



RISEN SAVIOR LUTHERAN CHURCH

Basehor, Kansas - Lutheran Church Missouri Synod

Daily Devotions for the Home Trinity 12 – 15 (September) The Year of Our Lord 2025



Sieg des Hengst Bligand in Brana.

Teufel von Hengst und Hengst in Brana.

Der Sieg Michaels über den Drachen.

Und es ward ausgeworfen der große Drache, die alte Schlange, die da heißt der Teufel und Satanas, der die ganze Welt verführt, und ward geworfen auf die Erde, und seine Engel wurden auch dahin geworfen.

Offenbarung Johannis. Kap. 12. v. 9.

**THIS DEVOTIONAL IS DEDICATED TO THE GLORY OF THE TRIUNE GOD, WHO
HEARS THE PRAYERS OF HIS PEOPLE AND DELIGHTS IN THEM.**

THE LIFE OF THE CHRISTIAN IS MARKED BY PRAYER. ALONGSIDE ALMSGIVING AND FASTING IT IS ONE OF THE THREE SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES COMMENDED TO US BY OUR LORD IN MATTHEW 6. PRAYER IS NOT A ONE-SIDED CONVERSATION. AS WE PRAY, WE SEE OUR LORD'S RESPONSE TO US IN THE HOLY SCRIPTURES. IT IS INDEED FITTING THEN THAT AS WE PRAY, WE WOULD ALSO HEAR THE WORD OF THE LORD, MEDITATE UPON IT AND BE SHAPED BY IT. IT IS THE WORD OF GOD THAT SUSTAINS US IN THE MIDST OF TRIBULATION, IT IS THE WORD OF GOD THAT IMPARTS LIFE IN THE MIDST OF DEATH, LIGHT IN DARKNESS, AND JOY IN SORROW. LET US CLING TO IT FERVENTLY, STUDY, READ, MARK, AND LEARN IT. IN SHORT LET US NOT DESPISE THE WORD OF GOD BUT GLADLY HEAR AND LEARN IT.

IN THE FOLLOWING PAGES YOU WILL FIND SAMPLE DAILY PRAYERS ALONGSIDE A BRIEF DEVOTION AND SCRIPTURE READING FOR EACH DAY. IT IS MY HOPE THAT THE PRACTICE OF DAILY PRAYER BECOMES A HABIT IN YOUR LIFE, IN YOUR FAMILY, AND THE LIFE OF OUR CONGREGATION.

PAX DOMINI,
PASTOR BURGDORF

MORNING

The sign of the cross may be made by all in remembrance of their baptism.

In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

In the morning, O Lord, You hear my voice,

in the morning, I prepare a sacrifice for You and watch.

Psalms 5

My mouth is filled with Your praise,

and with Your glory all the day.

Psalms 71

O Lord, open my lips,

and my mouth will declare Your praise.

Psalms 51

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

HYMN OR PSALM

SCRIPTURE READING

APOSTLES' CREED

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

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.

PRAYERS FOR OTHERS AND OURSELVES

CONCLUDING PRAYER

Almighty God, merciful Father, who created and completed all things, on this day when the work of our calling begins anew, we implore You to create its beginning, direct its continuance, and bless its end, that our doings may be preserved from sin, our life sanctified, and our work this day be well pleasing to You, through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Amen.

**I thank You, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Your dear Son,
that You have kept me this night from all harm and danger;**

**I pray that You would keep me this day also from sin and every evil,
that all my doings and life may please You.**

For into Your hands I commend myself, my body and soul, and all things.

**Let Your holy angel be with me, that the evil foe may have
no power over me. Amen.**

Small Catechism Morning Prayer

Let us bless the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Psalms 103

Noon

The sign of the cross may be made by all in remembrance of their baptism.

In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Listen to my prayer, O God, do not ignore my plea.

Hear me and answer me.

Evening, morning, and noon

I cry out in distress, and He hears my voice.

Cast your cares on the Lord and He will sustain you;

He will never let the righteous fall.

Psalms 55

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

HYMN OR PSALM

SCRIPTURE READING

MEDITATION

KYRIE

O Lord,

have mercy upon us.

O Christ,

have mercy upon us.

O Lord,

have mercy upon us.

Mark 10

LORD'S PRAYER

**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.

PRAYERS FOR OTHERS AND OURSELVES

CONCLUDING PRAYER

Blessed Lord Jesus Christ, at this hour You hung upon the cross, stretching out
Your loving arms to embrace the world in Your death. Grant that all people of the
earth may look o You and see their salvation; for Your mercy's sake we pray.

Amen.

Heavenly Father, send Your Holy Spirit into our hearts to direct and rule us
according to Your will, to comfort us in all our afflictions, to defend us from all
error, and to lead us into all truth; through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Amen.

Let us bless the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Psalms 103

EVENING

The sign of the cross may be made by all in remembrance of their baptism.

In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

The Lord Almighty grant us a quiet night and peace at the last.

Amen.

It is good to give thanks to the Lord,

To sing praise to Your name, O Most High;

To herald Your love in the morning.

Your truth at the close of the day.

Psalm 92

SCRIPTURE READING

HYMN OR PSALM

APOSTLES' CREED

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

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For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.

