

JUSTICE



FORMED

May 1, 2011

Morning

Call To Prayer: In the morning, O Lord, you hear my voice,* In the morning I lay my requests before you and wait in expectation.

Vow: In a world full of injustice, we will work at the grassroots level for visible social change and will be a voice for justice among the world's oppressed.

Scripture Related to the Vow: Psalm 11:7

For the righteous Lord loves justice.
The virtuous will see his face.

Morning Short Reading:

"All go on repeating with one voice that justice and moderation are beautiful, but certainly difficult and burdensome, while incontinence and injustice are sweet and easy, and shameful only by repute and the law."

Plato, *The Republic* (The Ring of Gyges)

Vow Prayer: Almighty Father, we long for your Kingdom where kindness and truth will meet, where justice and peace will kiss. Give our minds wisdom, give our hearts empathy, and give our hands strength as we work on behalf of justice for all, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Morning Gospel: Matthew 1:1-17

This is a record of the ancestors of Jesus the Messiah, a descendant of David and of Abraham
Abraham was the father of Isaac.

Isaac was the father of Jacob.

Jacob was the father of Judah and his brothers.

Judah was the father of Perez and Zerah (whose mother was Tamar).

Perez was the father of Hezron.

Hezron was the father of Ram.

Ram was the father of Amminadab.

Amminadab was the father of Nahshon.

Nahshon was the father of Salmon.

Salmon was the father of Boaz (whose mother was Rahab).

Boaz was the father of Obed (whose mother was Ruth).

Obed was the father of Jesse.

Jesse was the father of King David.

David was the father of Solomon (whose mother was Bathsheba, the widow of Uriah).

Solomon was the father of Rehoboam.

Rehoboam was the father of Abijah.

Abijah was the father of Asa.

Asa was the father of Jehoshaphat.

Jehoshaphat was the father of Jehoram.

Jehoram was the father of Uzziah.

Uzziah was the father of Jotham.

Jotham was the father of Ahaz.

Ahaz was the father of Hezekiah.

Hezekiah was the father of Manasseh.

Manasseh was the father of Amon.

Amon was the father of Josiah.

Josiah was the father of Jehoiachin and his brothers (born at the time of the exile to Babylon).

After the Babylonian exile

Jehoiachin was the father of Shealtiel.

Shealtiel was the father of Zerubbabel.
Zerubbabel was the father of Abiud.
Abiud was the father of Eliakim.
Eliakim was the father of Azor.
Azor was the father of Zadok.
Zadok was the father of Akim.
Akim was the father of Eliud.
Eliud was the father of Eleazar.
Eleazar was the father of Matthan.
Matthan was the father of Jacob.
Jacob was the father of Joseph, the husband of Mary.
Mary gave birth to Jesus, who is called the Messiah.

All those listed above include fourteen generations from Abraham to David, fourteen from David to the Babylonian exile, and fourteen from the Babylonian exile to the Messiah.

Lord's Prayer:

Our Father in heaven. Let your holiness be revealed
Let your kingdom come. Let your will be done on earth as in heaven
Give us today our daily bread. Erase our debts as we erase the debts of others.
Keep us from temptation and Rescue us from evil.
For kingdom, power and glory belong to you for ever and ever.
Amen.

Morning Psalm: Psalm 1

Oh, the joys of those who do not
follow the advice of the wicked,
or stand around with sinners,
or join in with mockers.
But they delight in the law of the Lord,
meditating on it day and night.
They are like trees planted along the riverbank,
bearing fruit each season.
Their leaves never wither,
and they prosper in all they do.
But not the wicked!
They are like worthless chaff, scattered by the wind.
They will be condemned at the time of judgment.
Sinners will have no place among the godly.
For the Lord watches over the path of the godly,
but the path of the wicked leads to destruction.

Intercession:

Concluding Prayer: Lord God, Almighty and Everlasting Father, you have brought us in safety to this new day. Preserve us with your mighty power that we may not fall into sin nor be overcome by adversity and in all we do direct us to the fulfilling of your purpose through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Midday

Vow: In a world of shallow living we'll develop habits and rhythms that sustain us in the way of Christ.

Vow Prayer: Almighty Father, we long for your Kingdom where kindness and truth will meet, where justice and peace will kiss. Give our minds wisdom, give our hearts empathy, and give our hands strength as we work on behalf of justice for all, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Evening

Our help is in the name of the Lord* The Maker of heaven and earth

Vow: In a world full of injustice, we will work at the grassroots level for visible social change and will be a voice for justice among the world's oppressed.

Scripture Related to the Vow: Psalm 11:7

For the righteous Lord loves justice.
The virtuous will see his face.

Evening Short Reading:

We are not morally free to treat wrongdoers any way we please in the process of seeking justice for the wronged ones... Yet neither are we morally free simply to let harmful wrongdoing continue unopposed.

Joseph L. Allen, *Love & Conflict: A Covenantal Model of Christian Ethics*

Vow Prayer: Almighty Father, we long for your Kingdom where kindness and truth will meet, where justice and peace will kiss. Give our minds wisdom, give our hearts empathy, and give our hands strength as we work on behalf of justice for all, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Evening Gospel: Matthew 1:18-25

This is how Jesus the Messiah was born. His mother, Mary, was engaged to be married to Joseph. But before the marriage took place, while she was still a virgin, she became pregnant through the power of the Holy Spirit. Joseph, her fiancé, was a good man and did not want to disgrace her publicly, so he decided to break the engagement quietly.

As he considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream. "Joseph, son of David," the angel said, "do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife. For the child within her was conceived by the Holy Spirit. And she will have a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins."

All of this occurred to fulfill the Lord's message through his prophet

"Look! The virgin will conceive a child!
She will give birth to a son,
and they will call him Immanuel,
which means 'God is with us.'"

When Joseph woke up, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded and took Mary as his wife. But he did not have sexual relations with her until her son was born. And Joseph named him Jesus.

Lord's Prayer:

Our Father in heaven. Let your holiness be revealed
Let your kingdom come. Let your will be done on earth as in heaven
Give us today our daily bread. Erase our debts as we erase the debts of others.
Keep us from temptation and Rescue us from evil.
For kingdom, power and glory belong to you for ever and ever.
Amen.

Evening Psalm: Psalm 2

Why are the nations so angry?
Why do they waste their time with futile plans?
The kings of the earth prepare for battle;
the rulers plot together
against the Lord
and against his anointed one.
“Let us break their chains,” they cry,
“and free ourselves from slavery to God.”

But the one who rules in heaven laughs.
The Lord scoffs at them.
Then in anger he rebukes them,
terrifying them with his fierce fury.
For the Lord declares, “I have placed my chosen king on the throne
in Jerusalem, on my holy mountain.”

The king proclaims the Lord’s decree:
“The Lord said to me, ‘You are my son.
Today I have become your Father.
Only ask, and I will give you the nations as your inheritance,
the whole earth as your possession.
You will break them with an iron rod
and smash them like clay pots.’”

Now then, you kings, act wisely!
Be warned, you rulers of the earth!
Serve the Lord with reverent fear,
and rejoice with trembling.
Submit to God’s royal son, or he will become angry,
and you will be destroyed in the midst of all your activities—
for his anger flares up in an instant.
But what joy for all who take refuge in him!

Intercession:

Concluding Prayer: Lord Jesus stay with us, for evening is at hand and the day is past. Be our companion in the way, kindle our hearts and awaken hope, that we may know you as you are revealed in Scripture and the breaking of bread. Grant this for the sake of your love. Amen.

May 2, 2011

Morning

Call To Prayer: In the morning, O Lord, you hear my voice,* In the morning I lay my requests before you and wait in expectation.

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Morning Short Reading:

It is not enough merely to have sympathy for the wronged. If one is responding from covenant love, it is morally necessary to seek effective expression for that sympathy. Effective expression includes at least these things: interposing an adequate defense between the oppressed and their oppressors, seeking just compensation for the wronged (whatever that might be) when the wrongful blow has already been struck, holding the wrongdoers responsible and, where feasible, seeking to shape the policies of society so as to anticipate and reduce the likelihood of further such wrongful acts in the future.

Joseph L. Allen, *Love & Conflict: A Covenantal Model of Christian Ethics*

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Morning Gospel: Matthew 2:1-12

Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the reign of King Herod. About that time some wise men from eastern lands arrived in Jerusalem, asking, "Where is the newborn king of the Jews? We saw his star as it rose, and we have come to worship him."

King Herod was deeply disturbed when he heard this, as was everyone in Jerusalem. He called a meeting of the leading priests and teachers of religious law and asked, "Where is the Messiah supposed to be born?"

"In Bethlehem in Judea," they said, "for this is what the prophet wrote

'And you, O Bethlehem in the land of Judah,
are not least among the ruling cities of Judah,
for a ruler will come from you
who will be the shepherd for my people Israel.'"

Then Herod called for a private meeting with the wise men, and he learned from them the time when the star first appeared. Then he told them, "Go to Bethlehem and search carefully for the child. And when you find him, come back and tell me so that I can go and worship him, too!"

After this interview the wise men went their way. And the star they had seen in the east guided them to Bethlehem. It went ahead of them and stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw the star, they were filled with joy! They entered the house and saw the child with his mother, Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasure chests and gave him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

When it was time to leave, they returned to their own country by another route, for God had warned them in a dream not to return to Herod.

