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**Daily Prayer**  
**+ Thursday, June 4, 2020 +**

## Invocation

L: Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of the faithful,

**C: and kindle in them the fire of your love! Alleluia.**

## Psalmody

*Psalm 116:7-14*

L: Return, O my soul, to your rest; for the LORD has dealt bountifully with you.

**C: For you have delivered my soul from death, my eyes from tears, my feet from stumbling;**

L: I will walk before the LORD in the land of the living.

**C; I believed, even when I spoke: "I am greatly afflicted"; I said in my alarm, "All mankind are liars."**

L: What shall I render to the LORD for all his benefits to me?

**C: I will lift up the cup of salvation and call on the name of the LORD,**

L: I will pay my vows to the LORD in the presence of all his people.

**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

**#500, v. 1-2**

[1] Creator Spirit, by whose aid  
The world's foundations first were laid,  
Come, visit ev'ry humble mind;  
Come, pour Your joys on humankind;  
From sin and sorrow set us free;  
May we Your living temples be.

[2] O Source of uncreated light,  
The bearer of God's gracious might,  
Thrice-holy fount, thrice-holy fire,  
Our hearts with heav'nly love inspire;  
Your sacred, healing message bring  
To sanctify us when we sing.

## **Reading**

**Acts 10:1-8**

*At Caesarea there was a man named Cornelius, a centurion of what was known as the Italian Cohort, a devout man who feared God with all his household, gave alms generously to the people, and prayed continually to God. About the ninth hour of the day he saw clearly in a vision an angel of God come in and say to him, "Cornelius." And he stared at him in terror and said, "What is it, Lord?" And he said to him, "Your prayers and your alms have ascended as a memorial before God. And now send men to Joppa and bring one Simon who is called Peter. He is lodging with one Simon, a tanner, whose house is by the sea." When the angel who spoke to him had departed, he called two of his servants and a devout soldier from among those who attended him, and having related everything to them, he sent them to Joppa.*

L: O Lord, have mercy on us.

**C: Thanks be to God.**

## **Devotional Message from Pastor Thompson**

Our reading today from Act 10 begins the long account of Peter and Cornelius.

The apostle Peter is well known to us from the Gospels. He was a leader among the twelve apostles, a member with James and John of the inner circle of Jesus' most faithful disciples, and one of the first to be called by Jesus to come and to follow him. Peter was a Jew by birth and a faithful Israelite.

Cornelius was not a Jew by birth, but a Gentile. Cornelius was Roman by race, yet he was familiar with the Jewish religion. In fact, although Cornelius was not a full convert to Judaism, he was a religious man and a believer. Cornelius was what was known as a God-fearer. As Luke says of Cornelius, *"a devout man who feared God with all his household, gave alms generously to the people, and prayed continually to God."* (Acts 10:2)

A God-fearer was a Gentile who attended synagogue services and believed in God, but who did not wish to convert to Judaism completely. A God-fearer could not, or did not want to, adopt the ethnic customs of the Jews, but did live by faith in God. There were thousands of God-fearers throughout the Roman world. Paul mentions them in his sermon at the synagogue in Pisidian Antioch: *"Men of Israel and you who fear God, listen..."* (Acts 13:16)

Luke also mentions that Cornelius lived in Caesarea. This is not unexpected. Caesarea was a city built for the Romans on the coast of Israel, located 65 miles northwest of Jerusalem. This new port was home base for the Roman Governor and his soldiers. The city was built by Herod for the Romans and was named in honor of Augustus

Caesar. Among the typical Roman features of a great city, including an amphitheater and an aqueduct, Herod built a temple in the city in honor of Rome and Augustus. During the time of Jesus, Caesarea served as the Roman capital of the province of Judea.

Cornelius was a centurion. A centurion was an Army officer who had worked his way up through the ranks to take command of a group of soldiers within a Roman legion. A cohort was a tenth of a Roman legion and consisted in 300 to 600 soldiers. Historians say that the Italian Cohort was a battalion of archers who were free men from Italy and citizens of Rome. The purpose of the cohort was to secure law and order for Rome in Israel.

This combination of being a religious man and a professional soldier should not at all be surprising. Our faith is in God the Creator and Maker of heaven and earth. His Law is eternal and consists in justice, order, faithfulness, obedience, discipline, self-control, loyalty, duty, service, love, mercy, and care for others. These are all the virtues of a soldier and an officer.

Throughout history many officers of the law and of the military have been religious and devout. God is a God of order and so it makes sense that soldiers would be drawn to the God of Israel.

In the coming days we will learn more about Cornelius and his encounter with the Gospel. 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 God Almighty, keep us this day under your protective care and preserve us, securely trusting in your everlasting goodness and love; through Jesus Christ our Lord.**

**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**

**#500, v. 3-4**

[3] Giver of grace, descend from high;  
Your sev'nfold gifts to us supply;  
Help us eternal truths receive  
And practice all that we believe;  
Give us Yourself that we may see  
The glory of the Trinity.

[4] Immortal honor, endless fame  
Attend the almighty Father's name;  
The Savior-Son be glorified,  
Who for all humankind has died;  
To You, O Paraclete, we raise  
Unending songs of thanks and praise.