

CELEBRATE SABBATH

Twenty-Ninth Sunday in Ordinary Time

**Keep your house in order, your mind free of toxic thoughts
and your spirit free of clutter and you will find serenity and peace.**

Isaiah 45:1, 4-6

Cyrus had defeated many nations and finally Babylon in 539 B.C. and had become the ruler of the then middle east. He was very tolerant and understanding toward the exiles and helped them reestablish themselves in their homeland. Isaiah reflected on the attitudes and accomplishments of Cyrus and saw that God was at work in and through him. He says God used the hands of a pagan king, to deliver his people, though the king did not even know it. Such was the love God had for his people.

This is really the “Amazing Grace” – God had used the hands of a pagan king, Cyrus, without even his knowing, and through this “pagan hands” saved His people, Israel. God is a God of everlasting, constant, steadfast Love.

God continues to reveal his plan and purpose even through the most unexpected people and situations. Be open to the surprises of the Spirit.

Psalms 96

This Psalm celebrates the return of the exiles from Babylon and the new beginning that God had offered them. The Psalmist calls the whole earth to sing to the Lord and tell the nations about the salvation God has won for His people, to glorify God for what He has done and to bring an offering of thanksgiving. This Psalm is a beautiful worship song, singing the praises of God who creates and renews and constantly makes new beginnings.

This Psalm also has a missionary dimension as it calls to proclaim God’s salvation to all the nations. It proclaims the God of Israel as radically different from gods of all other nations. Our God is a God of Holiness, who does marvelous things, who judges all peoples with righteousness and loving kindness and a God of unfailing faithfulness. All peoples are to be reached with this good news.

This Psalm also is a beautiful Poem calling the heaven to be glad, the earth to rejoice, the sea to roar, the field to exult, the trees to sing for joy because God has created, renewed and established the world and “it shall never be moved”. This is the reason for singing a new song of joy.

God makes all things new. Each day is a new day and each day calls for a new song. Every day that we wake up is a good day. Every breath that we take is filled with hope for a better day. Every word that we speak is a chance to change what is bad into something good. And so.....

**Sing to the Lord a new song;
Sing to the Lord, all you lands.
Tell his glory among the nations;
Among all peoples his wondrous deeds.**

I Thessalonians 1:1-5

Paul was a good pastor. Paul wrote to the Thessalonian community encouraging them and affirming them in their works of love. He praised them for their progress in living the Gospel challenge. He acknowledged that theirs was a dynamic faith, lived out in hope and expressed in love. He told them how much he appreciated their faith and how encouraged and supported he felt when he came to know of their faithfulness in love. He assured them of remembering them constantly in prayer.

Say a word of encouragement and support to someone today! Remember in prayer those who serve you in faithfulness and love!

Mathew 22:15-21

In response to a trick question from the Herodians, Jesus revealed a great truth. They sought his opinion on paying tax to the emperor. He invited them to look at the coin and identify the image on the coin. The image on the coin indicated ownership.

The coin belonged to the emperor since his image was on it. "Give to Caesar what is Caesar's". Pay him what is due to him. Then he taught another great truth: "give to God what is God's". The coin has the image of the emperor.....you have the image of God...give yourself to God. We are made in God's image and likeness and we must be faithful to that image.

The truth about every person is so incredibly rich and profound, beyond comprehension that the Scriptures have much to reveal to us.....

"in the divine image, He created him: male and female he created them" (Gen.1:27).

"made him less than the angels and crowned with glory" (Ps. 8:6).

"thank you God, for I am, fearfully, wonderfully made", (Ps139:14)

"you are the Body of Christ" (I Cor. 12:27)

“you are fellow citizens of the saints and members of the household of God - being built to become a dwelling place for God in the spirit” (Eph.2:19-22)

Loyalty to God takes priority over all else. Loyalty to God is fidelity to what God made you to be, obedience to what God wants you to do, striving to become what God wants you to become and faithfulness to all that is of God and from God.

Saint of the Day, October 18 - St. Luke, the Evangelist and 10 other saints are remembered this day.

Luke, a gentile and a doctor by profession, was born in Antioch. He wrote one of the four Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles in Greece between 70-90 C.E. for Christians of Greek background. Luke's profile of Jesus was influenced by the fact that he wrote for the Gentiles, especially for the poor and the outcasts of the society. He stresses the concern of Jesus for the outcasts, the sinners and the “second class” citizens. Luke's profile is that of the compassionate Messiah/Savior.

Luke wrote his Gospel to a friend. We know him as Theophilus, “Beloved of God”. To help his friend, Luke used traditional stories, memories of older people and collections of writings which were current in his community. Luke spoke to his friend in stories full of references to the hopes of the Jews which clarified for him the identity of Jesus.

He joined St. Paul in his ministry in the year 51 C.E. and his inspiration and information for his writings came from his close association with Paul and his companions. In his gospel, Luke stresses Jesus' compassion for sinners, the poor, and the suffering. Luke reveals Jesus performing six miracles and teaching 18 parables not found in the other gospels. Luke also has a special connection with the women in Jesus' life, especially Mary, the mother of Jesus.

It is only in Luke's gospel that we have the story of many of the major events in the life of Mary - the Annunciation, the Visitation, the Presentation, and the story of Jesus' disappearance in Jerusalem. Luke also provides the scriptural basis for parts of the “Hail Mary” - the Angel Gabriel's greeting at the Annunciation, ‘Hail Mary full of grace’ and her cousin Elizabeth's exclamation, ‘Blessed are you and blessed is the fruit of your womb Jesus’ at the Visitation. Luke wanted God's kingdom opened to everyone, and he saw hope in God's mercy for all. St. Luke died around 70 A.D. As one of the four gospel writers, St. Luke has traditionally been represented as a winged ox. He is the patron saint of physicians, surgeons, and artists.

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