Lord's Prayer:

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Keep us from temptation and Rescue us from evil.
For kingdom, power and glory belong to you for ever and ever.
Amen.

Morning Psalm: Psalm 3

A psalm of David, regarding the time David fled from his son Absalom.

O Lord, I have so many enemies;
so many are against me.

So many are saying,
"God will never rescue him!"

Interlude

But you, O Lord, are a shield around me;
you are my glory, the one who holds my head high.

I cried out to the Lord,
and he answered me from his holy mountain.

Interlude

I lay down and slept,
yet I woke up in safety,
for the Lord was watching over me.
I am not afraid of ten thousand enemies
who surround me on every side.

Arise, O Lord!
Rescue me, my God!
Slap all my enemies in the face!
Shatter the teeth of the wicked!
Victory comes from you, O Lord.
May you bless your people.

Interlude

Intercession:

Concluding Prayer: Lord God, Almighty and Everlasting Father, you have brought us in safety to this new day. Preserve us with your mighty power that we may not fall into sin nor be overcome by adversity and in all we do direct us to the fulfilling of your purpose through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Midday

Vow: In a world of shallow living we'll develop habits and rhythms that sustain us in the way of Christ.

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Amen.

Evening

Call To Prayer: Our help is in the name of the Lord* The Maker of heaven and earth

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Evening Short Reading:

Justice denied anywhere diminishes justice everywhere.
Martin Luther King, Jr.

Vow Prayer: Almighty Father, we long for your Kingdom where kindness and truth will meet, where justice and peace will kiss. Give our minds wisdom, give our hearts empathy, and give our hands strength as we work on behalf of justice for all, through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Evening Gospel: Matthew 2:13-23

After the wise men were gone, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream. "Get up! Flee to Egypt with the child and his mother," the angel said. "Stay there until I tell you to return, because Herod is going to search for the child to kill him."

That night Joseph left for Egypt with the child and Mary, his mother, and they stayed there until Herod's death. This fulfilled what the Lord had spoken through the prophet "I called my Son out of Egypt."

Herod was furious when he realized that the wise men had outwitted him. He sent soldiers to kill all the boys in and around Bethlehem who were two years old and under, based on the wise men's report of the star's first appearance. Herod's brutal action fulfilled what God had spoken through the prophet Jeremiah

"A cry was heard in Ramah—
weeping and great mourning.
Rachel weeps for her children,
refusing to be comforted,
for they are dead."

When Herod died, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt. "Get up!" the angel said. "Take the child and his mother back to the land of Israel, because those who were trying to kill the child are dead."

So Joseph got up and returned to the land of Israel with Jesus and his mother. But when he learned that the new ruler of Judea was Herod's son Archelaus, he was afraid to go there. Then, after being warned in a dream, he left for the region of Galilee. So the family went and lived in a town called Nazareth. This fulfilled what the prophets had said "He will be called a Nazarene."

Lord's Prayer:

Our Father in heaven. Let your holiness be revealed
Let your kingdom come. Let your will be done on earth as in heaven
Give us today our daily bread. Erase our debts as we erase the debts of others.
Keep us from temptation and Rescue us from evil.

For kingdom, power and glory belong to you for ever and ever.
Amen.

Evening Psalm: Psalm 4

For the choir director: A psalm of David, to be accompanied by stringed instruments.

Answer me when I call to you,
O God who declares me innocent.
Free me from my troubles.
Have mercy on me and hear my prayer.

How long will you people ruin my reputation?
How long will you make groundless accusations?
How long will you continue your lies?
Interlude

You can be sure of this:
The Lord set apart the godly for himself.
The Lord will answer when I call to him.

Don't sin by letting anger control you.
Think about it overnight and remain silent.
Interlude

Offer sacrifices in the right spirit,
and trust the Lord.

Many people say, "Who will show us better times?"
Let your face smile on us, Lord.
You have given me greater joy
than those who have abundant harvests of grain and new wine.
In peace I will lie down and sleep,
for you alone, O Lord, will keep me safe.

Intercession:

Concluding Prayer: Lord Jesus stay with us, for evening is at hand and the day is past. Be our companion in the way, kindle our hearts and awaken hope, that we may know you as you are revealed in Scripture and the breaking of bread. Grant this for the sake of your love. Amen.

May 3, 2011

Morning

Call To Prayer: In the morning, O Lord, you hear my voice,* In the morning I lay my requests before you and wait in expectation.

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Morning Short Reading:

Justice in the life and conduct of the State is possible only as first it resides in the hearts and souls of the citizens.
Plato

Vow Prayer: Almighty Father, we long for your Kingdom where kindness and truth will meet, where justice and peace will kiss. Give our minds wisdom, give our hearts empathy, and give our hands strength as we work on behalf of justice for all, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Morning Gospel: Matthew 3:1-12

In those days John the Baptist came to the Judean wilderness and began preaching. His message was, "Repent of your sins and turn to God, for the Kingdom of Heaven is near." The prophet Isaiah was speaking about John when he said,
"He is a voice shouting in the wilderness,
'Prepare the way for the Lord's coming!
Clear the road for him!'"

John's clothes were woven from coarse camel hair, and he wore a leather belt around his waist. For food he ate locusts and wild honey. People from Jerusalem and from all of Judea and all over the Jordan Valley went out to see and hear John. And when they confessed their sins, he baptized them in the Jordan River.

But when he saw many Pharisees and Sadducees coming to watch him baptize, he denounced them. "You brood of snakes!" he exclaimed. "Who warned you to flee God's coming wrath? Prove by the way you live that you have repented of your sins and turned to God. Don't just say to each other, 'We're safe, for we are descendants of Abraham.' That means nothing, for I tell you, God can create children of Abraham from these very stones. Even now the ax of God's judgment is poised, ready to sever the roots of the trees. Yes, every tree that does not produce good fruit will be chopped down and thrown into the fire.

"I baptize with water those who repent of their sins and turn to God. But someone is coming soon who is greater than I am—so much greater that I'm not worthy even to be his slave and carry his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire. He is ready to separate the chaff from the wheat with his winnowing fork. Then he will clean up the threshing area, gathering the wheat into his barn but burning the chaff with never-ending fire."

Lord's Prayer:

Our Father in heaven. Let your holiness be revealed
Let your kingdom come. Let your will be done on earth as in heaven
Give us today our daily bread. Erase our debts as we erase the debts of others.
Keep us from temptation and Rescue us from evil.
For kingdom, power and glory belong to you for ever and ever.

Amen.

Morning Psalm: Psalm 5

For the choir director: A psalm of David, to be accompanied by the flute.

O Lord, hear me as I pray;
pay attention to my groaning.
Listen to my cry for help, my King and my God,
for I pray to no one but you.
Listen to my voice in the morning, Lord.
Each morning I bring my requests to you and wait expectantly.

O God, you take no pleasure in wickedness;
you cannot tolerate the sins of the wicked.
Therefore, the proud may not stand in your presence,
for you hate all who do evil.
You will destroy those who tell lies.
The Lord detests murderers and deceivers.

Because of your unfailing love, I can enter your house;
I will worship at your Temple with deepest awe.
Lead me in the right path, O Lord,
or my enemies will conquer me.
Make your way plain for me to follow.

My enemies cannot speak a truthful word.
Their deepest desire is to destroy others.
Their talk is foul, like the stench from an open grave.
Their tongues are filled with flattery.
O God, declare them guilty.
Let them be caught in their own traps.
Drive them away because of their many sins,
for they have rebelled against you.

But let all who take refuge in you rejoice;
let them sing joyful praises forever.
Spread your protection over them,
that all who love your name may be filled with joy.
For you bless the godly, O Lord;
you surround them with your shield of love.

Intercession:

Concluding Prayer: Lord God, Almighty and Everlasting Father, you have brought us in safety to this new day. Preserve us with your mighty power that we may not fall into sin nor be overcome by adversity and in all we do direct us to the fulfilling of your purpose through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Midday

Vow: In a world of shallow living we'll develop habits and rhythms that sustain us in the way of Christ.

Vow Prayer: Almighty Father, we long for your Kingdom where kindness and truth will meet, where justice and peace will kiss. Give our minds wisdom, give our hearts empathy, and give our hands strength as we work on behalf of justice for all, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Evening

Call To Prayer: Our help is in the name of the Lord* The Maker of heaven and earth

Vow: In a world full of injustice, we will work at the grassroots level for visible social change and will be a voice for justice among the world's oppressed.

Scripture Related to the Vow: Psalm 11:7

For the righteous Lord loves justice.
The virtuous will see his face.

Evening Short Reading:

Sir, I say that justice is truth in action.
Benjamin Disraeli

Vow Prayer: Almighty Father, we long for your Kingdom where kindness and truth will meet, where justice and peace will kiss. Give our minds wisdom, give our hearts empathy, and give our hands strength as we work on behalf of justice for all, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Evening Gospel: Matthew 3:13-17

Then Jesus went from Galilee to the Jordan River to be baptized by John. But John tried to talk him out of it. "I am the one who needs to be baptized by you," he said, "so why are you coming to me?"
But Jesus said, "It should be done, for we must carry out all that God requires." So John agreed to baptize him.

