



“RETURN TO THE LORD”

Wednesday Lenten Worship

March 13, 2024

7:00 p.m.

St. John’s Lutheran Church, Schubert

RETURN FROM DENIAL

AS WE GATHER

In one of the classic hymns associated with the season of Lent, Scottish-born writer James Montgomery, author of over four hundred hymns, penned this thoughtful prayer: “In the hour of trial, Jesus, plead for me Lest by base denial I depart from Thee” (*LW* 511:1). Although the language of the hymn

reflects the era in which it was written almost two hundred years ago, the central concern is as valid today as it was when the stanza was written. The phrase “base denial” calls to mind the disciple Peter, who disowns his Lord while in the courtyard of the house of the high priest. At times in our lives, we may be tempted to deny our Lord and to act as though our faith is not central to who we are. It is then that we can draw strength from remembering the forgiveness won for us by our suffering Lord, who calls us even from “base denial” to return to Him.

+ PREPARATION +

RINGING OF THE BELL

PRELUDE

WORDS OF WELCOME

OPENING HYMN

“In the Hour of Trial” (*TLH* 516)

**In the hour of trial, Jesus, plead for me
Lest by base denial I depart from Thee.**

**When Thou see’st me waver, With a look recall
Nor for fear or favor Suffer me to fall.**

**With forbidden pleasures Should this vain world charm
Or its tempting treasures Spread to work me harm,
Bring to my remembrance Sad Gethsemane
Or, in darker semblance, Cross-crowned Calvary.**

**Should Thy mercy send me Sorrow, toil, and woe,
Or should pain attend me On my path below,
Grant that I may never Fail Thy hand to see;
Grant that I may ever Cast my care on Thee.**

**When my last hour cometh, Fraught with strife and pain,
When my dust returneth To the dust again,
On Thy truth relying, Through that mortal strife,
Jesus, take me, dying, To eternal life. Amen.**

INVOCATION

P In the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C **Amen.**

OPENING SENTENCES

Joel 2:13; Isaiah 55:6-7

P Return to the Lord, your God, for He is gracious and merciful,

C **slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love, and relents over disaster.**

P Seek the Lord while He may be found;

C **call upon Him while He is near.**

P Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts;

C **let him return to the Lord, that He may have compassion on him, and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon.**

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

TLH, p. 5

P Let us make our confession to our God, seeking His grace and forgiveness.

Almighty God, our Maker and Redeemer, we poor sinners confess unto Thee that we are by nature sinful and unclean and that we have sinned against Thee by thought, word, and deed. Wherefore we flee for refuge to Thine infinite mercy, seeking and imploring Thy grace for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ.

All **O most merciful God, who hast given Thine only-begotten Son to die for us, have mercy upon us and for His sake grant us remission of all our sins; and by Thy Holy Spirit increase in us true knowledge of Thee and of Thy Will and true obedience to Thy Word, to the end that by Thy grace we may come to everlasting life; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.**

P Almighty God, our heavenly Father, hath had mercy upon us and hath given His only Son to die for us and for His sake forgiveth us all our sins. To them that believe on His name He giveth power to become the sons of God and hath promised them His Holy Spirit. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved. Grant this, Lord, unto us all.

C **Amen.**

SALUTATION

P The Lord be with you.

C **And also with you.**

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P Let us pray.

All **Lord Jesus Christ, grant us love for You and firmness of faith that we may resist the temptation to deny You and compromise our confession of faith. Strengthen us on the journey of life that we may ever walk with You and joyfully acknowledge You as our Savior, in whom is all our hope. This we ask in Your precious and mighty name. Amen.**

+ WORD +

FIRST READING

Isaiah 59:1-3, 12-13

¹ Behold, the LORD's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save,
or His ear dull, that it cannot hear;
² but your iniquities have made a separation
between you and your God,
and your sins have hidden His face from you
so that He does not hear.
³ For your hands are defiled with blood
and your fingers with iniquity;
your lips have spoken lies;
your tongue mutters wickedness.
¹² For our transgressions are multiplied before You,
and our sins testify against us;
for our transgressions are with us,
and we know our iniquities:
¹³ transgressing, and denying the LORD,
and turning back from following our God,
speaking oppression and revolt,
conceiving and uttering from the heart lying words.

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM

Psalm 118:19-29

P Open to me the gates of righteousness, that I may enter through them and give thanks to the LORD.

C **This is the gate of the LORD; the righteous shall enter through it.**

P I thank You that You have answered me and have become my salvation.

C **The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone.**

P This is the LORD's doing; it is marvelous in our eyes.