PRAYERS FOR OTHERS AND OURSELVES

CONCLUDING PRAYER

Visit our dwellings, O Lord, and in Your great mercy defend us from all perils and dangers of this night; for the love of Your Son, our Savior Jesus Christ.

Amen.

I thank You, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Your dear Son, that You have graciously kept me this day;

and I pray that You would forgive me all my sins where I have done wrong, and graciously keep me this night.

For into Your hands I commend myself, my body and soul, and all things.

Let Your holy angel be with me, that the evil foe may have no power over me. Amen.

Small Catechism Evening Prayer

Let us bless the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Psalm 103

TWELFTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

AUGUST 31ST

"According to your faith be it done to you." And their eyes were opened.

Matthew 9:29-30a

Your eyes have purpose. It might sound obvious but your eyes, just as the rest of your body were created and formed for a particular reason. You have eyes so that you might behold Jesus Christ, the Son of God. But in our sin we have perverted our eyes and turned them toward sinful things. Consider the depth of sin we have seen. We turn on the TV and see violent and explicit images. Even in our own life, we turn our eyes to self-serving images, we see the wickedness of our own hands. Our eyes are full of sin and we cannot escape it.

The purpose for which we have eyes, to behold good and godly things is lost in a world full of our sin. We have profaned our body by filling it with evil and wickedness.

Eyes that should rejoice to see Christ, instead, are forced to avert their gaze lest they be struck dead. Profane things cannot stand holy things.

But Christ heals the blind, and what do they behold? The eyes that were dark are illuminated by the Light of the World, Jesus Christ. Eyes that were dimmed by sin, are made new by the Word of God. It was done for them according to their faith, faith that was a gift of the Spirit, given through the preached word of God. By this they knew who Christ was, by this faith they clung to Christ.

So it is among us even today. Our eyes are dimmed with sin, darkened by the stain of the world, unable to see clearly and rightly. In the Holy Baptism, Christ spoke to you, through your pastor, and opened your eyes. In the font, the Holy Spirit gave you faith by which you were healed. Christ fixes your eyes upon Him. He restores to you true sight.

✠ In Jesus' name. Amen. ✠

MONDAY OF TRINITY 12

SEPTEMBER 1ST

*Holding fast to the Head, from whom the whole body,
nourished and knit together through its joints and ligaments,
grows with a growth that is from God.*

Colossians 2:19

What is the head but Christ? Where else should we turn but to Christ alone? Where else does the Church draw life? Apart from Christ there is nothing but death. Just as the body is helpless without a head so is the Church without Christ.

And yet we try time and time again to find life in everything and anything but Christ. We put our hope and trust in the things of the world, created things that have no life in them. Not only in daily life, but in the Church! Congregations turn to all sorts of novel and fleeting things in order to "stay alive" but to no avail. How foolish are we when we turn to human reason and modern fads so that we might live.

It is Christ alone who gives life, who nourishes us with His body and blood every Sunday. At the pinnacle of the Divine Service, the Holy Supper, we are enjoined to our head, we are knit together as the mystical body of Christ, and we receive life and salvation. This is our hope in all things. This is the will of God for you, that you would receive Him, that you would eat His body and drink His blood for the forgiveness of your sins.

Without this we have no life, we cannot grow. Even if the pews are full there is no life. It may look good, it may seem charming and winsome, but a congregation that does not cling to Christ is dead. You are dead if you are not found in Christ.

But you are in Christ by nature of the sacrament, by the blood poured out for you on the cross and by the Word you are joined to the Church. And the Church cannot die, for the Church is the body of Christ. Where the body is there is the head. Do not separate yourself from Him; rejoice in the life that He has won for you.

✠ In Jesus' name. Amen. ✠

TUESDAY OF TRINITY 12

SEPTEMBER 2ND

***Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward. You are serving the Lord Christ.
Colossians 3:23-24***

Love of the Lord does not come naturally to us. It is something that is given by God through His Word and Sacraments. It is not natural to us but imparted. The same is true of obedience. We do not naturally do what the Lord requires of us but must cultivate a habit of obedience.

For this reason, Christ instructs us to be slaves to righteousness (Romans 6:18). So that we might work and serve the Lord not out of compulsion, but, having been set free from the chains that bind us to death; having received from the Lord every grace and mercy, earned by the atonement upon the cross.

But it is not just for you that Christ died. No, Christ died for all sinners. His blood was outpoured not just for those we like, not just for those in our close circles, but for all mankind. The atonement paid the price of all sin, for all people. So as we serve our neighbor, as we cultivate a habit of love and obedience towards God, we must cultivate a habit of love towards both the Christian and Pagan. God has shed His holy precious blood for all, so we too, as Christians are to serve one another, recognizing that by so doing we are not serving mere men, but God Himself.

By serving our neighbor with our whole heart, regardless of his attitude towards us, we are rendering thanksgiving to God for the wonderful gift of salvation that He has bestowed upon us in Christ Jesus. It does not come naturally but must be cultivated. The one who does this, has a reward in heaven, not on account of his works, but because has been given faith in Christ, and made new in Christ and now delights to do the will of the Father.

✠ In Jesus' name. Amen. ✠

WEDNESDAY OF TRINITY 12

SEPTEMBER 3RD

Wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come.