After his baptism, as Jesus came up out of the water, the heavens were opened and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and settling on him. And a voice from heaven said, "This is my dearly loved Son, who brings me great joy."

Lord's Prayer:

Our Father in heaven. Let your holiness be revealed
Let your kingdom come. Let your will be done on earth as in heaven
Give us today our daily bread. Erase our debts as we erase the debts of others.
Keep us from temptation and Rescue us from evil.
For kingdom, power and glory belong to you for ever and ever.
Amen.

Evening Psalm: Psalm 6

For the choir director: A psalm of David, to be accompanied by an eight-stringed instrument.
O Lord, don't rebuke me in your anger
or discipline me in your rage.
Have compassion on me, Lord, for I am weak.
Heal me, Lord, for my bones are in agony.
I am sick at heart.

How long, O Lord, until you restore me?

Return, O Lord, and rescue me.

Save me because of your unfailing love.

For the dead do not remember you.

Who can praise you from the grave?

I am worn out from sobbing.

All night I flood my bed with weeping,

drenching it with my tears.

My vision is blurred by grief;

my eyes are worn out because of all my enemies.

Go away, all you who do evil,

for the Lord has heard my weeping.

The Lord has heard my plea;

the Lord will answer my prayer.

May all my enemies be disgraced and terrified.

May they suddenly turn back in shame.

Intercession:

Concluding Prayer: Lord Jesus stay with us, for evening is at hand and the day is past. Be our companion in the way, kindle our hearts and awaken hope, that we may know you as you are revealed in Scripture and the breaking of bread. Grant this for the sake of your love. Amen.

May 4, 2011

Morning

Call To Prayer: In the morning, O Lord, you hear my voice,* In the morning I lay my requests before you and wait in expectation.

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Morning Short Reading:

Every step toward the goal of justice requires sacrifice, suffering, and struggle; the tireless exertions and passionate concern of dedicated individuals.
Martin Luther King, Jr.

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Morning Gospel: Matthew 4:1-11

Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted there by the devil. For forty days and forty nights he fasted and became very hungry.

During that time the devil came and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become loaves of bread."

But Jesus told him, "No! The Scriptures say,

'People do not live by bread alone,
but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.'"

Then the devil took him to the holy city, Jerusalem, to the highest point of the Temple, and said, "If you are the Son of God, jump off! For the Scriptures say,

'He will order his angels to protect you.
And they will hold you up with their hands
so you won't even hurt your foot on a stone.'"

Jesus responded, "The Scriptures also say, 'You must not test the Lord your God.'"

Next the devil took him to the peak of a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. "I will give it all to you," he said, "if you will kneel down and worship me."

"Get out of here, Satan," Jesus told him. "For the Scriptures say,

'You must worship the Lord your God
and serve only him.'"

Then the devil went away, and angels came and took care of Jesus.

Lord's Prayer:

Our Father in heaven. Let your holiness be revealed

Let your kingdom come. Let your will be done on earth as in heaven
Give us today our daily bread. Erase our debts as we erase the debts of others.
Keep us from temptation and Rescue us from evil.
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Amen.

Morning Psalm: Psalm 7

A psalm of David, which he sang to the Lord concerning Cush of the tribe of Benjamin.

I come to you for protection, O Lord my God.
Save me from my persecutors—rescue me!
If you don't, they will maul me like a lion,
tearing me to pieces with no one to rescue me.
O Lord my God, if I have done wrong
or am guilty of injustice,
if I have betrayed a friend
or plundered my enemy without cause,
then let my enemies capture me.
Let them trample me into the ground
and drag my honor in the dust.
Interlude

Arise, O Lord, in anger!
Stand up against the fury of my enemies!
Wake up, my God, and bring justice!
Gather the nations before you.
Rule over them from on high.
The Lord judges the nations.
Declare me righteous, O Lord,
for I am innocent, O Most High!
End the evil of those who are wicked,
and defend the righteous.
For you look deep within the mind and heart,
O righteous God.

God is my shield,
saving those whose hearts are true and right.
God is an honest judge.
He is angry with the wicked every day.

If a person does not repent,
God will sharpen his sword;
he will bend and string his bow.
He will prepare his deadly weapons
and shoot his flaming arrows.

The wicked conceive evil;
they are pregnant with trouble
and give birth to lies.
They dig a deep pit to trap others,
then fall into it themselves.
The trouble they make for others backfires on them.
The violence they plan falls on their own heads.

I will thank the Lord because he is just;
I will sing praise to the name of the Lord Most High.

Intercession:

Concluding Prayer: Lord God, Almighty and Everlasting Father, you have brought us in safety to this new day. Preserve us with your mighty power that we may not fall into sin nor be overcome by adversity and in all we do direct us to the fulfilling of your purpose through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

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Evening Short Reading:

One summer in the village, the people in the town gathered for a picnic. As they leisurely shared food and conversation, someone noticed a baby in the river, struggling and crying. The baby was going to drown! Someone rushed to save the baby. Then, they noticed another screaming baby in the river, and they pulled that baby out. Soon, more babies were seen drowning in the river, and the towns people were pulling them out as fast as they could. It took great effort, and they began to organize their activities in order to save the babies as they came down the river. As everyone else was busy in the rescue efforts to save the babies, two of the townspeople started to run away along the shore of the river.

"Where are you going?" shouted one of the rescuers. "We need you here to help us save these babies!"

"We are going upstream to stop whoever is throwing them in!"

Love is rescuing the babies already in the river. Justice is going upstream to stop whoever is putting babies in the river.

Modern/old parable

Vow Prayer: Almighty Father, we long for your Kingdom where kindness and truth will meet, where justice and peace will kiss. Give our minds wisdom, give our hearts empathy, and give our hands strength as we work on behalf of justice for all, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Evening Gospel: Matthew 4:12-25

When Jesus heard that John had been arrested, he left Judea and returned to Galilee. He went first to Nazareth, then left there and moved to Capernaum, beside the Sea of Galilee, in the region of Zebulun and Naphtali. This fulfilled what God said through the prophet Isaiah “In the land of Zebulun and of Naphtali, beside the sea, beyond the Jordan River, in Galilee where so many Gentiles live, the people who sat in darkness have seen a great light.

And for those who lived in the land where death casts its shadow, a light has shined.”

From then on Jesus began to preach, “Repent of your sins and turn to God, for the Kingdom of Heaven is near.”

One day as Jesus was walking along the shore of the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers—Simon, also called Peter, and Andrew—throwing a net into the water, for they fished for a living. Jesus called out to them, “Come, follow me, and I will show you how to fish for people!” And they left their nets at once and followed him.

A little farther up the shore he saw two other brothers, James and John, sitting in a boat with their father, Zebedee, repairing their nets. And he called them to come, too. They immediately followed him, leaving the boat and their father behind.

Jesus traveled throughout the region of Galilee, teaching in the synagogues and announcing the Good News about the Kingdom. And he healed every kind of disease and illness. News about him spread as far as Syria, and people soon began bringing to him all who were sick. And whatever their sickness or disease, or if they were demon possessed or epileptic or paralyzed—he healed them all. Large crowds followed him wherever he went—people from Galilee, the Ten Towns, Jerusalem, from all over Judea, and from east of the Jordan River.

Lord’s Prayer:

Our Father in heaven. Let your holiness be revealed
Let your kingdom come. Let your will be done on earth as in heaven
Give us today our daily bread. Erase our debts as we erase the debts of others.
Keep us from temptation and Rescue us from evil.
For kingdom, power and glory belong to you for ever and ever.
Amen.

Evening Psalm: Psalm 8

For the choir director: A psalm of David, to be accompanied by a stringed instrument.

O Lord, our Lord, your majestic name fills the earth!

Your glory is higher than the heavens.
You have taught children and infants
to tell of your strength,
silencing your enemies
and all who oppose you.

When I look at the night sky and see the work of your fingers—
the moon and the stars you set in place—
what are mere mortals that you should think about them,
human beings that you should care for them?
Yet you made them only a little lower than God
and crowned them with glory and honor.
You gave them charge of everything you made,
putting all things under their authority—
the flocks and the herds
and all the wild animals,
the birds in the sky, the fish in the sea,
and everything that swims the ocean currents.

O Lord, our Lord, your majestic name fills the earth!

Intercession:

Concluding Prayer: Lord Jesus stay with us, for evening is at hand and the day is past. Be our companion in the way, kindle our hearts and awaken hope, that we may know you as you are revealed in Scripture and the breaking of bread. Grant this for the sake of your love. Amen.

May 5, 2011

Morning

Call To Prayer: In the morning, O Lord, you hear my voice,* In the morning I lay my requests before you and wait in expectation.

Vow: In a world full of injustice, we will work at the grassroots level for visible social change and will be a voice for justice among the world's oppressed.

Scripture Related to the Vow: Psalm 11:7

For the righteous Lord loves justice.
The virtuous will see his face.

Morning Short Reading:

We've got to take back the ideal of justice, we've got to take back this principle of human dignity. We've got to take it back from vengeance, from hatred, we've got to say: look, we're all in this together. We are human beings.
David Kaczynsk

Vow Prayer: Almighty Father, we long for your Kingdom where kindness and truth will meet, where justice and peace will kiss. Give our minds wisdom, give our hearts empathy, and give our hands strength as we work on behalf of justice for all, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Morning Gospel: Matthew 5:1-16

One day as he saw the crowds gathering, Jesus went up on the mountainside and sat down. His disciples gathered around him, and he began to teach them.