C **This is the day that the LORD has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it.**

P Save us, we pray, O LORD! O LORD, we pray, give us success!

C **Blessèd is He who comes in the name of the LORD! We bless You from the house of the LORD.**

P The LORD is God, and He has made His light to shine upon us. Bind the festal sacrifice with cords, up to the horns of the altar!

C **You are my God, and I will give thanks to You; You are my God; I will extol You. Oh give thanks to the LORD, for He is good; for His steadfast love endures forever! 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.**

SECOND READING

1 Peter 5:6-10

⁶ Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time He may exalt you, ⁷ casting all your anxieties on Him, because He cares for you. ⁸ Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. ⁹ Resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same kinds of suffering are being experienced by your brotherhood throughout the world. ¹⁰ And after you have suffered a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to His eternal glory in Christ, will Himself restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you.

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

HYMN VERSES

“O Sacred Head, Now Wounded” (*TLH* 172; vs. 1, 2 & 4)

**O sacred Head, now wounded, With grief and shame weighed down,
Now scornfully surrounded With thorns, Thine only crown.
O sacred Head, what glory, What bliss, till now was Thine!
Yet, though despised and gory, I joy to call Thee mine.
Men mock and taunt and jeer Thee, Thou noble countenance,
Though mighty worlds shall fear Thee And flee before Thy glance.
How art Thou pale with anguish, With sore abuse and scorn!
How doth Thy visage languish That once was bright as morn!
My burden in Thy Passion, Lord, Thou hast borne for me,
For it was my transgression Which brought this woe on Thee.
I cast me down before Thee; Wrath were my rightful lot.
Have mercy, I implore Thee; Redeemer, spurn me not!**

HOLY GOSPEL

Luke 22:54-62

P The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the twenty-second chapter.

C **Glory to You, O Lord.**

A *Then they seized Him and led Him away, bringing Him into the high priest's house, and Peter was following at a distance. And when they had kindled a fire in the middle of the courtyard and sat down together, Peter sat down among them. Then a servant girl, seeing him as he sat in the light and looking closely at him, said,*

P “This man also was with Him.”

A *But he denied it, saying, “Woman, I do not know Him.” And a little later someone else saw him and said,*

P “You also are one of them.”

A *But Peter said, “Man, I am not.” And after an interval of about an hour still another insisted, saying,*

P “Certainly this man also was with Him, for he too is a Galilean.”

A *But Peter said, “Man, I do not know what you are talking about.” And immediately, while he was still speaking, the rooster crowed. And the Lord turned and looked at Peter. And Peter remembered the saying of the Lord, how He had said to him,*

P “Before the rooster crows today, you will deny Me three times.”

A *And he went out and wept bitterly.*

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C **Praise to You, O Christ.**

WEEKDAY/CONFIRMATION CLASS READING

SERMON HYMN

“O Sacred Head, Now Wounded” (TLH 172; vs. 6, 8 & 10)

**Here I will stand beside Thee, From Thee I will not part;
O Savior, do not chide me! When breaks Thy loving heart,
When soul and body languish In death’s cold, cruel grasp,
Then, in Thy deepest anguish, Thee in mine arms I’ll clasp.**

**What language shall I borrow To thank Thee, dearest Friend,
For this Thy dying sorrow, Thy pity without end?**

**Oh, make me Thine forever! And should I fainting be,
Lord, let me never, never, Outlive my love for Thee.**

**Be Thou my Consolation, My Shield, when I must die;
Remind me of Thy Passion When my last hour draws nigh.
Mine eyes shall then behold Thee, Upon Thy cross shall dwell,
My heart by faith enfold Thee. Who dieth thus dies well. Amen.**

SERMON

“Return from Denial”

The OFFERINGS are presented

OFFERTORY

“Take My Life and Let It Be” (TLH 400; vs. 1, 5)

**Take my life and let it be Consecrated, Lord, to Thee;
Take my moments and my days, Let them flow in ceaseless praise.
Take my will and make it Thine, It shall be no longer mine;
Take my heart, it is Thine own, It shall be Thy royal throne. Amen.**

THE LITANY

L O Lord,
C **have mercy.**
L O Christ,
C **have mercy.**
L O Lord,
C **have mercy.**