1 Thessalonians 1:10

We are so far removed from death that we either are unwilling to think about it or we convince ourselves there is nothing to fear. We do not contend with our mortality in any meaningful way. Consider the growing trend of “celebrations of life” rather than Christian funerals, the growing trend that children have no place at funerals. (Especially if there is a body!)

It is incumbent upon us to ponder our frailty. Frailty that stems from our sin. Wrath that is to come because of our failure to uphold and keep the law of God. To avoid it does not make it go away, but ensures that we are ill-prepared for death. Make no mistake, death is inevitable, it is the end of man on account of our sins. So prepare, and prepare now.

But how? How do we prepare for the inevitable end? It is a daunting task to be sure. Or rather, it would be, without Christ. How does a Christian prepare for death? By waiting, waiting in the blessed hope of the Son from heaven. By seeing death through the death and resurrection of Christ, we can confess along with the fathers in the faith that death is but a portal unto life.

Yes, it will take our loved ones from us for a time. Yes, it will one day place us into the ground. But Christ was laid in the tomb and no longer rests in the bonds of death. He has broken the chains that bind mankind to death and has delivered us from the wrath that is to come.

So how do we prepare? Come to church, receive the body and blood of the crucified and risen Lord; be enjoined to the life itself; receive the medicine of immortality and face death boldly and confident in Christ Jesus.

✠ In Jesus' name. Amen. ✠

THURSDAY OF TRINITY 12

SEPTEMBER 4TH

Just as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel, so we speak, not to please man, but to please God who tests our hearts.

1 Thessalonians 2:4

There is nothing new under the sun, says the preacher in Ecclesiastes. So it is with modern man the same as it was with our ancestors. We desire and want a message fit to our sensibilities, one that caters to our desires and our understanding, one that affirms our sins while condemning with unrelenting wrath the sins of those we hate, those we deem as unworthy of love, those "too far gone".

But the Church does not preach to cater to your whim, it does not cater to the flippant winds of culture or human sensibilities. It preaches to proclaim the unchanging truth to all mankind. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday today and forever, the substance of the Church's proclamation cannot change. So it is that the confession of the Church, the preaching of her pastor's cannot fluctuate as the culture shifts one way or another.

And this is a good thing, for the Son of God is the delight and apple of God's eye, it is His life death and resurrection that is at the heart of Christian preaching. This preaching is pleasing to the Lord, who St. Paul says, "tests our hearts".

But the same God who tests us also approved us. By the content of the Church's preaching and confession, the cross of Christ stands as a seal of God's love for you. It is the center of life and history. It is an indelible mark upon your forehead in the water of Holy Baptism and a sure promise in the bread and chalice of the Holy Supper.

✠ In Jesus' name. Amen. ✠

FRIDAY OF TRINITY 12

SEPTEMBER 5TH

May the Lord make you increase and abound in love for one another and for all, as we do for you, so that he may establish your hearts blameless in holiness before our God and Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all his saints.

1 Thessalonians 3:12-13

As Christians we are marked by love. Love promised to us in the garden of Eden, love in the union of God and man in the incarnation, love poured out for us in the sacrifice of Christ, love given in the sacraments.

Love is also a calling given to us by our Lord. Flowing from what He has done for us we are called to love one another and all men. That is to say, God's love for us in the person of His Son, informs and shapes and increases love within us.

Who are we to hate what God has redeemed? Who are we to declare what God has purchased with His blood worthless. Anyone who does calls God a liar and brings condemnation upon himself. Let it not be so among us, let us be marked by love. But let it not be an "empty love"; let us not confuse love and "niceness". In His love for us, God condemns sin, He casts out the wicked and breaks them upon the rocks, so that He might establish us in His grace as holy and blessed before the Father.

True love kills so it might make alive, it condemns so that it might pronounce pardon. Let us learn well what love looks like and show true love to one another and all men. Earnestly desiring above all else that they recognize and repent of their sins, come to a knowledge of the truth of Christ's love for them and receive everlasting life.

Apart from Christ, there is no love, apart from God there is only death. Let us love one another, encourage and pray that they would be kept until the coming of our Lord Jesus.

✠ In Jesus' name. Amen. ✠

SATURDAY OF TRINITY 12

SEPTEMBER 6TH

*Now concerning brotherly love you have no need for anyone
to write to you, for you yourselves have been taught by
God to love one another
1 Thessalonians 4:9*

We have indeed been taught by God. In the last several years of Christian preaching and teaching we are perhaps light on recognizing that Christ is indeed our example. He is not only an example to us; His life and death do far more than simply show us what we are to do, but they never are devoid of being an example to us.

So it is even with love. The love we have for one another, for our church, for our fellow man is not conceived out of the will of our hearts but flows from the example of Christ. To love someone is to see them as one whom Christ has bought and redeemed with his holy body and blood.

And so it is that even our Christian love looks different than the rest of the world. Brotherly love is to point one another towards Christ, to encourage each other not with fleeting and temporal things but with the eternal Word which suffered and died for you. Our love has a focus not on earthly things but on eternal, upon the return of Christ.

Love for each other is driven out of the love of God that earned for you salvation and life eternal, it cannot be separated from that and still be called love. So encourage each other, listen to and bear the burdens of one another, love each other as Christ has loved you, you need no other example than Him.

✠ In Jesus' name. Amen. ✠

THIRTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

SEPTEMBER 7TH

Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others.