“God blesses those who are poor and realize their need for him,
for the Kingdom of Heaven is theirs.
God blesses those who mourn,
for they will be comforted.
God blesses those who are humble,
for they will inherit the whole earth.
God blesses those who hunger and thirst for justice,
for they will be satisfied.
God blesses those who are merciful,
for they will be shown mercy.
God blesses those whose hearts are pure,
for they will see God.
God blesses those who work for peace,
for they will be called the children of God.
God blesses those who are persecuted for doing right,
for the Kingdom of Heaven is theirs.

“God blesses you when people mock you and persecute you and lie about you and say all sorts of evil things against you because you are my followers. Be happy about it! Be very glad! For a great reward awaits you in heaven. And remember, the ancient prophets were persecuted in the same way.

“You are the salt of the earth. But what good is salt if it has lost its flavor? Can you make it salty again? It will be thrown out and trampled underfoot as worthless.

“You are the light of the world—like a city on a hilltop that cannot be hidden. No one lights a lamp and then puts it under a basket. Instead, a lamp is placed on a stand, where it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your good deeds shine out for all to see, so that everyone will praise your heavenly Father.

Lord's Prayer:

Our Father in heaven. Let your holiness be revealed
Let your kingdom come. Let your will be done on earth as in heaven
Give us today our daily bread. Erase our debts as we erase the debts of others.
Keep us from temptation and Rescue us from evil.
For kingdom, power and glory belong to you for ever and ever.
Amen.

Morning Psalm: Psalm 9: 1-10

For the choir director: A psalm of David, to be sung to the tune "Death of the Son."

I will praise you, Lord, with all my heart;
I will tell of all the marvelous things you have done.
I will be filled with joy because of you.
I will sing praises to your name, O Most High.

My enemies retreated;
they staggered and died when you appeared.
For you have judged in my favor;
from your throne you have judged with fairness.
You have rebuked the nations and destroyed the wicked;
you have erased their names forever.
The enemy is finished, in endless ruins;
the cities you uprooted are now forgotten.

But the Lord reigns forever,
executing judgment from his throne.
He will judge the world with justice
and rule the nations with fairness.
The Lord is a shelter for the oppressed,
a refuge in times of trouble.
Those who know your name trust in you,
for you, O Lord, do not abandon those who search for you.

Intercession:

Concluding Prayer: Lord God, Almighty and Everlasting Father, you have brought us in safety to this new day. Preserve us with your mighty power that we may not fall into sin nor be overcome by adversity and in all we do direct us to the fulfilling of your purpose through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Midday

Vow: In a world of shallow living we'll develop habits and rhythms that sustain us in the way of Christ.

Vow Prayer: Almighty Father, we long for your Kingdom where kindness and truth will meet, where justice and peace will kiss. Give our minds wisdom, give our hearts empathy, and give our hands strength as we work on behalf of justice for all, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Evening

Call To Prayer: Our help is in the name of the Lord* The Maker of heaven and earth

Vow: In a world full of injustice, we will work at the grassroots level for visible social change and will be a voice for justice among the world's oppressed.

Scripture Related to the Vow: Psalm 11:7

For the righteous Lord loves justice.
The virtuous will see his face.

Evening Short Reading:

We define Justice simply as acting right in our relationships, as determining how we stand in relation to our world. We desire, based on many deeper beliefs about the world and our role in it, to be always moving toward some point where our actions and our hopes for the world mirror one another. While we recognize that may never occur in our lifetime, this is our strongest belief about the future.

Will & Lisa Samson, *Justice in the Burbs: Being the Hands of Jesus Wherever You Live*

Vow Prayer: Almighty Father, we long for your Kingdom where kindness and truth will meet, where justice and peace will kiss. Give our minds wisdom, give our hearts empathy, and give our hands strength as we work on behalf of justice for all, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Evening Gospel: Matthew 5:17-48

“Don’t misunderstand why I have come. I did not come to abolish the law of Moses or the writings of the prophets. No, I came to accomplish their purpose. I tell you the truth, until heaven and earth disappear, not even the smallest detail of God’s law will disappear until its purpose is achieved. So if you ignore the least commandment and teach others to do the same, you will be called the least in the Kingdom of Heaven. But anyone who obeys God’s laws and teaches them will be called great in the Kingdom of Heaven.

“But I warn you—unless your righteousness is better than the righteousness of the teachers of religious law and the Pharisees, you will never enter the Kingdom of Heaven!

“You have heard that our ancestors were told, ‘You must not murder. If you commit murder, you are subject to judgment.’ But I say, if you are even angry with someone, you are subject to judgment! If you call someone an idiot, you are in danger of being brought before the court. And if you curse someone, you are in danger of the fires of hell.

“So if you are presenting a sacrifice at the altar in the Temple and you suddenly remember that someone has something against you, leave your sacrifice there at the altar. Go and be reconciled to that person. Then come and offer your sacrifice to God.

“When you are on the way to court with your adversary, settle your differences quickly. Otherwise, your accuser may hand you over to the judge, who will hand you over to an officer, and you will be thrown into prison. And if that happens, you surely won’t be free again until you have paid the last penny.

“You have heard the commandment that says, ‘You must not commit adultery.’ But I say, anyone who even looks at a woman with lust has already committed adultery with her in his heart. So if your eye—even your good eye—causes you to lust, gouge it out and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to be thrown into hell. And if your hand—even your stronger hand—causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to be thrown into hell.

“You have heard the law that says, ‘A man can divorce his wife by merely giving her a written notice of divorce.’ But I say that a man who divorces his wife, unless she has been unfaithful,

causes her to commit adultery. And anyone who marries a divorced woman also commits adultery.

“You have also heard that our ancestors were told, ‘You must not break your vows; you must carry out the vows you make to the Lord.’ But I say, do not make any vows! Do not say, ‘By heaven!’ because heaven is God’s throne. And do not say, ‘By the earth!’ because the earth is his footstool. And do not say, ‘By Jerusalem!’ for Jerusalem is the city of the great King. Do not even say, ‘By my head!’ for you can’t turn one hair white or black. Just say a simple, ‘Yes, I will,’ or ‘No, I won’t.’ Anything beyond this is from the evil one.

“You have heard the law that says the punishment must match the injury ‘An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth.’ But I say, do not resist an evil person! If someone slaps you on the right cheek, offer the other cheek also. If you are sued in court and your shirt is taken from you, give your coat, too. If a soldier demands that you carry his gear for a mile, carry it two miles. Give to those who ask, and don’t turn away from those who want to borrow.
Teaching about Love for Enemies

“You have heard the law that says, ‘Love your neighbor’ and hate your enemy. But I say, love your enemies! Pray for those who persecute you! In that way, you will be acting as true children of your Father in heaven. For he gives his sunlight to both the evil and the good, and he sends rain on the just and the unjust alike. If you love only those who love you, what reward is there for that? Even corrupt tax collectors do that much. If you are kind only to your friends, how are you different from anyone else? Even pagans do that. But you are to be perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect.

Lord’s Prayer:

Our Father in heaven. Let your holiness be revealed
Let your kingdom come. Let your will be done on earth as in heaven
Give us today our daily bread. Erase our debts as we erase the debts of others.
Keep us from temptation and Rescue us from evil.
For kingdom, power and glory belong to you for ever and ever.
Amen.

Evening Psalm: Psalm 9: 11-20

Sing praises to the Lord who reigns in Jerusalem.
Tell the world about his unforgettable deeds.
For he who avenges murder cares for the helpless.
He does not ignore the cries of those who suffer.

Lord, have mercy on me.
See how my enemies torment me.
Snatch me back from the jaws of death.
Save me so I can praise you publicly at Jerusalem’s gates,
so I can rejoice that you have rescued me.

The nations have fallen into the pit they dug for others.
Their own feet have been caught in the trap they set.
The Lord is known for his justice.
The wicked are trapped by their own deeds.
Quiet Interlude

The wicked will go down to the grave.
This is the fate of all the nations who ignore God.
But the needy will not be ignored forever;
the hopes of the poor will not always be crushed.

Arise, O Lord!
Do not let mere mortals defy you!
Judge the nations!
Make them tremble in fear, O Lord.
Let the nations know they are merely human.

Interlude

Intercession:

Concluding Prayer: Lord Jesus stay with us, for evening is at hand and the day is past. Be our companion in the way, kindle our hearts and awaken hope, that we may know you as you are revealed in Scripture and the breaking of bread. Grant this for the sake of your love. Amen.

May 6, 2011

Morning

Call To Prayer: In the morning, O Lord, you hear my voice,* In the morning I lay my requests before you and wait in expectation.

Vow: In a world full of injustice, we will work at the grassroots level for visible social change and will be a voice for justice among the world's oppressed.

Scripture Related to the Vow: Psalm 11:7

For the righteous Lord loves justice.
The virtuous will see his face.

Morning Short Reading:

It is not enough merely to publicize a social doctrine. It has to be translated into action...This is particularly true of Christian social doctrine, whose light is truth, whose objective is justice, and whose driving force is love.

