

Affirmation Prayer...

Jesus Christ is the Word of life: let us give thanks and praise!

All: Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen. Alleluia!

Hymn **Meter: LM**

Your love, O Lord, our sinful race
Has not returned, but falsified;
Author of mercy, turn your face
And grant repentance for our pride.
Remember, Lord, though frail we be,
In your own image were we made;
Help us, lest in anxiety,
We cause your Name to be betrayed.
Therefore, we pray you, Lord, forgive;
So when our wand'rings here shall cease,
We may with you for ever live,
In love and unity and peace.

Psalm **1**

You disregard God's commandment but cling to human tradition. (Mk 7:8)

The pattern began in Eden. Our shortsighted pride opens us to the ready temptation to substitute our own preferences for God's commandments, either because we find God's law too strict or because we find it too compassionate. We fail to understand that God has mapped out for us the way to the life for which we yearn.

Happy indeed is the man
who follows not the counsel of the wicked;
nor lingers in the way of sinners
nor sits in the company of scorners,
but whose delight is the law of the Lord
and who ponders his law day and night.
He is like a tree that is planted
beside the flowing waters,
that yields its fruit in due season
and whose leaves shall never fade;
and all that he does shall prosper.
Not so are the wicked, not so!
For they like winnowed chaff
shall be driven away by the wind.
When the wicked are judged they shall not stand,
nor find room among those who are just;
for the Lord guards the way of the just
but the way of the wicked leads to doom.

All: Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

Word of God **Deuteronomy 4:40**

You must keep his statutes and commandments which I enjoin on you today, that you and your children after you may prosper, and that you may have long life on the land which the Lord, your God, is giving you forever.

Every command that I enjoin on you, you shall be careful to observe, neither adding to it nor subtracting from it (Dt 13:1)

Canticle of Zechariah

Love the Lord, your God, heeding his voice, and holding fast to him. For that will mean life for you. (cf. Dt 30:20)

All: Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel; he has come to his people and set them free. He has raised up for us a mighty savior, born of the house of his servant David.

Through his holy prophets he promised of old that he would save us from our enemies, from the hands of all who hate us. He promised to show mercy to our fathers and to remember his holy covenant.

This was the oath he swore to our father Abraham: to set us free from the hands of our enemies, free to worship him without fear, holy and righteous in his sight all the days of our life.

You, my child, shall be called the prophet of the Most High; for you will go before the Lord to prepare his way, to give his people knowledge of salvation by the forgiveness of their sins.

In the tender compassion of our God the dawn from on high shall break upon us, to shine on those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death, and to guide our feet into the way of peace.

All: Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

Intercessions

In our weakness, we pray with confidence to the God who gives us strength:

R/ Guard us in the way of your commandments.

When we are tempted to follow our own will rather than yours: **R/**

When we are blinded by the attraction of our own preferences: **R/**

When we learn or teach ways other than those you have marked out for us: **R/**

Personal intentions

All: 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.

God of truth, you gave us your law made flesh in Jesus Christ, our Lord. Open our eyes and our hearts to see, understand, and follow in the path in which he will lead us today, that we may arrive at last in our heavenly homeland, through the same Christ our Lord. Amen.

Reading 1 **Deuteronomy 4:1-2, 6-8**

Moses said to the people: 'Now, Israel, take notice of the laws and customs that I teach you today, and observe them, that you may have life and may enter and take possession of the land that the Lord the God of your fathers is giving you. You must add nothing to what I command you, and take nothing from it, but keep the commandments of the Lord your God just as I lay them down for you. Keep them, observe them, and they will demonstrate to the peoples your wisdom and understanding. When they come to know of all these laws they will exclaim, "No other people is as wise and prudent as this great nation." And indeed, what great nation is there that has its gods so near as the Lord our God is to us whenever we call to him? And what great nation is there that has laws and customs to match this whole Law that I put before you today?'

Reading 2 **James 1:17-18, 21b-22, 27**

It is all that is good, everything that is perfect, which is given us from above; it comes down from the Father of all light; with him there is no such thing as alteration, no shadow of a change. By his own choice he made us his children by the message of the truth so that we should be a sort of first-fruits of all that he had created.

Accept and submit to the word which has been planted in you and can save your souls. But you must do what the word tells you, and not just listen to it and deceive yourselves.

Pure, unspoilt religion, in the eyes of God our Father is this: coming to the help of orphans and widows when they need it, and keeping oneself uncontaminated by the world.

The Pharisees and some of the scribes who had come from Jerusalem gathered round Jesus, and they noticed that some of his disciples were eating with unclean hands, that is, without washing them. For the Pharisees, and the Jews in general, follow the tradition of the elders and never eat without washing their arms as far as the elbow; and on returning from the market place they never eat without first sprinkling themselves. There are also many other observances which have been handed down to them concerning the washing of cups and pots and bronze dishes. So these Pharisees and scribes asked him, 'Why do your disciples not respect the tradition of the elders but eat their food with unclean hands?' He answered, 'It was of you hypocrites that Isaiah so rightly prophesied in this passage of scripture:

This people honours me only with lip-service, while their hearts are far from me.

The worship they offer me is worthless, the doctrines they teach are only human regulations.

You put aside the commandment of God to cling to human traditions.' He called the people to him again and said, 'Listen to me, all of you, and understand. Nothing that goes into a man from outside can make him unclean; it is the things that come out of a man that make him unclean. For it is from within, from men's hearts, that evil intentions emerge: fornication, theft, murder, adultery, avarice, malice, deceit, indecency, envy, slander, pride, folly. All these evil things come from within and make a man unclean.'

Men of St. Joseph Prayer

All: St. Joseph, help me to be like you. Help me to be obedient to the teachings of the Church and faithful to God's commands. Help me to patiently endure my cross each day. Let me be a model of holiness and a pillar of virtue. I solemnly promise to embrace God's will and I accept the challenge to work tirelessly for my family's salvation. Be my guide and companion on this journey. St. Joseph, terror of demons, pray for us!

***Prayer for the text used with permission
of Magnificat***