Phillipians 2:4

A seemingly easy thing, at least on the surface isn't it? Let each of you look to the interests of others. What Christ commends to us through the apostle Paul is no light thing. Sure, parents may say they are acting in the best interests of their children, and sometimes they are to be sure. But sometimes we don't. Sure, sometimes we act like we are looking out for one another's best interests when we are gossiping about them to friend. Afterall wouldn't it be best if more people knew?

The reality is simple, we do not look after one another's interests, any more than we love others as ourselves; be it socially, financially, or emotionally. We see ourselves as the focus as the center of everything. If it brings me joy and happiness, however fleeting that may be, it is fair game.

Strive against this. You are not the center, you are not what's most important. Christ is. He has called you to a higher calling. He has freed you from the shackles of self-entitlement and granted you the freedom to love one another as He has loved you giving of yourself for their good.

And this is a great comfort. It may seem counterintuitive at first, but contentment and peace does not come from being served but serving. To this you have been called as Christians, to be served by Christ and then to serve one another. The servant is not above his master and Christ your master has humbled Himself for you. Take up your service and follow Him. He will give you peace and comfort, He did not deem it beneath Him to serve and neither should we.

✠ In Jesus' name. Amen. ✠

MONDAY OF TRINITY 13

SEPTEMBER 8TH

Now may the God of peace himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

1 Thessalonians 5:23

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.

What does this mean? I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to Him; but the Holy Spirit has called me by the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts, sanctified and kept me in the true faith. In the same way He calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the whole Christian church on earth, and keeps it with Jesus Christ in the one true faith. In this Christian church He daily and richly forgives all my sins and the sins of all believers. On the Last Day He will raise me and all the dead, and give eternal life to me and all believers in Christ.

We have heard this countless times in confirmation and yet how well do we really know it? We must constantly be reminded that we are not only justified by Christ, and given faith by the Holy Spirit, but also kept in the true faith by the Spirit Himself!

No work of yours will keep you in the faith, no strivings of mothers and fathers will keep their children in the faith. It is God alone who works faith and who sustains it. The God who speaks and the world is, creates and sustains faith. Be at peace, comfort yourself with this truth.

But do not use it as an excuse towards apathy or sloth, but pray and strive all the more. God alone saves but let us rejoice in what He has done and pray that He would work among us also.

✠ In Jesus' name. Amen. ✠

TUESDAY OF TRINITY 13

SEPTEMBER 9TH

***The aim of our charge is love that issues from a pure heart
and a good conscience and a sincere faith.***

1 Timothy 1:5

Think of your catechism classes. After each of the commandments the question "what does this mean" is answered with the phrase "we should fear and love God so that..."

What do we mean? What does Paul mean when he says the aim of our charge is love? Nothing other than the simple fact that the fulfillment of the law is love. Love the Lord your God with all your heart soul and mind and your neighbor as yourself. The fulfillment of all that God commands you to do, the fullness of what God desires for your life is summed up by love.

Not a love that is aimless and discordant with the scriptures. Not a love that rejoices in wickedness and approves of sin. Not a love that crushes men and women underfoot. But a love that stems from a pure heart and good conscience and sincere faith.

True faith allows us to stand before the law of God and rejoice in it, for by faith we know that Christ has taken unto Himself the accusations of the law and borne our guilt. Thus by faith we receive and good conscience before God, one that stands joyfully before His throne in sure confidence of the atonement of Christ.

Not only that but true faith cries out for a clean heart, which we pray every Sunday, "create in me a clean heart", this too is a working of God in you. By the blood of Christ you are wiped clean of sin and death and painted righteous before God in heaven, enabled to fear and love God rejoicing in His victory for you.

✠ In Jesus' name. Amen. ✠

WEDNESDAY OF TRINITY 13

SEPTEMBER 10TH

I desire then that in every place the men should pray, lifting holy hands without anger or quarreling; likewise also that women should adorn themselves in respectable apparel, with modesty and self-control, not with braided hair and gold or pearls or costly attire.

1 Timothy 2:8-9

It is a great beauty when men and women live as God has intended. Not to lord their uniqueness over one another but to serve and honor one another. This should not need to be taught but the world has so confused men for women and women for men that it must be said.

For this reason St. Paul exhorts us that men should pray; that is take up the position of Christ as our intercessor. Just as he says in Ephesians that men should love their wives as Christ loves the Church. Men are always called to sacrifice for and serve their wives precisely because marriage is set up from eternity to be a picture of Christ and the Church.

With what authority do we dare change this? It is not cultural or changing. Men are to be Christ to their wives and wives are to be the Church to their husbands.

That is to say men are to sacrifice, not become angry and quarrel as Christ does for the Church. While women, equally important, submit and adorn themselves respectably with modesty and self-control. These are the marks of a godly woman.

Do not be confused or conformed to the world. Rejoice in your vocations as man and woman and seek to serve one another. Placing the other before yourself as you have been called by our Father who ordained it for your good from the creation of the world. Remember God looked upon man and woman and said that it was very good.