Pope John XXIII, *Mater et Magistra*

Vow Prayer: Almighty Father, we long for your Kingdom where kindness and truth will meet, where justice and peace will kiss. Give our minds wisdom, give our hearts empathy, and give our hands strength as we work on behalf of justice for all, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Morning Gospel: Matthew 6:1-18

“Watch out! Don’t do your good deeds publicly, to be admired by others, for you will lose the reward from your Father in heaven. When you give to someone in need, don’t do as the hypocrites do—blowing trumpets in the synagogues and streets to call attention to their acts of charity! I tell you the truth, they have received all the reward they will ever get. But when you give to someone in need, don’t let your left hand know what your right hand is doing. Give your gifts in private, and your Father, who sees everything, will reward you.

“When you pray, don’t be like the hypocrites who love to pray publicly on street corners and in the synagogues where everyone can see them. I tell you the truth, that is all the reward they will ever get. But when you pray, go away by yourself, shut the door behind you, and pray to your Father in private. Then your Father, who sees everything, will reward you.

“When you pray, don’t babble on and on as people of other religions do. They think their prayers are answered merely by repeating their words again and again. Don’t be like them, for your Father knows exactly what you need even before you ask him! Pray like this:

Our Father in heaven,
may your name be kept holy.
May your Kingdom come soon.
May your will be done on earth,
as it is in heaven.
Give us today the food we need,
and forgive us our sins,
as we have forgiven those who sin against us.
And don’t let us yield to temptation,
but rescue us from the evil one.

“If you forgive those who sin against you, your heavenly Father will forgive you. But if you refuse to forgive others, your Father will not forgive your sins.

“And when you fast, don’t make it obvious, as the hypocrites do, for they try to look miserable and disheveled so people will admire them for their fasting. I tell you the truth, that is the only reward they will ever get. But when you fast, comb your hair and wash your face.

Then no one will notice that you are fasting, except your Father, who knows what you do in private. And your Father, who sees everything, will reward you.

Lord's Prayer:

Our Father in heaven. Let your holiness be revealed
Let your kingdom come. Let your will be done on earth as in heaven
Give us today our daily bread. Erase our debts as we erase the debts of others.
Keep us from temptation and Rescue us from evil.
For kingdom, power and glory belong to you for ever and ever.
Amen.

Morning Psalm: Psalm 10

O Lord, why do you stand so far away?
Why do you hide when I am in trouble?
The wicked arrogantly hunt down the poor.
Let them be caught in the evil they plan for others.
For they brag about their evil desires;
they praise the greedy and curse the Lord.

The wicked are too proud to seek God.
They seem to think that God is dead.
Yet they succeed in everything they do.
They do not see your punishment awaiting them.
They sneer at all their enemies.
They think, "Nothing bad will ever happen to us!
We will be free of trouble forever!"

Their mouths are full of cursing, lies, and threats.
Trouble and evil are on the tips of their tongues.
They lurk in ambush in the villages,
waiting to murder innocent people.
They are always searching for helpless victims.
Like lions crouched in hiding,
they wait to pounce on the helpless.
Like hunters they capture the helpless
and drag them away in nets.
Their helpless victims are crushed;
they fall beneath the strength of the wicked.
The wicked think, "God isn't watching us!
He has closed his eyes and won't even see what we do!"

Arise, O Lord!
Punish the wicked, O God!
Do not ignore the helpless!
Why do the wicked get away with despising God?
They think, "God will never call us to account."
But you see the trouble and grief they cause.
You take note of it and punish them.
The helpless put their trust in you.
You defend the orphans.

Break the arms of these wicked, evil people!
Go after them until the last one is destroyed.
The Lord is king forever and ever!
The godless nations will vanish from the land.
Lord, you know the hopes of the helpless.
Surely you will hear their cries and comfort them.
You will bring justice to the orphans and the oppressed,
so mere people can no longer terrify them.

Intercession:

Concluding Prayer: Lord God, Almighty and Everlasting Father, you have brought us in safety to this new day. Preserve us with your mighty power that we may not fall into sin nor be overcome by adversity and in all we do direct us to the fulfilling of your purpose through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Midday

Vow: In a world of shallow living we'll develop habits and rhythms that sustain us in the way of Christ.

Vow Prayer: Almighty Father, we long for your Kingdom where kindness and truth will meet, where justice and peace will kiss. Give our minds wisdom, give our hearts empathy, and give our hands strength as we work on behalf of justice for all, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Evening

Call To Prayer: Our help is in the name of the Lord* The Maker of heaven and earth

Vow: In a world full of injustice, we will work at the grassroots level for visible social change and will be a voice for justice among the world's oppressed.

Scripture Related to the Vow: Psalm 11:7

For the righteous Lord loves justice.
The virtuous will see his face.

Evening Short Reading:

The practice of justice is at the center of God's purpose for human life. It is so closely related to the worship of the living God as the only true God that no act of worship is acceptable to him unless it is accompanied by concrete acts of justice on the human level.
C. Rene Padilla, *The Justice Project*

Vow Prayer: Almighty Father, we long for your Kingdom where kindness and truth will meet, where justice and peace will kiss. Give our minds wisdom, give our hearts empathy, and give our hands strength as we work on behalf of justice for all, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Evening Gospel: Matthew 6:19-34

"Don't store up treasures here on earth, where moths eat them and rust destroys them, and where thieves break in and steal. Store your treasures in heaven, where moths and rust cannot destroy, and thieves do not break in and steal. Wherever your treasure is, there the desires of your heart will also be.

"Your eye is a lamp that provides light for your body. When your eye is good, your whole body is filled with light. But when your eye is bad, your whole body is filled with darkness. And if the light you think you have is actually darkness, how deep that darkness is!

“No one can serve two masters. For you will hate one and love the other; you will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money.

“That is why I tell you not to worry about everyday life—whether you have enough food and drink, or enough clothes to wear. Isn't life more than food, and your body more than clothing? Look at the birds. They don't plant or harvest or store food in barns, for your heavenly Father feeds them. And aren't you far more valuable to him than they are? Can all your worries add a single moment to your life?

“And why worry about your clothing? Look at the lilies of the field and how they grow. They don't work or make their clothing, yet Solomon in all his glory was not dressed as beautifully as they are. And if God cares so wonderfully for wildflowers that are here today and thrown into the fire tomorrow, he will certainly care for you. Why do you have so little faith?

“So don't worry about these things, saying, 'What will we eat? What will we drink? What will we wear?' These things dominate the thoughts of unbelievers, but your heavenly Father already knows all your needs. Seek the Kingdom of God above all else, and live righteously, and he will give you everything you need.

“So don't worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will bring its own worries. Today's trouble is enough for today.

Lord's Prayer:

Our Father in heaven. Let your holiness be revealed
Let your kingdom come. Let your will be done on earth as in heaven
Give us today our daily bread. Erase our debts as we erase the debts of others.
Keep us from temptation and Rescue us from evil.
For kingdom, power and glory belong to you for ever and ever.
Amen.

Evening Psalm: Psalm 11

For the choir director: A psalm of David.

I trust in the Lord for protection.
So why do you say to me,
“Fly like a bird to the mountains for safety!
The wicked are stringing their bows
and fitting their arrows on the bowstrings.
They shoot from the shadows
at those whose hearts are right.
The foundations of law and order have collapsed.
What can the righteous do?”

But the Lord is in his holy Temple;
the Lord still rules from heaven.
He watches everyone closely,
examining every person on earth.
The Lord examines both the righteous and the wicked.
He hates those who love violence.
He will rain down blazing coals and burning sulfur on the wicked,
punishing them with scorching winds.
For the righteous Lord loves justice.
The virtuous will see his face.

Intercession:

Concluding Prayer: Lord Jesus stay with us, for evening is at hand and the day is past. Be our companion in the way, kindle our hearts and awaken hope, that we may know you as you are revealed in Scripture and the breaking of bread. Grant this for the sake of your love. Amen.

May 7, 2011

Morning

Call To Prayer: In the morning, O Lord, you hear my voice,* In the morning I lay my requests before you and wait in expectation.

Vow: In a world full of injustice, we will work at the grassroots level for visible social change and will be a voice for justice among the world's oppressed.

Scripture Related to the Vow: Psalm 11:7

For the righteous Lord loves justice.
The virtuous will see his face.

Morning Short Reading:

The economic prosperity of a people should be measured, not only in terms of its aggregate wealth, but also and much more in terms of the real distribution of wealth according to the norms of justice.

Pope John XXIII, *Mater et Magistra*

Vow Prayer: Almighty Father, we long for your Kingdom where kindness and truth will meet, where justice and peace will kiss. Give our minds wisdom, give our hearts empathy, and give our hands strength as we work on behalf of justice for all, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Morning Gospel: Matthew 7:1-12

“Do not judge others, and you will not be judged. For you will be treated as you treat others. The standard you use in judging is the standard by which you will be judged.

“And why worry about a speck in your friend’s eye when you have a log in your own? How can you think of saying to your friend, ‘Let me help you get rid of that speck in your eye,’ when you can’t see past the log in your own eye? Hypocrite! First get rid of the log in your own eye; then you will see well enough to deal with the speck in your friend’s eye.

“Don’t waste what is holy on people who are unholy. Don’t throw your pearls to pigs! They will trample the pearls, then turn and attack you.

“Keep on asking, and you will receive what you ask for. Keep on seeking, and you will find. Keep on knocking, and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks, receives. Everyone who seeks, finds. And to everyone who knocks, the door will be opened.

