

## Do You Begrudge My Generosity?

### As We Gather

A part of us expects justice from God. We think that fairness ought to reign—that each of us should get what we deserve. But this is a dead end. God does not give us what we deserve but acts with mercy and grace beyond belief. He is scandalously generous and lavish with us—giving us what we do not deserve and have not earned. We are tempted to ask God for equity and what we deserve, but God is determined to give us so much more in Christ. Only in faith can we learn to let God be God, to honor His generosity with the only response He desires: faith and thanksgiving. Today we pray the Lord to break through to our hearts and minds with His abundant grace and to rejoice that He is more than fair—He is merciful!

### PREPARATION

#### Invocation

P In the name of the Father and of the T Son and of the Holy Spirit.  
||<sup>a</sup> **Amen.**

#### Opening Sentences

*Psalm 27:9*

P Hide not Your face from me.  
||<sup>a</sup> **Turn not Your servant away in anger,**

P O You who have been my help.  
||<sup>a</sup> **Cast me not off; forsake me not, O God of my salvation!**

#### Confession and Absolution

P Let us confess our sins to God our Father.  
||<sup>a</sup> **I, a poor sinner, plead guilty before God of all sins. I have lived as if God did not matter and as if I mattered most. My Lord's name I have not honored as I should; my worship and prayers have faltered. I have not let His love have its way with me, and so my love for others has failed. There are those whom I have hurt, and those whom I have failed to help. My thoughts and desires have been soiled with sin.**

P Is this your sincere confession?  
||<sup>a</sup> **I am sorry for all my sins, and I ask for grace that I may do better. Amen.**

P As you believe, so let it be. Almighty God in His mercy has given His Son to die for you and for His sake forgives you all your sins. As a called and ordained servant of Christ, and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins, in the name of the Father and of the T Son and of the Holy Spirit.  
||<sup>a</sup> **Amen.**

P May He who began this good work in you bring it to completion at the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. The peace of the Lord be with you.  
||<sup>a</sup> **And also with you.**

#### Salutation

P The Lord be with you.  
||<sup>a</sup> **And also with you.**

## Prayer of the Day

P Let us pray.

Lord God, heavenly Father, since we cannot stand before You relying on anything we have done, help us trust in Your abiding grace and live according to Your Word; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

||<sup>a</sup> **Amen.**

## Old Testament Reading

*Isaiah 55:6–9*

<sup>6</sup>“Seek the LORD while he may be found;  
call upon him while he is near;  
<sup>7</sup>let the wicked forsake his way,  
and the unrighteous man his thoughts;  
let him return to the LORD, that he may have compassion on him,  
and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.  
<sup>8</sup>For my thoughts are not your thoughts,  
neither are your ways my ways, declares the LORD.  
<sup>9</sup>For as the heavens are higher than the earth,  
so are my ways higher than your ways  
and my thoughts than your thoughts.”

L This is the Word of the Lord.

||<sup>a</sup> **Thanks be to God.**

## Epistle

*Philippians 1:12–14, 19–30*

<sup>12</sup>I want you to know, brothers, that what has happened to me has really served to advance the gospel,  
<sup>13</sup>so that it has become known throughout the whole imperial guard and to all the rest that my imprisonment is for Christ. <sup>14</sup>And most of the brothers, having become confident in the Lord by my imprisonment, are much more bold to speak the word without fear. . . .

<sup>19</sup>for I know that through your prayers and the help of the Spirit of Jesus Christ this will turn out for my deliverance, <sup>20</sup>as it is my eager expectation and hope that I will not be at all ashamed, but that with full courage now as always Christ will be honored in my body, whether by life or by death. <sup>21</sup>For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. <sup>22</sup>If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me. Yet which I shall choose I cannot tell. <sup>23</sup>I am hard pressed between the two. My desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better. <sup>24</sup>But to remain in the flesh is more necessary on your account. <sup>25</sup>Convinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue with you all, for your progress and joy in the faith, <sup>26</sup>so that in me you may have ample cause to glory in Christ Jesus, because of my coming to you again.

<sup>27</sup>Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving side by side for the faith of the gospel, <sup>28</sup>and not frightened in anything by your opponents. This is a clear sign to them of their destruction, but of your salvation, and that from God. <sup>29</sup>For it has been granted to you that for the sake of Christ you should not only believe in him but also suffer for his sake, <sup>30</sup>engaged in the same conflict that you saw I had and now hear that I still have.

