

# ***Risen Christ Lutheran Church Arvada, Colorado***

***Midweek Family Devotion in Absence***

***Midweek of Lent 4  
March 25, 2020***

## **INVOCATION**

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen!

## **THE PSALM** *Psalm 130*

<sup>1</sup> Out of the depths

I cry to you, O LORD!

<sup>2</sup> O Lord, hear my voice!

Let your ears be attentive to the voice of my pleas for mercy!

<sup>3</sup> If you, O LORD, should mark iniquities,

O Lord, who could stand?

<sup>4</sup> But with you there is forgiveness,

that you may be feared.

<sup>5</sup> I wait for the LORD, my soul waits,

and in his word I hope;

<sup>6</sup> my soul waits for the Lord more than watchmen for the morning,

more than watchmen for the morning.

<sup>7</sup> O Israel, hope in the LORD! For with the LORD there is steadfast love,

and with him is plentiful redemption.

<sup>8</sup> And he will redeem Israel

from all his iniquities.

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.

## **FIRST READING** *1 Peter 3:17-22*

<sup>17</sup> For it is better to suffer for doing good, if that should be God's will, than for doing evil. <sup>18</sup> For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive in the spirit, <sup>19</sup> in which he went and proclaimed to the spirits in prison, <sup>20</sup> because they formerly did not obey, when God's patience waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were brought safely through water. <sup>21</sup> Baptism, which corresponds to this, now saves you, not as a removal of dirt from the body but as an appeal to God for a good conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, <sup>22</sup> who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers having been subjected to him.

## **SECOND READING** *Mark 1:1-11*

<sup>1</sup> The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. <sup>2</sup> As it is written in Isaiah the prophet, "Behold, I send my messenger before your face, who will prepare your way, <sup>3</sup> the voice of one crying in the wilderness: Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight," <sup>4</sup> John appeared, baptizing in the wilderness and proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. <sup>5</sup> And all the country of Judea and all Jerusalem were going out to him and were being baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. <sup>6</sup> Now John was clothed with camel's hair and wore a leather belt around his waist

and ate locusts and wild honey.<sup>7</sup> And he preached, saying, "After me comes he who is mightier than I, the strap of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie."<sup>8</sup> I have baptized you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."<sup>9</sup> In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan.<sup>10</sup> And when he came up out of the water, immediately he saw the heavens being torn open and the Spirit descending on him like a dove.<sup>11</sup> And a voice came from heaven, "You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased."

**SERMON HYMN** *Lutheran Service Book 406 "To Jordan Came the Christ, Our Lord"*

### **SERMON**

There were other "baptisms" or ritual washings for centuries before Jesus was Baptized. In ancient Israel's divine service, there were various ritual washings with water for various occasions and purposes. All of those "baptisms" pointed to their ultimate fulfillment in Christ. Even the baptism with which John baptized was a ritual cleansing for repentance and forgiveness of sins that pointed to and prepared for the coming of the promised Messiah, the Christ. Therefore, when Christ Jesus was Baptized by John in the Jordan River, it fulfilled all the washings of the Old Testament law. Jesus was not Baptized because he needed to repent or be forgiven; he is the sinless, pure, and holy eternal Son of God. So why *was* he Baptized? Not to get something out of it, but to put himself into it! In Matthew's Gospel, it says that John tried to stop Jesus from being Baptized. John knew that he himself was a sinner who needed to be Baptized by Jesus. "I need to be Baptized by you, and do you come to me?" John questions. And Jesus responds by telling John that it is proper to do this in order to "fulfill all righteousness." The righteousness that Jesus fulfilled in his Baptism was the righteousness that he would give to you and to me in our own Holy Baptism.

Righteousness has to do with having a right relationship with God. It is the relationship that exists in eternity between the persons of the Triune God. And so, we see the relationship of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit revealed at Jesus' Baptism. Mark says in the Gospel reading that Jesus "was baptized by John in the Jordan. And when he came up out of the water, immediately he saw the heavens being torn open and the Spirit descending on him like a dove. And a voice came from heaven, 'You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased.'" The incarnate Son was Baptized. The Holy Spirit descended upon him. The Father announced Jesus as his beloved Son, with whom he is well pleased. That relationship between the persons of the Trinity is the relationship in which you participate through your Baptism. That's why Christ ordains his apostles in Matthew 28, to Baptize in (literally "into") the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. In your Baptism, you received the gift of the righteousness of Christ that he put into the water when he was Baptized. He put himself into the water of baptism together with the Father and the Holy Spirit so that you would be put into him and into a right relationship with his Father and the Holy Spirit in your Baptism. Because you are Baptized, the Holy Spirit has come and still comes upon you through God's Holy Word, Holy Absolution, and Holy Communion. As a Baptized Christian, the heavenly Father declares you as his beloved son with whom he is well pleased. "Because you are sons, God sends the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, calling out '*Abba, Father.*' Thus, you are no longer a slave, but a son; and because as son, also an heir, with God" (Galatians 4:6-7). Dear friends, cherish your Holy Baptism and your relationship with the Holy Father in the Holy Son by the power of the Holy Spirit who continues to work in you through it. Amen!

### **KYRIE**

Lord, have mercy upon us. Christ, have mercy upon us. Lord, have mercy upon us.

### **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.

**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.

**COLLECT FOR PEACE**

O God, from whom come all holy desires, all good counsels, and all just works, give to us, Your servants, that peace which the world cannot give, that our hearts may be set to obey Your commandments and also that we, being defended from the fear of our enemies, may live in peace and quietness; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

**BENEDICTION**

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with us all. Amen.

**CLOSING HYMN** *Lutheran Service Book 434 "Lamb of God, Pure and Holy"*

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