“You parents—if your children ask for a loaf of bread, do you give them a stone instead? Or if they ask for a fish, do you give them a snake? Of course not! So if you sinful people know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give good gifts to those who ask him.

“Do to others whatever you would like them to do to you. This is the essence of all that is taught in the law and the prophets.

Lord’s Prayer:

Our Father in heaven. Let your holiness be revealed
Let your kingdom come. Let your will be done on earth as in heaven
Give us today our daily bread. Erase our debts as we erase the debts of others.
Keep us from temptation and Rescue us from evil.
For kingdom, power and glory belong to you for ever and ever.
Amen.

Morning Psalm: Psalm 12

For the choir director: A psalm of David, to be accompanied by an eight-stringed instrument.

Help, O Lord, for the godly are fast disappearing!

The faithful have vanished from the earth!

Neighbors lie to each other,

speaking with flattering lips and deceitful hearts.

May the Lord cut off their flattering lips

and silence their boastful tongues.

They say, "We will lie to our hearts' content.

Our lips are our own—who can stop us?"

The Lord replies, "I have seen violence done to the helpless,

and I have heard the groans of the poor.

Now I will rise up to rescue them,

as they have longed for me to do."

The Lord's promises are pure,

like silver refined in a furnace,

purified seven times over.

Therefore, Lord, we know you will protect the oppressed,

preserving them forever from this lying generation,

even though the wicked strut about,

and evil is praised throughout the land.

Intercession:

Concluding Prayer: Lord God, Almighty and Everlasting Father, you have brought us in safety to this new day. Preserve us with your mighty power that we may not fall into sin nor be overcome by adversity and in all we do direct us to the fulfilling of your purpose through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Midday

Vow: In a world of shallow living we'll develop habits and rhythms that sustain us in the way of Christ.

Vow Prayer: Almighty Father, we long for your Kingdom where kindness and truth will meet, where justice and peace will kiss. Give our minds wisdom, give our hearts empathy, and give our hands strength as we work on behalf of justice for all, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Evening

Call To Prayer: Our help is in the name of the Lord* The Maker of heaven and earth

Vow: In a world full of injustice, we will work at the grassroots level for visible social change and will be a voice for justice among the world's oppressed.

Scripture Related to the Vow: Psalm 11:7

For the righteous Lord loves justice.
The virtuous will see his face.

Evening Short Reading:

Many beautiful Christians working for social change in a range of movements believe we can bring about fundamental change by using power benevolently rather than reworking the power equation. We see ourselves as the good guys who will use our influence for justice — and perhaps, in these terms, we succeed in getting our candidate on the ballot or elected. But the Christ we follow has a different, harder path—one of downward mobility, of struggling to become the least, of joining those at the bottom.”

Shane Claiborne, *Downward Mobility in an Upscale World*

Vow Prayer: Almighty Father, we long for your Kingdom where kindness and truth will meet, where justice and peace will kiss. Give our minds wisdom, give our hearts empathy, and give our hands strength as we work on behalf of justice for all, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Evening Gospel: Matthew 7:13-29

“You can enter God’s Kingdom only through the narrow gate. The highway to hell is broad, and its gate is wide for the many who choose that way. But the gateway to life is very narrow and the road is difficult, and only a few ever find it.

“Beware of false prophets who come disguised as harmless sheep but are really vicious wolves. You can identify them by their fruit, that is, by the way they act. Can you pick grapes from thorn-bushes, or figs from thistles? A good tree produces good fruit, and a bad tree produces bad fruit. A good tree can’t produce bad fruit, and a bad tree can’t produce good fruit. So every tree that does not produce good fruit is chopped down and thrown into the fire. Yes, just as you can identify a tree by its fruit, so you can identify people by their actions.

“Not everyone who calls out to me, ‘Lord! Lord!’ will enter the Kingdom of Heaven. Only those who actually do the will of my Father in heaven will enter. On judgment day many will say to me, ‘Lord! Lord! We prophesied in your name and cast out demons in your name and performed many miracles in your name.’ But I will reply, ‘I never knew you. Get away from me, you who break God’s laws.’

“Anyone who listens to my teaching and follows it is wise, like a person who builds a house on solid rock. Though the rain comes in torrents and the floodwaters rise and the winds beat against that house, it won’t collapse because it is built on bedrock. But anyone who hears my teaching and doesn’t obey it is foolish, like a person who builds a house on sand. When the rains and floods come and the winds beat against that house, it will collapse with a mighty crash.”

When Jesus had finished saying these things, the crowds were amazed at his teaching, for he taught with real authority—quite unlike their teachers of religious law.

Lord’s Prayer:

Our Father in heaven. Let your holiness be revealed
Let your kingdom come. Let your will be done on earth as in heaven
Give us today our daily bread. Erase our debts as we erase the debts of others.
Keep us from temptation and Rescue us from evil.
For kingdom, power and glory belong to you for ever and ever.
Amen.

Evening Psalm: Psalm 13

For the choir director: A psalm of David.

O Lord, how long will you forget me? Forever?
How long will you look the other way?
How long must I struggle with anguish in my soul,
with sorrow in my heart every day?

How long will my enemy have the upper hand?

Turn and answer me, O Lord my God!

Restore the sparkle to my eyes, or I will die.

Don't let my enemies gloat, saying, "We have defeated him!"

Don't let them rejoice at my downfall.

But I trust in your unfailing love.

I will rejoice because you have rescued me.

I will sing to the Lord

because he is good to me.

Intercession:

Concluding Prayer: Lord Jesus stay with us, for evening is at hand and the day is past. Be our companion in the way, kindle our hearts and awaken hope, that we may know you as you are revealed in Scripture and the breaking of bread. Grant this for the sake of your love. Amen.

May 8, 2011

Morning

Call To Prayer: In the morning, O Lord, you hear my voice,* In the morning I lay my requests before you and wait in expectation.

Vow: In a world full of injustice, we will work at the grassroots level for visible social change and will be a voice for justice among the world's oppressed.

Scripture Related to the Vow: Leviticus 19:33-34

Do not take advantage of foreigners who live among you in your land. Treat them like native-born Israelites, and love them as you love yourself. Remember that you were once foreigners living in the land of Egypt. I am the Lord your God.

Morning Short Reading:

National wealth should be measured according to the degree in which it guarantees the personal development of all the members of society.

Pope John XXIII, *Mater et Magistra*

Vow Prayer: Almighty Father, we long for your Kingdom where kindness and truth will meet, where justice and peace will kiss. Give our minds wisdom, give our hearts empathy, and give our hands strength as we work on behalf of justice for all, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Morning Gospel: Matthew 8:1-17

Large crowds followed Jesus as he came down the mountainside. Suddenly, a man with leprosy approached him and knelt before him. "Lord," the man said, "if you are willing, you can heal me and make me clean."

Jesus reached out and touched him. "I am willing," he said. "Be healed!" And instantly the leprosy disappeared. Then Jesus said to him, "Don't tell anyone about this. Instead, go to the priest and let him examine you. Take along the offering required in the law of Moses for those who have been healed of leprosy. This will be a public testimony that you have been cleansed."

When Jesus returned to Capernaum, a Roman officer came and pleaded with him, "Lord, my young servant lies in bed, paralyzed and in terrible pain."

Jesus said, "I will come and heal him."

But the officer said, "Lord, I am not worthy to have you come into my home. Just say the word from where you are, and my servant will be healed. I know this because I am under the authority of my superior officers, and I have authority over my soldiers. I only need to say, 'Go,' and they go, or 'Come,' and they come. And if I say to my slaves, 'Do this,' they do it."

When Jesus heard this, he was amazed. Turning to those who were following him, he said, "I tell you the truth, I haven't seen faith like this in all Israel! And I tell you this, that many Gentiles will come from all over the world—from east and west—and sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob at the feast in the Kingdom of Heaven. But many Israelites—those for whom the Kingdom was prepared—will be thrown into outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

Then Jesus said to the Roman officer, "Go back home. Because you believed, it has happened." And the young servant was healed that same hour.

When Jesus arrived at Peter's house, Peter's mother-in-law was sick in bed with a high fever. But when Jesus touched her hand, the fever left her. Then she got up and prepared a meal for him.

That evening many demon-possessed people were brought to Jesus. He cast out the evil spirits with a simple command, and he healed all the sick. This fulfilled the word of the Lord through the prophet Isaiah, who said,

“He took our sicknesses
and removed our diseases.”

Lord’s Prayer:

Our Father in heaven. Let your holiness be revealed
Let your kingdom come. Let your will be done on earth as in heaven
Give us today our daily bread. Erase our debts as we erase the debts of others.
Keep us from temptation and Rescue us from evil.
For kingdom, power and glory belong to you for ever and ever.
Amen.

Morning Psalm: Psalm 14

For the choir director: A psalm of David.
Only fools say in their hearts,
“There is no God.”
They are corrupt, and their actions are evil;
not one of them does good!

The Lord looks down from heaven
on the entire human race;
he looks to see if anyone is truly wise,
if anyone seeks God.
But no, all have turned away;
all have become corrupt.
No one does good,
not a single one!

Will those who do evil never learn?
They eat up my people like bread
and wouldn’t think of praying to the Lord.
Terror will grip them,
for God is with those who obey him.
The wicked frustrate the plans of the oppressed,
but the Lord will protect his people.