L This is the Word of the Lord.

||<sup>a</sup> **Thanks be to God.**

**Verse**

*Ephesians 2:8*

- P Alleluia. By grace you have been saved through faith.
- ||<sup>a</sup> **And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God. Alleluia.**

**Holy Gospel**

*Matthew 20:1-16*

- P The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the twentieth chapter.
- ||<sup>a</sup> **Glory to You, O Lord.**

<sup>1</sup>[Jesus said:] “The kingdom of heaven is like a master of a house who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard. <sup>2</sup>After agreeing with the laborers for a denarius a day, he sent them into his vineyard. <sup>3</sup>And going out about the third hour he saw others standing idle in the marketplace, <sup>4</sup>and to them he said, ‘You go into the vineyard too, and whatever is right I will give you.’ <sup>5</sup>So they went. Going out again about the sixth hour and the ninth hour, he did the same. <sup>6</sup>And about the eleventh hour he went out and found others standing. And he said to them, ‘Why do you stand here idle all day?’ <sup>7</sup>They said to him, ‘Because no one has hired us.’ He said to them, ‘You go into the vineyard too.’ <sup>8</sup>And when evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his foreman, ‘Call the laborers and pay them their wages, beginning with the last, up to the first.’ <sup>9</sup>And when those hired about the eleventh hour came, each of them received a denarius. <sup>10</sup>Now when those hired first came, they thought they would receive more, but each of them also received a denarius. <sup>11</sup>And on receiving it they grumbled at the master of the house, <sup>12</sup>saying, ‘These last worked only one hour, and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden of the day and the scorching heat.’ <sup>13</sup>But he replied to one of them, ‘Friend, I am doing you no wrong. Did you not agree with me for a denarius?’ <sup>14</sup>Take what belongs to you and go. I choose to give to this last worker as I give to you. <sup>15</sup>Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me? Or do you begrudge my generosity?’ <sup>16</sup>So the last will be first, and the first last.”

- P This is the Gospel of the Lord.
- ||<sup>a</sup> **Praise to You, O Christ.**

**Sermon: “Heavenly Citizens: Unbridled Joy”.....*Philippians 1:12-14, 19-30***

**Apostles’ Creed**

- ||<sup>a</sup> **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 T everlasting. Amen.**

### **Prayer of the Church**

P In peace, let us pray to the Lord and offer to Him the petitions and supplications of a people confident of His promise to hear and answer us with mercy.

*Brief silence*

That we may seek the Lord while He may be found, call upon Him in the day of salvation, and be prepared by His mercy for the Day of Judgment, let us pray to the Lord:

||<sup>a</sup> **Lord, have mercy.**

P That we may delight in the light of Christ and His salvation, and that sinners may find refuge in His mercy and comfort in His forgiveness, let us pray to the Lord:

||<sup>a</sup> **Lord, have mercy.**

P That we may hear the voice of God speaking in His Word and be nurtured by faithful pastors who preach and teach this Gospel, let us pray to the Lord:

||<sup>a</sup> **Lord, have mercy.**

P That this Word may be the foundation of the home, that husband and wife may be united in this faith and hope, and that their children may hear and be nurtured in this Word by faithful parents, let us pray to the Lord:

||<sup>a</sup> **Lord, have mercy.**

P That the Church may nurture the lives of our children in Sunday school and catechism classes, and that we may all be grounded in the doctrine of Scripture through the study of God's Word, let us pray to the Lord:

||<sup>a</sup> **Lord, have mercy.**

P That the Lord may bless missionaries far and near, that He may nurture newly planted congregations, and that He may renew those congregations in distress, that those from every nation and culture may be united with us in faith and life, let us pray to the Lord:

||<sup>a</sup> **Lord, have mercy.**

P That we may enjoy the blessing of good government, faithful leaders, peace in our land and peace among the nations, and that we may be good citizens and neighbors, let us pray to the Lord:

||<sup>a</sup> **Lord, have mercy.**

P That the sick may be healed, the troubled know peace, the grieving be comforted and the dying be delivered to everlasting life in Christ, and especially for \_\_\_\_\_; and that we may all be delivered from fear, anxiety and despair by God's gracious care, let us pray to the Lord:

||<sup>a</sup> **Lord, have mercy.**

P That we may honor the Lord with praise and thanksgiving and bring to the Lord the tithes and offerings of a grateful people, let us pray to the Lord:

||<sup>a</sup> **Lord, have mercy.**

P That we may not forget the witness of the faithful who lived and died in Christ, and that we may at last be joined with them in the marriage supper of the Lamb in His Kingdom without end, let us pray to the Lord:

||<sup>a</sup> **Lord, have mercy.**

P Hear the prayers of Your people, O Lord, and grant to us all things good and wholesome and keep from us all things harmful. Give us contentment, that trusting in Your mercy we may delight in Your saving will where the last are made first by Your generosity and grace; through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

||<sup>a</sup> **Amen.**

### Lord's Prayer

||<sup>a</sup> **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.**

### Benedicamus

P Let us bless the Lord.

||<sup>a</sup> **Thanks be to God.**

### Benediction

P The Lord bless you and keep you.  
The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.  
The Lord look upon you with favor and T give you peace.

||<sup>a</sup> **Amen.**

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