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**Daily Prayer**  
**+ Wednesday, April 1, 2020 +**

## Invocation

L: In the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**C: Amen.**

L: O Lord, open my lips,

**C: and my mouth will declare your praise.**

L: Make haste, O God, to deliver me;

**C: make haste to help me, O Lord.**

**C: Glory be to Father and to the + Son and to the Holy Spirit; as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.**

## Psalmody

*Psalm 18:6-7,16-20*

L: In my distress I called upon the LORD; to my God I cried for help.

**C: From his temple he heard my voice, and my cry to him reached his ears.**

L: Then the earth reeled and rocked; the foundations also of the mountains trembled and quaked, because he was angry.

**C: He sent from on high, he took me; he drew me out of many waters.**

L: He rescued me from my strong enemy and from those who hated me, for they were too mighty for me.

**C: They confronted me in the day of my calamity, but the LORD was my support.**

L: He brought me out into a broad place;

**C: He rescued me, because he delighted in me.**

**C: Glory be to Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit; as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.**

## Hymn

# 724, v. 1-3

[1] If God Himself be for me,  
I may a host defy;  
For when I pray, before me  
My foes, confounded, fly.  
If Christ, my head and master,  
Befriend me from above,  
What foe or what disaster  
Can drive me from His love?

[2] I build on this foundation,  
That Jesus and His blood  
Alone are my salvation,  
My true, eternal good.  
Without Him all that pleases  
Is valueless on earth;  
The gifts I have from Jesus  
Alone have priceless worth.

[3] Christ Jesus is my splendor,  
My sun, my light, alone;  
Were He not my defender  
Before God's judgment throne,  
I never should find favor  
And mercy in His sight,  
But be destroyed forever  
As darkness by the light.

## Reading

**Mark 15:1-15**

*And as soon as it was morning, the chief priests held a consultation with the elders and scribes and the whole*

*council. And they bound Jesus and led him away and delivered him over to Pilate. And Pilate asked him, "Are you the King of the Jews?" And he answered him, "You have said so." And the chief priests accused him of many things. And Pilate again asked him, "Have you no answer to make? See how many charges they bring against you." But Jesus made no further answer, so that Pilate was amazed. Now at the feast he used to release for them one prisoner for whom they asked. And among the rebels in prison, who had committed murder in the insurrection, there was a man called Barabbas. And the crowd came up and began to ask Pilate to do as he usually did for them. And he answered them, saying, "Do you want me to release for you the King of the Jews?" For he perceived that it was out of envy that the chief priests had delivered him up. But the chief priests stirred up the crowd to have him release for them Barabbas instead. And Pilate again said to them, "Then what shall I do with the man you call the King of the Jews?" And they cried out again, "Crucify him." And Pilate said to them, "Why? What evil has he done?" But they shouted all the more, "Crucify him." So Pilate, wishing to satisfy the crowd, released for them Barabbas, and having scourged Jesus, he delivered him to be crucified.*

L: O Lord, have mercy on us.

**C: Thanks be to God.**

### **Devotional Message from Pastor Thompson**

Our reading today records for us the truth that we confess in the Creed: that Jesus Christ "*suffered under Pontius*

*Pilate*". Pilate was the governor of Judea from 26-37 A.D. and he presided over the trial of Jesus and ordered his death by crucifixion in 33 A.D.

The fact that Jesus "*suffered under Pontius Pilate*" is included in the Creed as a remembrance that Jesus was not a myth or a legend, but a real man in a real country, who lived a real life and died a real death. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried. The third day he rose again from the dead.

These are the historical facts of the death and resurrection of Christ. They do not require faith to believe any more than it requires faith to believe that George Washington was our first President or that the Union won the Civil War.

What does require faith, however, are the promises attached to the facts of the death of Christ. The spiritual truths that are connected to the cross of Christ do require faith.

Truths like these: "*Christ died for our sins.*" (1 Corinthians 15:3) And, "*While we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son.*" (Romans 5:10) And, "*Christ died for us.*" (Romans 5:8)

The spiritual truths that we have peace with God and have been reconciled to him through the death of his Son; that our sins are forgiven for Christ's sake; that his death has merited our salvation---these spiritual truths require faith to believe.

And our reading from Mark 15 encourages and builds up this faith. The facts are simple and clear. Jesus was falsely accused of a capital crime by the chief priests and the scribes, out of jealousy and fear. The Roman governor, Pontius Pilate, was fully aware of his innocence. And in an effort to find a way to release Jesus, Pilate offered to have Jesus released as a token of good will, according to the traditions of Passover. But the chief priests stirred up the crowds to reject the release of Jesus, and as substitute, to release Barabbas instead, an insurrectionist and a murderer. These are the simple facts of what took place at the trial.

Yet the spiritual truths and meaning of these facts encourage and build up faith. Barabbas, for instance, means "*son and father*" or "*son of the father*". Because of this, Barabbas stands for all of humanity. Barabbas represents sinful humanity before God. He is a picture of the first man, Adam, and all of his descendants. Which means that Barabbas stands for us in this account. We are Barabbas.

Barabbas was a rebel and a robber, a murderer and an insurrectionist; yet he was set free to live. Jesus was the obedient Son of the Father, a good Son, holy and without sin; yet he was condemned to die.

This is the exchange of the Gospel and a depiction of the spiritual meaning of the cross of Christ. Jesus died for our sins. Like Barabbas, we find release from the fair and just condemnation for our sins through him.

Our reading today is an account which encourages and builds up our faith that, as Paul says, "*Christ died for our sins.*" (1 Corinthians 15:3) And, "*Christ died for us.*" (Romans 5:8)

These truths and promises, connected to the historical events, are what we hold onto in faith. And they are the fundamental things that we hold dear.

As we enter into Holy Week, again, let us fix our eyes on the cross of our Lord and on the promises attached to his death, even the forgiveness of sins and peace with God. Amen.

### **Apostles' Creed**

**C: I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth. And in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried. He descended into hell. The third day he rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From thence he will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.**

### **Lord's Prayer**

**C: Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us**

**our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.**

### **Collect**

L: Lord Jesus Christ, you released many from their bondage to sin, death, and the devil as the healer of the nations. As we confess you to be our everlasting king, release us from our sins; for you live and reign with the Father and the Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**C: Amen.**

### **Blessing**

L: Let us bless the Lord.

**C: Thanks be to God.**

L: The Lord bless us, defend us from all evil, and bring us to everlasting life.

**C: Amen.**

### **Hymn**

**# 724, v. 4-5,10**

[4] He canceled my offenses,  
Delivered me from death;  
He is the Lord who cleanses  
My soul from sin through faith.  
In Him I can be cheerful,  
Courageous on my way;  
In Him I am not fearful  
Of God's great Judgment Day.

[5] For no one can condemn me  
Or set my hope aside;  
Now hell no more can claim me:  
Its fury I deride.  
No sentence now reproves me,  
No guilt destroys my peace;  
For Christ, my Savior, loves me  
And shields me with His grace.

[10] My heart with joy is springing;  
I am no longer sad.  
My soul is filled with singing;  
Your sunshine makes me glad.  
The sun that cheers my spirit  
Is Jesus Christ, my King;  
The heav'n I shall inherit  
Makes me rejoice and sing.