Who will come from Mount Zion to rescue Israel?
When the Lord restores his people,
Jacob will shout with joy, and Israel will rejoice.

Intercession:

Concluding Prayer: Lord God, Almighty and Everlasting Father, you have brought us in safety to this new day. Preserve us with your mighty power that we may not fall into sin nor be overcome by adversity and in all we do direct us to the fulfilling of your purpose through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Midday

Vow: In a world of shallow living we'll develop habits and rhythms that sustain us in the way of Christ.

Vow Prayer: Almighty Father, we long for your Kingdom where kindness and truth will meet, where justice and peace will kiss. Give our minds wisdom, give our hearts empathy, and give our hands strength as we work on behalf of justice for all, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Evening

Call To Prayer: Our help is in the name of the Lord* The Maker of heaven and earth

Vow: In a world full of injustice, we will work at the grassroots level for visible social change and will be a voice for justice among the world's oppressed.

Scripture Related to the Vow: Leviticus 19:33-34

Do not take advantage of foreigners who live among you in your land. Treat them like native-born Israelites, and love them as you love yourself. Remember that you were once foreigners living in the land of Egypt. I am the Lord your God.

Evening Short Reading:

Ultimately, only this radical love of Jesus can end the poverty-wealth dichotomy. When the rich meet the poor, together they will end wealth. When the poor meet the rich, together they will end poverty. People do not get crucified for charity. People are crucified for living out a love that disrupts the social order, that calls forth a new world. People are not crucified for helping poor people. People are crucified for joining them. "

Shane Claiborne, *Downward Mobility in an Upscale World*

Vow Prayer: Almighty Father, we long for your Kingdom where kindness and truth will meet, where justice and peace will kiss. Give our minds wisdom, give our hearts empathy, and give our hands strength as we work on behalf of justice for all, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Evening Gospel: Matthew 8:18-34

When Jesus saw the crowd around him, he instructed his disciples to cross to the other side of the lake.

Then one of the teachers of religious law said to him, "Teacher, I will follow you wherever you go."

But Jesus replied, "Foxes have dens to live in, and birds have nests, but the Son of Man has no place even to lay his head."

Another of his disciples said, "Lord, first let me return home and bury my father."

But Jesus told him, "Follow me now. Let the spiritually dead bury their own dead."

Then Jesus got into the boat and started across the lake with his disciples. Suddenly, a fierce storm struck the lake, with waves breaking into the boat. But Jesus was sleeping. The disciples went and woke him up, shouting, "Lord, save us! We're going to drown!"

Jesus responded, "Why are you afraid? You have so little faith!" Then he got up and rebuked the wind and waves, and suddenly there was a great calm.

The disciples were amazed. “Who is this man?” they asked. “Even the winds and waves obey him!”

When Jesus arrived on the other side of the lake, in the region of the Gadarenes, two men who were possessed by demons met him. They lived in a cemetery and were so violent that no one could go through that area.

They began screaming at him, “Why are you interfering with us, Son of God? Have you come here to torture us before God’s appointed time?”

There happened to be a large herd of pigs feeding in the distance. So the demons begged, “If you cast us out, send us into that herd of pigs.”

“All right, go!” Jesus commanded them. So the demons came out of the men and entered the pigs, and the whole herd plunged down the steep hillside into the lake and drowned in the water.

The herdsmen fled to the nearby town, telling everyone what happened to the demon-possessed men. Then the entire town came out to meet Jesus, but they begged him to go away and leave them alone.

Lord’s Prayer:

Our Father in heaven. Let your holiness be revealed
Let your kingdom come. Let your will be done on earth as in heaven
Give us today our daily bread. Erase our debts as we erase the debts of others.
Keep us from temptation and Rescue us from evil.
For kingdom, power and glory belong to you for ever and ever.
Amen.

Evening Psalm: Psalm 15

A psalm of David.

Who may worship in your sanctuary, Lord?
Who may enter your presence on your holy hill?
Those who lead blameless lives and do what is right,
speaking the truth from sincere hearts.
Those who refuse to gossip
or harm their neighbors
or speak evil of their friends.
Those who despise flagrant sinners,
and honor the faithful followers of the Lord,
and keep their promises even when it hurts.
Those who lend money without charging interest,
and who cannot be bribed to lie about the innocent.
Such people will stand firm forever.

Intercession:

Concluding Prayer: Lord Jesus stay with us, for evening is at hand and the day is past. Be our companion in the way, kindle our hearts and awaken hope, that we may know you as you are revealed in Scripture and the breaking of bread. Grant this for the sake of your love. Amen.

May 9, 2011

Morning

Call To Prayer: In the morning, O Lord, you hear my voice,* In the morning I lay my requests before you and wait in expectation.

Vow: In a world full of injustice, we will work at the grassroots level for visible social change and will be a voice for justice among the world's oppressed.

Scripture Related to the Vow: Leviticus 19:33-34

Do not take advantage of foreigners who live among you in your land. Treat them like native-born Israelites, and love them as you love yourself. Remember that you were once foreigners living in the land of Egypt. I am the Lord your God.

Morning Short Reading:

After the old trade guilds had been destroyed in the last century, and no protection was substituted in their place, and when public institutions and legislation had cast off traditional religious teaching, it gradually came about that the present age handed over the workers, each alone and defenseless, to the inhumanity of employers and the unbridled greed of competitors...The whole process of production, as well as trade in every kind of goods, has been brought almost entirely under the power of a few, so that a very few rich and exceedingly rich men have laid a yoke almost of slavery on the unnumbered masses of non-owning workers.

Pope Leo XIII, *Rerum Novarum*

Vow Prayer: Almighty Father, we long for your Kingdom where kindness and truth will meet, where justice and peace will kiss. Give our minds wisdom, give our hearts empathy, and give our hands strength as we work on behalf of justice for all, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Morning Gospel: Matthew 9:1-17

Jesus climbed into a boat and went back across the lake to his own town. Some people brought to him a paralyzed man on a mat. Seeing their faith, Jesus said to the paralyzed man, "Be encouraged, my child! Your sins are forgiven."

But some of the teachers of religious law said to themselves, "That's blasphemy! Does he think he's God?"

Jesus knew what they were thinking, so he asked them, "Why do you have such evil thoughts in your hearts? Is it easier to say 'Your sins are forgiven,' or 'Stand up and walk'? So I will prove to you that the Son of Man has the authority on earth to forgive sins." Then Jesus turned to the paralyzed man and said, "Stand up, pick up your mat, and go home!"

And the man jumped up and went home! Fear swept through the crowd as they saw this happen. And they praised God for sending a man with such great authority.

As Jesus was walking along, he saw a man named Matthew sitting at his tax collector's booth. "Follow me and be my disciple," Jesus said to him. So Matthew got up and followed him.

Later, Matthew invited Jesus and his disciples to his home as dinner guests, along with many tax collectors and other disreputable sinners. But when the Pharisees saw this, they asked his disciples, "Why does your teacher eat with such scum?"

When Jesus heard this, he said, "Healthy people don't need a doctor—sick people do." Then he added, "Now go and learn the meaning of this Scripture 'I want you to show mercy, not offer sacrifices.' For I have come to call not those who think they are righteous, but those who know they are sinners."

One day the disciples of John the Baptist came to Jesus and asked him, "Why don't your disciples fast like we do and the Pharisees do?"

Jesus replied, "Do wedding guests mourn while celebrating with the groom? Of course not. But someday the groom will be taken away from them, and then they will fast."

“Besides, who would patch old clothing with new cloth? For the new patch would shrink and rip away from the old cloth, leaving an even bigger tear than before.

“And no one puts new wine into old wineskins. For the old skins would burst from the pressure, spilling the wine and ruining the skins. New wine is stored in new wineskins so that both are preserved.”

Lord's Prayer:

Our Father in heaven. Let your holiness be revealed
Let your kingdom come. Let your will be done on earth as in heaven
Give us today our daily bread. Erase our debts as we erase the debts of others.
Keep us from temptation and Rescue us from evil.
For kingdom, power and glory belong to you for ever and ever.
Amen.

Morning Psalm: Psalm 16

A psalm of David.

Who may worship in your sanctuary, Lord?
Who may enter your presence on your holy hill?
Those who lead blameless lives and do what is right,
speaking the truth from sincere hearts.
Those who refuse to gossip
or harm their neighbors
or speak evil of their friends.
Those who despise flagrant sinners,
and honor the faithful followers of the Lord,
and keep their promises even when it hurts.
Those who lend money without charging interest,
and who cannot be bribed to lie about the innocent.
Such people will stand firm forever.

Intercession:

Concluding Prayer: Lord God, Almighty and Everlasting Father, you have brought us in safety to this new day. Preserve us with your mighty power that we may not fall into sin nor be overcome by adversity and in all we do direct us to the fulfilling of your purpose through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Midday

Vow: In a world of shallow living we'll develop habits and rhythms that sustain us in the way of Christ.

Vow Prayer: Almighty Father, we long for your Kingdom where kindness and truth will meet, where justice and peace will kiss. Give our minds wisdom, give our hearts empathy, and give our hands strength as we work on behalf of justice for all, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Evening

Call To Prayer: Our help is in the name of the Lord* The Maker of heaven and earth

Vow: In a world full of injustice, we will work at the grassroots level for visible social change and will be a voice for justice among the world's oppressed.

