

Office of Compline

The Versicles and Gloria Patri

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

C: Amen.

P: Our help is in the name of the Lord:

C: Who made heaven and earth.

P: Restore us again, O God of our salvation.

C: And put away Your anger toward us.

P: Make haste, O God, to deliver me.

C: Make haste to help me, O Lord.

All: Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost; as it was in the beginning is now and ever shall be forevermore. Amen.

The Confession of Sin

P: Almighty God, heavenly Father, I have sinned against You through my own fault in thought, word and deed. For the sake of the suffering, death and resurrection of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on me; forgive me all my sins and bring me to everlasting life.

C: Amen!

The Psalm - Psalm 119:1-8:

Blessed are the unde`fined in the way,/ Who walk in the `law of the Lord.

2 Blessed are those who keep His `testimonies,/ Who seek Him `with the whole heart!

3 They also do no `iniquity;/ They `walk in His ways.

4 You have `commanded us/ To keep Your precepts `diligently.

5 Oh, that my ways `were directed/ To `keep Your statutes!

6 Then I would `not be ashamed,/ When I look into all `Your commandments.

7 I will praise You with up`rightness of heart,/ When I learn Your `righteous judgments.

8 I will `keep Your statutes;/ Oh, do not forsake `me utterly!

All: Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost; as it was in the beginning is now and ever shall be forevermore. Amen.

Today's devotion is from one of Luther's sermons for Trinity 21. The text is John 4:46-53:

Jesus came again to Cana of Galilee where He had made the water wine. And there was a certain [b]nobleman whose son was sick at Capernaum. When he heard that Jesus had come out of Judea into Galilee, he went to Him and implored Him to come down and heal his son, for he was at the point of death. Then Jesus said to him, "Unless you *people* see signs and wonders, you will by no means believe."

The nobleman said to Him, "Sir, come down before my child dies!"

Jesus said to him, "Go your way; your son lives." So the man believed the word that Jesus spoke to him, and he went his way. And as he was now going down, his servants met him and told *him*, saying, "Your son lives!"

Then he inquired of them the hour when he got better. And they said to him, "Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him." So the father knew that *it was* at the same hour in which Jesus said to him, "Your son lives." And he himself believed, and his whole household.

The devotion:

17. Here begins the faith that depends on Christ. This Gospel shows that he had faith; for he hears of Christ, how he heals the sick; his heart recognizes Christ, cleaves to him and thinks thus: If he helps all others, he will also help me and heal my son. He regarded Christ as the person who can help men, and he expects every benefit from him. This indeed, is the heart of a true

Christian, since it leads him to attach himself to Christ. If, however, this nobleman had remained in doubt, he would not have come to Christ, but his heart would have been in the condition to say: "He, indeed, helps others, but who knows if he will help me also;" and he might have left the matter rest at this. But his faith was a living faith, and hence he arose and went to Christ. This was the beginning of faith.

18. Now you shall see how strangely and contrary to expectation Christ met him and how his faith was tried, when he said to him: "Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will in no wise believe."

19. How are we to understand this? The nobleman had heard reports concerning Christ, that he was helping everybody. He believed this and came to him. But when he heard that Christ refused to come to him, he felt hurt and his faith drooped, and he feared lest Christ would refuse to help him. This was a rebuff and here began the trial of incipient faith; for this was a hard saying, "Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will in no wise believe." This expression was a trial of his faith, and produced a doubt, and caused him to stumble. The devil stood back of him and said: Return to your home, await the result; he will not help you. But the nobleman was not so easily repulsed, but said to the Lord: "Sir, come down ere my child die."

20. Faith was ready to droop and sink; but the Lord did not forsake him, raised him up and said to him: "Go thy way; thy son liveth."

21. He must have had a pure faith, or else he would not have asked the Lord to come to his son. What then did he lack? This: He believed if Christ came to his house, he could heal his son; but unless he were present, he could not effect the cure. His faith was not strong enough to realize that Christ could heal without being present. Hence, his faith had to attain a higher stage. His weak faith was gone, the little earthen vessel was shattered, and he thought his son had to die; but Christ approached, raised him up, placed him on a higher plane of faith, and said to him: "Go thy way; thy son liveth." Thus the man advanced from his first faith, when he believed that Christ could heal if he were present, to a higher stage of faith, by reason of which he now

believed the mere word of Christ. For if he had not believed the Word, he would not have ceased until the Lord had accompanied him to his house; but he accepted the Word, believed Christ and clung to his word; for the son was at home, and Christ was with the father.

22. The father accepted the word of Christ and said in his heart: My son is ill; but I shall find him well. This was faith over against reason and experience. Reason would have led him to say: When I left my son, he was ill. As you left him, so you shall find him. But faith says the contrary, stands firmly on the Word and drowns itself in it, and does not at all doubt that it shall be as the Word declares: "Go thy way; thy son liveth."

23. This is a pure and strong faith, that requires the individual to cast away all sense, understanding, reason, eyes and heart, and sink himself into one little word and be satisfied with and feel secure in it. Christ says, Thy son liveth, so he says to himself: It is certainly true, I shall find it so. Thus faith does not remain idle or quiet, but progresses and rises higher.

Responsory and Lord's Prayer

P: Into your hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit.

P: C: For you have redeemed me, O Lord, God of truth.

P: Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost.

C: Into Your hand, O Lord, I commend my spirit.

P: Keep us, O Lord, as the apple of Your eye.

C: Hide us under the shadow of Your wings.

All: Lord, have mercy upon us.

Christ, have mercy upon us.

Lord, have mercy upon us.

All: Our Father...

P: O Lord, hear my prayer:

C: And let my cry come to You.

The Collect

P: O Lord, visit this church and our dwellings, and drive far from them all snares of the enemy; let Your holy angels dwell with us to preserve us in peace; and may Your blessing be upon us evermore; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. **Amen.**

The Canticle

P: Preserve us, O Lord, while waking and guard us while sleeping, that awake we may watch with Christ, and asleep we may rest in peace.

C: Lord, now You let Your servant depart in peace, according to Your word; for my eyes have seen Your Salvation which You have prepared before the face of all people, a Light to lighten the Gentiles, and the Glory of Your people Israel.

Preserve us, O Lord, while waking and guard us while sleeping, that awake we may watch with Christ, and asleep we may rest in peace.

P: Let us bless the Lord:

C: Thanks be to God.

P: The almighty and most merciful Lord, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit bless and preserve us.

C:Amen.

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