✠ In Jesus' name. Amen. ✠

THURSDAY OF TRINITY 13

SEPTEMBER 11TH

*Great indeed, we confess, is the mystery of godliness:
He was manifested in the flesh, vindicated by the Spirit, seen
by angels, proclaimed among the nations, believed on in the
world, taken up in glory.
1 Timothy 3:16*

Great indeed is the mystery of godliness! Who has set out to comprehend the entirety of the faith and succeeded? Only those who have fallen asleep and rest with Christ are so blessed. For we see in a mirror dimly but we will see Christ clearly face to face.

This greatness should not deter us nor cause us any consternation. For Christ also gives to us the fullness of what we need. The scriptures contain all that we need for eternal life. They are sufficient for this daily life.

What then is the content of this great faith? We confess it every Sunday in the creed. Christ was manifested in the flesh, that is He was born of the Virgin Mary. He was vindicated by the Spirit, that is He suffered under Pontious Pilate was crucified died and was buried and on the third day He rose again according to the scriptures.

He was seen by angels, that is He exited the tomb flanked by angels who proclaimed "He is not here" to the disciples. He is proclaimed among the nations and believed in by the word of God going forth and the Holy Spirit and the Holy Catholic Church.

Christ was taken up in glory, that is, He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father.

This is the mystery of the godliness. This is the faith by which we are saved. Great it is indeed!

✠ In Jesus' name. Amen. ✠

FRIDAY OF TRINITY 13

SEPTEMBER 12TH

*Set the believers an example in speech, in conduct, in love,
in faith, in purity.
1 Timothy 4:12*

While written to a young Timothy who is pursuing the office of the Holy Ministry, these words are not just for him. Each of us in our vocation has a calling to set an example for others.

Whether pastor or not it makes little difference. You have been called by Christ to be a Christian. That is to be a little Christ. You have been called to live as one baptized into the death and resurrection of Christ. To live as one marked by the blood of the Lamb and made wise unto salvation. You have been called out of death into life. To live as you have been called not only for your sake but for the sake of your brother.

So we should take seriously the words that come out of our mouth. Are the words I speak building up a brother or sister in the faith? Are they proclaiming the great glories of God? Are they extolling His benefits or tearing them down?

All too often even our joking is crude and belittles the great and wonderful gifts God has given to us. All too often we belittle those who have been made in the image of God and for the sake of humor.

Let there be no filthiness nor foolish talk nor crude joking, which are out of place, but instead let there be thanksgiving.

Thanksgiving for what God has done, thanksgiving for who God is and who He has made and fashioned each of us to be. Thanksgiving for the various callings and vocations God has given for our good.

✠ In Jesus' name. Amen. ✠

SATURDAY OF TRINITY 13

SEPTEMBER 13TH

Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in preaching and teaching.

1 Timothy 5:17

Pastors are indeed a gift from God. They are the ones He has placed over you to shepherd and guide you, to proclaim the Word of God to you and your children, and to steward the mysteries of God.

The term “elder” is used in Holy Scripture to refer to pastors. It is not how we use the term elder in most of our churches today. Elders in the scripture were ordained men, simply put they were pastors.

Paul instructs the Church to honor her pastors, especially those who rule well. But notice even those who do not rule well are still called to be honored, albeit in a lesser way. This is because of the office in which they stand. Just as the scriptures teach us to honor our fathers and mothers regardless of how they treat us, so we are to honor those whom God has sent to deliver word and sacrament to us.

Those pastors who rule and labor in preaching and teaching, those who strive after the word of God and to deliver it over to their people are to receive double honor. Because the kingdom of God exists in service. The greatest must be as the least. Christ stoops and serves His disciples on the night He was betrayed for our sins, so the servant of Christ who is worthy stoops and serves those in his care.

✠ In Jesus' name. Amen. ✠

FOURTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

SEPTEMBER 14TH

Therefore, brothers, be all the more diligent to confirm your calling and election, for if you practice these qualities you will never fall.

1 Peter 1:10

There is nothing more important than the faith. It is easy to fall prey to the world's insistence that we need all this other stuff to be happy and fulfilled. It is of no coincidence that Sundays are full of other events and options other than the divine service, especially for children in school, as sports and extra-curricular activities seem to encroach more and more upon Sunday.

Against all this be all the more diligent. We must recognize the hard truth that there is no neutrality in the world. You are either for Christ or against Him. Anything that would seek to pull you away from the life of the Church, the participation in the Holy Supper is not of God but of the devil.

Participation with Christ is what the Lord has planned for His people. He desires you to be with Him in His house and to receive from His table all good things. Not the good things the world tries to sell but eternally good things.

All that the world will try and fill your days with is here today and gone tomorrow. The "good" the world wants to sell you is worthless. But the Lord fills you with all good things, He fills you with the source of goodness, His Son Jesus Christ in the divine service as He feeds you His flesh and pours out His blood.

Be present and practice these things.

✠ In Jesus' name. Amen. ✠

MONDAY OF TRINITY 14

SEPTEMBER 15TH

If anyone teaches a different doctrine and does not agree with the sound words of our Lord Jesus Christ and the teaching that accords with godliness, he is puffed up with conceit and understands nothing.

1 Timothy 6:3-4

It is not simply enough to be in a church. The devil tries to convince us concerning our own family and friends "at least they are at church". When the reality is which church you go to is very important. Not all churches are equal even within the LCMS.

We must constantly be searching the doctrine of the church, both in practice and preaching, lest we find ourselves led astray and caught off guard on judgement day. Christ has handed you everything you need do not cast it aside.

