.

To write the same things to you is not troublesome to me, and for you it is a safeguard.

2 Beware of the dogs, beware of the evil workers, beware of those who mutilate the flesh! 3 For it is we who are the circumcision, who worship in the Spirit of God and boast in Christ Jesus and have no confidence in the flesh— 4 even though I, too, have reason for confidence in the flesh.

If anyone else has reason to be confident in the flesh, I have more: 5 circumcised on the eighth day, a member of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew born of Hebrews; as to the law, a Pharisee; 6 as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to righteousness under the law, blameless.

7 Yet whatever gains I had, these I have come to regard as loss because of Christ. 8 More than that, I regard everything as loss because of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things, and I regard them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ 9 and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but one that comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God based on faith. 10 I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the sharing of his sufferings by becoming like him in his death, 11 if somehow I may attain the resurrection from the dead.

12 Not that I have already obtained this or have already reached the goal; but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own. 13 Beloved, I do not consider that I have made it my own; but this one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, 14 I press on toward the goal for the prize of the heavenly call of God in Christ Jesus.



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Jeremiah 15:10-21

10 Woe is me, my mother, that you ever bore me, a man of strife and contention to the whole land! I have not lent, nor have I borrowed, yet all of them curse me. 11 The Lord said: Surely I have intervened in your life for good, surely I have imposed enemies on you in a time of trouble and in a time of distress. 12 Can iron and bronze break iron from the north?

13 Your wealth and your treasures I will give as plunder, without price, for all your sins, throughout all your territory. 14 I will make you serve your enemies in a land that you do not know, for in my anger a fire is kindled that shall burn forever.

15 O Lord, you know;
remember me and visit me,
and bring down retribution for me on my persecutors.

In your forbearance do not take me away;
know that on your account I suffer insult.

16 Your words were found, and I ate them,
and your words became to me a joy
and the delight of my heart;
for I am called by your name,
O Lord, God of hosts.

17 I did not sit in the company of merrymakers,
nor did I rejoice;
under the weight of your hand I sat alone,
for you had filled me with indignation.

18 Why is my pain unceasing,
my wound incurable,
refusing to be healed?

Truly, you are to me like a deceitful brook,
like waters that fail.

19 Therefore thus says the Lord:
If you turn back, I will take you back,
and you shall stand before me.
If you utter what is precious, and not what is worthless,
you shall serve as my mouth.
It is they who will turn to you,
not you who will turn to them.

20 And I will make you to this people
a fortified wall of bronze;
they will fight against you,
but they shall not prevail over you,
for I am with you
to save you and deliver you,
says the Lord.
21 I will deliver you out of the hand of the wicked,
and redeem you from the grasp of the ruthless.

Wednesday, March 31, 2021

Philippians 4:1-13

1 Therefore, my brothers and sisters, whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, stand firm in the Lord in this way, my beloved.

2 I urge Euodia and I urge Syntyche to be of the same mind in the Lord. 3 Yes, and I ask you also, my loyal companion, help these women, for they have struggled beside me in the work of the gospel, together with Clement and the rest of my co-workers, whose names are in the book of life.

4 Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. 5 Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. 6 Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. 7 And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

8 Finally, beloved, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. 9 Keep on doing the things that you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, and the God of peace will be with you.

10 I rejoice in the Lord greatly that now at last you have revived your concern for me; indeed, you were concerned for me, but had no opportunity to show it. 11 Not that I am referring to being in need; for I have learned to be content with whatever I have. 12 I know what it is to have little, and I know what it is to have plenty. In any and all circumstances I have learned the secret of being well-fed and of going hungry, of having plenty and of being in need. 13 I can do all things through him who strengthens me.



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- **Second Reading:** Take a few minutes to circle or underline any words or phrases that stick out to you.
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John 17:1-26

After Jesus had spoken these words, he looked up to heaven and said, "Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son so that the Son may glorify you, 2 since you have given him authority over all people, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him. 3 And this is eternal life, that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent. 4 I glorified you on earth by finishing the work that you gave me to do. 5 So now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had in your presence before the world existed.

6 "I have made your name known to those whom you gave me from the world. They were yours, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word. 7 Now they know that everything you have given me is from you; 8 for the words that you gave to me I have given to them, and they have received them and know in truth that I came from you; and they have believed that you sent me. 9 I am asking on their behalf; I am not asking on behalf of the world, but on behalf of those whom you gave me, because they are yours. 10 All mine are yours, and yours are mine; and I have been glorified in them. 11 And now I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them in your name that you have given me, so that they may be one, as we are one. 12 While I was with them, I protected them in your name that you have given me. I guarded them, and not one of them was lost except the one destined to be lost, so that the scripture might be fulfilled. 13 But now I am coming to you, and I speak these things in the world so that they may have my joy made complete in themselves. 14 I have given them your word, and the world has hated them because they do not belong to the world, just as I do not belong to the world. 15 I am not asking you to take them out of the world, but I ask you to protect them from the evil one. 16 They do not belong to the world, just as I do not belong to the world. 17 Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth. 18 As you have sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world. 19 And for their sakes I sanctify myself, so that they also may be sanctified in truth.

20 "I ask not only on behalf of these, but also on behalf of those who will believe in me through their word, 21 that they may all be one. As you, Father, are in me and I am in you, may they also be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me. 22 The glory that you have given me I have given them, so that they may be one, as we are one, 23 I in them and you in me, that they may become completely one, so that the world may know that you have sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me. 24 Father, I desire that those also, whom you have given me, may be with me where I am, to see my glory, which you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world.

25 "Righteous Father, the world does not know you, but I know you; and these know that you have sent me. 26 I made your name known to them, and I will make it known, so that the love with which you have loved me may be in them, and I in them."



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Psalm 148

- 1 Praise the Lord!
Praise the Lord from the heavens;
praise him in the heights!
- 2 Praise him, all his angels;
praise him, all his host!
- 3 Praise him, sun and moon;
praise him, all you shining stars!
- 4 Praise him, you highest heavens,
and you waters above the heavens!
- 5 Let them praise the name of the Lord,
for he commanded and they were created.
- 6 He established them forever and ever;
he fixed their bounds, which cannot be passed.
- 7 Praise the Lord from the earth,
you sea monsters and all deeps,
- 8 fire and hail, snow and frost,
stormy wind fulfilling his command!
- 9 Mountains and all hills,
fruit trees and all cedars!
- 10 Wild animals and all cattle,
creeping things and flying birds!
- 11 Kings of the earth and all peoples,
princes and all rulers of the earth!
- 12 Young men and women alike,
old and young together!
- 13 Let them praise the name of the Lord,
for his name alone is exalted;
his glory is above earth and heaven.
- 14 He has raised up a horn for his people,
praise for all his faithful,
for the people of Israel who are close to him.
Praise the Lord!



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