- L O Christ,
C **hear us.**
- L God the Father in heaven,
C **have mercy.**
- L God the Son, Redeemer of the world,
C **have mercy.**
- L God the Holy Spirit,
C **have mercy.**
- L Be gracious to us.
C **Spare us, good Lord.**
- L Be gracious to us.
C **Help us, good Lord.**
- L From all sin, from all error, from all evil;
From the crafts and assaults of the devil; from sudden and evil death;
From pestilence and famine; from war and bloodshed; from sedition and from rebellion;
From lightning and tempest; from all calamity by fire and water; and from everlasting
death:
C **Good Lord, deliver us.**
- L By the mystery of Your holy incarnation; by Your holy nativity;
By Your Baptism, fasting, and temptation; by Your agony and bloody sweat; by Your cross
and passion; by Your precious death and burial;
By Your glorious resurrection and ascension; and by the coming of the Holy Spirit, the
Comforter:
C **Help us, good Lord.**
- L In all time of our tribulation; in all time of our prosperity; in the hour of death; and in the
Day of Judgment:
C **Help us, good Lord.**
- L We poor sinners implore You
C **to hear us, O Lord.**
- L To rule and govern Your holy Christian Church; to preserve all pastors and ministers of
Your Church in the true knowledge and understanding of Your wholesome Word and to
sustain them in holy living;
To put an end to all schisms and causes of offense; to bring into the way of truth all who
have erred and are deceived;
To beat down Satan under our feet; to send faithful laborers into Your harvest; and to
accompany Your Word with Your grace and Spirit:
C **We implore You to hear us, good Lord.**
- L To raise those who fall and to strengthen those who stand; and to comfort and help the
weakhearted and the distressed:
C **We implore You to hear us, good Lord.**

L To give to all peoples concord and peace; to preserve our land from discord and strife; to give our country Your protection in every time of need;
To direct and defend our president and all in authority; to bless and protect our magistrates and all our people;
To watch over and help all who are in danger, necessity, and tribulation; to protect and guide all who travel;
To grant all women with child, and all mothers with infant children, increasing happiness in their blessings; to defend all orphans and widows and provide for them;
To strengthen and keep all sick persons and young children; to free those in bondage; and to have mercy on us all:

C **We implore You to hear us, good Lord.**

L To forgive our enemies, persecutors, and slanderers and to turn their hearts; to give and preserve for our use the kindly fruits of the earth; and graciously to hear our prayers:

C **We implore You to hear us, good Lord.**

L Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God,

C **we implore You to hear us.**

L Christ, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world,

C **have mercy.**

L Christ, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world,

C **have mercy.**

L Christ, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world,

C **grant us Your peace.**

L O Christ,

C **hear us.**

L O Lord,

C **have mercy.**

L O Christ,

C **have mercy.**

L O Lord,

C **have mercy. 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.

CLOSING COLLECT

Luther's Evening Prayer

P Let us pray.

C **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.**

BLESSING

P The blessing of almighty God, the Father, the + Son, and the Holy Spirit be and remain with you always.

C **Amen.**

CLOSING HYMN

“Now the Day Is Over” (TLH 654)

**Now the day is over, Night is drawing night;
Shadows of the evening Steal across the sky.
Now the darkness gathers, Stars begin to peep,
Birds and beasts and flowers Soon will be asleep.
Jesus, give the weary Calm and sweet repose;
With Thy tend'rst blessing May mine eyelids close.
Grant to little children Visions bright of Thee;
Guard the sailors tossing On the deep blue sea.
Comfort every sufferer Watching late in pain;
Those who plan some evil From their sin restrain.
Through the long night-watches May Thine angels spread
Their white wings above me, Watching round my bed.
When the morning wakens; Then may I arise
Pure and fresh and sinless In Thy holy eyes.
Glory to the Father, Glory to the Son,
And to Thee, blest Spirit, While all ages run. Amen.**

SILENT PRAYER

POSTLUDE

Acknowledgments

The Lutheran Hymnal: St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, © 1941.

Hymn #516: Scripture: Luke 22:31,32; In the Hour of Trial; Author: James Montgomery (1834, alt.); Tune: St. Mary Magdalene; Composer: John B. Dykes (1862).

Hymn #172: Scripture: Isaiah 50:6; O Haupt voll Blut und Wunden; O Sacred Head, Now Wounded; Based on the Latin Bernard of Clairvaux († 1153, asc.); Author: Paul Gerhardt (1656); Translation composite; Tune: Herzlich tut mich; Composer: Hans L. Hassler (1601).

Hymn #400: Scripture: Ephesians 6:24; Take My Life and Let It Be; Author: Frances R. Havergal (1874); Tune: Patmos, Composer: William H. Havergal (1869).

Hymn #654: Scripture: Proverbs 3:24; Now the Day Is Over; Author: Sabine Baring-Gould (1865); Tune: Eudoxia; Composer: Sabine Baring-Gould (1865).

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