Do not settle for close enough. Settle for nothing other than the fullness of Christ crucified for the forgiveness of your sins. Do not settle for a church that simply feels right, that your friends go to, that makes you happy.

Settle for nothing other than the fullness of God's law crashing down upon you to kill any and all sense of self-righteousness. Likewise, settle for nothing else than the fullness of the Gospel proclaimed with its full sweetness, relieving and comforting you in the face of all your sins.

Settle for nothing else than the sacraments administer according to God's command for the salvation of His people.

Simply put, settle for nothing but the truth.

✠ In Jesus' name. Amen. ✠

TUESDAY OF TRINITY 14

SEPTEMBER 16TH

Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord, nor of me his prisoner, but share in suffering for the gospel by the power of God
2 Timothy 1:8

What Christ has done for you does indeed go against the grain of the world. A God who would willingly take the place of His creation and actually suffer cannot be comprehended by human reason. An omnipotent God allowing Himself to be scourged and nailed in the place of His people cannot be rationalized.

Because of this it is easy to be mocked for believing it. Those who follow Christ will be laughed at and put down, but do not be ashamed. A god who conforms to all of your will and all of your sensibilities is not a god at all, but is yourself.

Humble yourself before the Lord and drink deeply of His scriptures, and you will be enlightened to the fullness of His love. Only there do we see that God's love is so profound that yes, even He, would suffer and die for you. There in the pages of Scripture you see Christ willingly, like a lamb to the slaughter, goes without complaint.

The world sees this is shameful, but the scriptures call it God's greatest glory. It is here in the cross, that God desires to be known. St. Paul preaches nothing other than Christ and Him crucified. St. John repeatedly calls the cross His glory. The Old Testament alludes to it with the bronze serpent, the paschal lamb, the day of atonement. It is everywhere if we only have eyes to see it.

Do not be ashamed of God's glory, but rejoice in it. For by the cross you have been redeemed.

✠ In Jesus' name. Amen. ✠

WEDNESDAY OF TRINITY 14

SEPTEMBER 17TH

Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth. Titus 1:7-9

The perfect is the enemy of the good.

This saying holds true even in the Church. We are all very concerned with being perfect. After all, Christ commands us to be perfect even as His Father is perfect. If we desire to be saved through the law we must be perfect. But Christ has fulfilled the law on our behalf. He has lived the perfect life in full obedience to God's word. It is not our keeping of the law that saves but Christ's.

So quite often we don't really know what to do with the law. It has been fulfilled by Christ, we cannot fulfill it. It always condemns us when we measure up against it. The temptation is to say the law does not hold any authority. To say it does not matter what we do, how we live because Christ has lived for us. And in a sense that is true, despite our failures and sins Christ does indeed give to us salvation.

But it is a foolish to live as if the law is unimportant. The law shows us the character and nature of God. They are not incidental to His person but intrinsic. As those who have been bought by the precious blood of Christ, let us not out of compulsion but out of joy strive to live according to the law. For the law is the will of God for our life.

Christ has set us free to be children of God, children are to do the will of their father. Let us as God's children through the waters of baptism strive to live according to God's law not out of fear but out of love.

✠ In Jesus' name. Amen. ✠

THURSDAY OF TRINITY 14

SEPTEMBER 18TH

For an overseer, as God's steward, must be above reproach. He must not be arrogant or quick-tempered or a drunkard or violent or greedy for gain, but hospitable, a lover of good, self-controlled, upright, holy, and disciplined. He must hold firm to the trustworthy word as taught, so that he may be able to give instruction in sound doctrine and also to rebuke those who contradict it.

Titus 1:7-9

One of the most comforting doctrines of the Church is that Her pastors actually stand "persona Christi", that as the person of Christ. Those who are called into the Office of the Holy Ministry do not speak and act with their own authority but with the authority of Christ.

That means that when they pronounce the forgiveness of sins it is as valid and sure as if Christ our Lord forgave them Himself. It means that when they proclaim "this is my body... this cup is the new testament in my blood" Christ proclaims it as well.

Where Christ proclaims and speaks there cannot be lies. When your pastors stand and care for you in Persona Christi you have full assurance that the forgiveness is real, that the sacrament is for your salvation.

Because of this there are qualifications for pastors, or overseers as they are referred to in Titus. Those who are to stand in the stead of Christ must be molded and shaped by Him. They must know the doctrines of the Church, the Scriptures and be above reproach, just as Christ.

This does not mean they will not be slandered or assaulted by the devil and outsiders. Christ was, so will His servants. But let them model themselves and act as Christ, lest people are led astray.

✠ In Jesus' name. Amen. ✠

FRIDAY OF TRINITY 14

SEPTEMBER 19TH

But as for you, teach what accords with sound doctrine.

Titus 2:1

Lex orandi lex credenda – The law of prayer is the law of belief.

This phrase is used in the Church to remind us that how we pray, shapes how we believe; and what we believe should shape how we practice our faith. The same holds true in our daily life. It is easy to think that things do not matter. But how we act, what we do makes a confession. Everything is theological at some level. Even changing diapers and studying in school.

As Christians we do well to keep this at the front of our mind. What we teach in our daily life through our words and actions should be in accordance with sound doctrine. That is they should proclaim the reality of our vocations and callings as Christians.

Fathers, teach your sons to be men, having compassion upon the weak and defending the vulnerable, just as Christ had compassion upon us and defends us from the assaults of the adversary. Mothers, show your daughters to be hospitable and compassionate; just as the church welcomes all those who belong to Christ into Her loving arms and sustains them with the food of immortality.

Students, be diligent in your study as Christ was diligent in the pursuit of God's will and grew in wisdom and stature before men. Workers, be faithful in your service as Christ was faithful in His work of salvation.

Proclaim these things by your life. Teach these things by your deeds.

✠ In Jesus' name. Amen. ✠

SATURDAY OF TRINITY 14

SEPTEMBER 20TH

Declare these things; exhort and rebuke with all authority. Let no one disregard you.

Titus 2:15

The things that we are to declare are summed up in the previous verses:

For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works.

What we are called to proclaim as Christians is first and foremost the work of Christ. It is easy to get wrapped up in moral living and everything else besides Christ. Let it not be so among us. Our focus is Christ and His work. No moral living or ordering of our days avails us anything if it is not for Christ.

To those whom Christ has given your authority over insist upon this. Teach them will all authority what Christ has done. Impart the blessed hope to those to whom the Lord has given you.

You cannot force it, conversion is a work of the Holy Spirit. But we can confess it. Moses instructs us "you shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise." Let us cling to Christ and confess and declare His glory.

✠ In Jesus' name. Amen. ✠

FIFTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

SEPTEMBER 21ST

***And the world is passing away along with its desires, but
whoever does the will of God abides forever.***

1 John 2:17

As we begin to shift towards the end of the church year; we will see an ever-increasing motif of the end times. This is an intentional shift as the life of the Christian always is pointing towards the end of the world.

Not because we have anything to be fearful of on that last day, but because we have every reason to be hopeful. The world is passing away, all that is around us, the wickedness of this world, the injustice we experience is indeed coming to an end. And we yearn for it along with all of creation.

It is indeed a good thing for evil to be punished and injustice to come to an end. Even so, this is not our only comfort. The comfort is not simply that we won't suffer. No, the true and much greater comfort is that we are with Christ.

The end goal of Christians is not simple to go to heaven, it is to dwell with Christ forever, to be in the presence of Christ for all eternity. The traditional Lutheran Funeral Hymn, "Lord Thee I Love With All My Heart" sums it up beautifully:

**Earth has no pleasure I would share;
yea, heav'n itself were void and bare
if thou, Lord, wert not near me.**

Let us be comforted with the joyful reality that we will abide with Christ forever in the age to come, that He will take our sorrows and pain and give us eternal and everlasting joy.

✠ In Jesus' name. Amen. ✠

MONDAY OF TRINITY 15

SEPTEMBER 22ND

The saying is trustworthy, and I want you to insist on these things, so that those who have believed in God may be careful to devote themselves to good works. These things are excellent and profitable for people.

Titus 3:8

Faith without works is dead. But the order is of greatest importance. As Paul is teaching Titus how to be a pastor, notice the order. Insist, or teach, doctrine, then comes belief in God, and only then comes devotion to good works. As Lutherans we cannot decry good works which has certainly been done in our past. There are abuses we must correct against, but we cannot reject the need for good works.

But good works are never the object, nor the source of our faith that must always remain Christ if we desire to be Christian. Instead, they flow out of love of God and only can be "good" because they are done by faith.

So, devote yourself to good works dear Christian. Love your neighbor, care for the poor, visit the sick and needy, comfort the afflicted. Your neighbors need your good works; they need you to care for them and serve them. In so doing you will also glorify God.

Does not Christ say in the Gospel of Matthew:

I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty, and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me. Then the righteous will answer him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink?

Love your neighbor for in so doing you serve your Lord.

✠ In Jesus' name. Amen. ✠

TUESDAY OF TRINITY 15

SEPTEMBER 23RD

For I have derived much joy and comfort from your love, my brother, because the hearts of the saints have been refreshed through you.

Philemon 7

Love is not a self-serving thing. You have often heard it said and said rightly that love is not simply emotion but it is sacrifice. Love is inherently service. We see this in the person of Christ, in our Lord's great service towards us. But that is not the only place we see love.

In our dealings with one another we are called to show forth love towards one another. It is this that St. Paul praises Onesimus for. The love that Onesimus had was telling of his character, of who he was as a Christian. So, as St. Paul writes to him urging him to receive back into his care the slave Philemon, he appeals to this very thing.

Where the love of Christ is there is the church living and active. Let us pray that this is what is said of us! Let us strive for such a love as Christ's to dwell so strongly in us that we by our actions might refresh those around us and comfort one another with love.

It is easy to speak shallow comfort, to give fleeting happiness and short refreshment, but the love of Christ given to you in the Divine Service is deep, lasting and substantial. Receive one another after sin has been committed, just as Onesimus received Philemon. Pardon and forgive one another. Love one another.

Love is the fulfillment of the law. Love is Jesus Christ given and shed for you for the forgiveness of your sins and for those around you.

✠ In Jesus' name. Amen. ✠

WEDNESDAY OF TRINITY 15

SEPTEMBER 24TH

*But you are the same,
and your years will have no end.
Hebrews 1:12*

The nature of God is to be unchanging. He is the same yesterday, today and tomorrow; and His years will have no end. He is the eternal. Without beginning and without end, the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End.

Because He is unchanging, you know the promises are valid and certain. He cannot forsake His word, but is steadfast and true. Where He has promised life and salvation there it is, where comfort and peace is promised there it is. A god who changes can not offer full assurance. Minds can be changed, decisions can be revoked, but not with God. The Word of the Lord endures forever. It is eternal because it is apart of Him and He is eternal.

And you have been enjoined to Him. Just a few days ago you received the very unchanging Body and Blood of Christ which was poured out for you, and you will do it again next Sunday. By this, you have been given the great gift that your own years will have no end. Not that you will not die, but that even though you die you will live. That on the last day you will be raised up unto eternal life to live in blessedness forever with Christ your Lord.

The life He gives you began in the font as the water was poured out and the name of God was placed upon you. Death cannot claim you forever; you are grafted into Christ and into His eternal life and His unending years. Take heart, and rejoice Christ lives.

✠ In Jesus' name. Amen. ✠

THURSDAY OF TRINITY 15

SEPTEMBER 25TH

Christ is faithful over God's house as a son. And we are his house, if indeed we hold fast our confidence and our boasting in our hope.

Hebrews 3:6

We emphasize the importance of Christ's death and resurrection. But throughout the history of the Church there has been a wealth of preaching and emphasis upon the obedience of Christ.

Christ's death is meaningful because of His obedience to the law of God. It was our failure to keep the law that drove us from the garden of Eden. It was failure to uphold the commands of God that cast mankind into death. And it is the perfect obedience of Christ that redeems us.

Along with being merciful and loving, God is eternally and perfectly just. He demands righteousness and sin cannot dwell with Him. The wages of sin is death, that is what is just and right. Mankind sinned and so mankind deserves death.

This all changes when Christ enters the scene. Because Christ is without sin. He took up flesh and tabernacled among us. He made our flesh the house of God. Here is a man who is blameless. And this true man still suffered and died. Not only that, He allows Himself to be killed, He suffers on behalf of those who broke the law. He offers Himself as a perfect sacrifice.

This would mean nothing if Christ was not also God. He was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. This sacrifice was of infinite value for it was not the blood of man but the innocent blood of the God as a man. So the justice our sin demanded was paid out. God as man paid the price of man's sin. Christ is faithful over the house of God. In baptism you are made God's house, and Christ's righteousness is given to you. You are at peace with God.

✠ In Jesus' name. Amen. ✠

FRIDAY OF TRINITY 15

SEPTEMBER 26TH

He can deal gently with the ignorant and wayward, since he himself is beset with weakness.

Hebrews 5:2

Amongst the highest comfort is that Christ has dwelt bodily among us and as one of us. When we are suffering, we can rest assured that God has experienced what we experience today. He was tempted in every way as we are, yet without sin. That is to say, He knows exactly what you are going through.

Take a few moments to ponder what that means. Christ, who intercedes on your behalf; Christ, who is your high priest; Christ who sits at the right hand of the Father knows precisely every struggle and difficulty you face.

We cannot claim that “He doesn’t know what its like” as is often our complaint against those who try to sympathize with us. No, He has felt the weight of sin because He became sin for us, He assumed our sin in His baptism and paid for them upon the cross. He knows our suffering more than we do.

This knowledge is not mere mental exercise but a real and visceral understanding. That is why we should be so filled with awe as we celebrate the incarnation of our Lord. It is not the same joyful victory song of Easter, but a contemplative speechlessness that the almighty God has descended to Earth to be one of us, to live as a man.

To God be praise for the great blessing of Christ’s incarnation by which He takes upon Himself our flesh and deals gently with us.

✠ In Jesus’ name. Amen. ✠

SATURDAY OF TRINITY 15

SEPTEMBER 27TH

[Do] not be sluggish, but imitators of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

Hebrews 6:12

One of the greatest vices of our day and age is sloth. Sloth is an apathy towards godly things. It is precisely what is being preached against here in Hebrews.

Consider the culture in which we live. Everything is designed to be easier and more convenient. Things that require work are ignored in favor of whatever is easiest. Ease of access is the driving factor instead of quality. No one argues the McDonald's burger is the best burger, it is simply easier and cheaper than everything else.

What is our McDonald's in the church? This McDonald's mindset creeps in everywhere, from worship to the life in the home. In worship the church tends towards shorter and shorter preaching and services, in the home it casts aside God's word.

Listening and engaging with longer sermons takes more work, we want it to be entertaining instead of edifying. Even in communion practices, the individual cups comes from a fear of disease, and wouldn't it be easier if we all had our own cups instead of making the harder confession that even if we get sick from the chalice it is worth it to show we are of one body, sharing the one cup. Shorter sermons and individual cups certainly are not sinful but we would do well to consider why and where they come from.

Likewise in the home, daily devotions are cast aside because its hard to do when we are so busy with sports, travel, and activities. It is easier to put it off, or to console ourselves that we go to church on Sunday, than to do the hard work of being disciplined in a study of God's word daily and with our families. Imitate instead of McDonald's those whose faith and patience inherit eternal life. Do the hard work for it is good for you. Strive after things that are godly.

✠ In Jesus' name. Amen. ✠