Scripture Related to the Vow: Leviticus 19:33-34

Do not take advantage of foreigners who live among you in your land. Treat them like native-born Israelites, and love them as you love yourself. Remember that you were once foreigners living in the land of Egypt. I am the Lord your God.

Evening Short Reading:

Of particular concern are those most likely to be treated unjustly, namely, the voiceless, the powerless, the homeless. And while this concern is appropriately and most often directed to humans, it also includes those nonhuman creatures whose voices remain silent to human ears. From this theological theme derives the ethical principle of equity. Equity is a kind of justice. More precisely, it denotes a type of distributive justice that allocates goods not according to the market, merit, or even equality but according to basic fairness in conjunction with need. Steven Bouma-Prediger, *For The Beauty of the Earth: a Christian Vision for Creation Care*

Vow Prayer: Almighty Father, we long for your Kingdom where kindness and truth will meet, where justice and peace will kiss. Give our minds wisdom, give our hearts empathy, and give our hands strength as we work on behalf of justice for all, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Evening Gospel: Matthew 9:18-38

As Jesus was saying this, the leader of a synagogue came and knelt before him. "My daughter has just died," he said, "but you can bring her back to life again if you just come and lay your hand on her."

So Jesus and his disciples got up and went with him. Just then a woman who had suffered for twelve years with constant bleeding came up behind him. She touched the fringe of his robe, for she thought, "If I can just touch his robe, I will be healed."

Jesus turned around, and when he saw her he said, "Daughter, be encouraged! Your faith has made you well." And the woman was healed at that moment.

When Jesus arrived at the official's home, he saw the noisy crowd and heard the funeral music. "Get out!" he told them. "The girl isn't dead; she's only asleep." But the crowd laughed at him. After the crowd was put outside, however, Jesus went in and took the girl by the hand, and she stood up! The report of this miracle swept through the entire countryside.

After Jesus left the girl's home, two blind men followed along behind him, shouting, "Son of David, have mercy on us!"

They went right into the house where he was staying, and Jesus asked them, "Do you believe I can make you see?"

"Yes, Lord," they told him, "we do."

Then he touched their eyes and said, "Because of your faith, it will happen." Then their eyes were opened, and they could see! Jesus sternly warned them, "Don't tell anyone about this." But instead, they went out and spread his fame all over the region.

When they left, a demon-possessed man who couldn't speak was brought to Jesus. So Jesus cast out the demon, and then the man began to speak. The crowds were amazed. "Nothing like this has ever happened in Israel!" they exclaimed.

But the Pharisees said, "He can cast out demons because he is empowered by the prince of demons."

Jesus traveled through all the towns and villages of that area, teaching in the synagogues and announcing the Good News about the Kingdom. And he healed every kind of disease and illness. When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them because they were confused and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. He said to his disciples, "The harvest is great, but the workers are few. So pray to the Lord who is in charge of the harvest; ask him to send more workers into his fields."

Lord's Prayer:

Our Father in heaven. Let your holiness be revealed
Let your kingdom come. Let your will be done on earth as in heaven
Give us today our daily bread. Erase our debts as we erase the debts of others.
Keep us from temptation and Rescue us from evil.
For kingdom, power and glory belong to you for ever and ever.
Amen.

Evening Psalm: Psalm 17

A prayer of David.

O Lord, hear my plea for justice.
Listen to my cry for help.
Pay attention to my prayer,
for it comes from honest lips.
Declare me innocent,
for you see those who do right.

You have tested my thoughts and examined my heart in the night.
You have scrutinized me and found nothing wrong.
I am determined not to sin in what I say.
I have followed your commands,
which keep me from following cruel and evil people.
My steps have stayed on your path;
I have not wavered from following you.

I am praying to you because I know you will answer, O God.
Bend down and listen as I pray.
Show me your unfailing love in wonderful ways.
By your mighty power you rescue
those who seek refuge from their enemies.
Guard me as you would guard your own eyes.
Hide me in the shadow of your wings.
Protect me from wicked people who attack me,
from murderous enemies who surround me.
They are without pity.
Listen to their boasting!
They track me down and surround me,
watching for the chance to throw me to the ground.
They are like hungry lions, eager to tear me apart—
like young lions hiding in ambush.

Arise, O Lord!
Stand against them, and bring them to their knees!
Rescue me from the wicked with your sword!
By the power of your hand, O Lord,
destroy those who look to this world for their reward.
But satisfy the hunger of your treasured ones.

May their children have plenty,
leaving an inheritance for their descendants.
Because I am righteous, I will see you.
When I awake, I will see you face to face and be satisfied.

Intercession:

Concluding Prayer: Lord Jesus stay with us, for evening is at hand and the day is past. Be our companion in the way, kindle our hearts and awaken hope, that we may know you as you are revealed in Scripture and the breaking of bread. Grant this for the sake of your love. Amen.

May 10, 2011

Morning

Call To Prayer: In the morning, O Lord, you hear my voice,* In the morning I lay my requests before you and wait in expectation.

Vow: In a world full of injustice, we will work at the grassroots level for visible social change and will be a voice for justice among the world's oppressed.

Scripture Related to the Vow: Leviticus 19:33-34

Do not take advantage of foreigners who live among you in your land. Treat them like native-born Israelites, and love them as you love yourself. Remember that you were once foreigners living in the land of Egypt. I am the Lord your God.

Morning Short Reading:

The world is more malleable than you think. You can wrestle it from fools.
Bono

Vow Prayer: Almighty Father, we long for your Kingdom where kindness and truth will meet, where justice and peace will kiss. Give our minds wisdom, give our hearts empathy, and give our hands strength as we work on behalf of justice for all, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Morning Gospel: Matthew 10:1-20

Jesus called his twelve disciples together and gave them authority to cast out evil spirits and to heal every kind of disease and illness. Here are the names of the twelve apostles
first, Simon (also called Peter),
then Andrew (Peter's brother),
James (son of Zebedee),
John (James's brother),
Philip,
Bartholomew,
Thomas,
Matthew (the tax collector),
James (son of Alphaeus),
Thaddaeus,
Simon (the zealot),
Judas Iscariot (who later betrayed him).

Jesus sent out the twelve apostles with these instructions "Don't go to the Gentiles or the Samaritans, but only to the people of Israel—God's lost sheep. Go and announce to them that the Kingdom of Heaven is near. Heal the sick, raise the dead, cure those with leprosy, and cast out demons. Give as freely as you have received!

"Don't take any money in your money belts—no gold, silver, or even copper coins. Don't carry a traveler's bag with a change of clothes and sandals or even a walking stick. Don't hesitate to accept hospitality, because those who work deserve to be fed.

"Whenever you enter a city or village, search for a worthy person and stay in his home until you leave town. When you enter the home, give it your blessing. If it turns out to be a worthy home, let your blessing stand; if it is not, take back the blessing. If any household or town refuses to welcome you or listen to your message, shake its dust from your feet as you leave. I tell you the truth, the wicked cities of Sodom and Gomorrah will be better off than such a town on the judgment day.

“Look, I am sending you out as sheep among wolves. So be as shrewd as snakes and harmless as doves. But beware! For you will be handed over to the courts and will be flogged with whips in the synagogues. You will stand trial before governors and kings because you are my followers. But this will be your opportunity to tell the rulers and other unbelievers about me. When you are arrested, don’t worry about how to respond or what to say. God will give you the right words at the right time. For it is not you who will be speaking—it will be the Spirit of your Father speaking through you.

Lord’s Prayer:

Our Father in heaven. Let your holiness be revealed
Let your kingdom come. Let your will be done on earth as in heaven
Give us today our daily bread. Erase our debts as we erase the debts of others.
Keep us from temptation and Rescue us from evil.
For kingdom, power and glory belong to you for ever and ever.
Amen.

Morning Psalm: Psalm 18: 1-11

For the choir director: A psalm of David, the servant of the Lord. He sang this song to the Lord on the day the Lord rescued him from all his enemies and from Saul. He sang:

I love you, Lord;
you are my strength.
The Lord is my rock, my fortress, and my savior;
my God is my rock, in whom I find protection.
He is my shield, the power that saves me,
and my place of safety.
I called on the Lord, who is worthy of praise,
and he saved me from my enemies.

The ropes of death entangled me;
floods of destruction swept over me.
The grave wrapped its ropes around me;
death laid a trap in my path.
But in my distress I cried out to the Lord;
yes, I prayed to my God for help.
He heard me from his sanctuary;
my cry to him reached his ears.

Then the earth quaked and trembled.
The foundations of the mountains shook;
they quaked because of his anger.
Smoke poured from his nostrils;
fierce flames leaped from his mouth.
Glowing coals blazed forth from him.
He opened the heavens and came down;
dark storm clouds were beneath his feet.
Mounted on a mighty angelic being, he flew,
soaring on the wings of the wind.
He shrouded himself in darkness,
veiling his approach with dark rain clouds.

Intercession:

Concluding Prayer: Lord God, Almighty and Everlasting Father, you have brought us in safety to this new day. Preserve us with your mighty power that we may not fall into sin nor be

overcome by adversity and in all we do direct us to the fulfilling of your purpose through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Midday

Vow: In a world of shallow living we'll develop habits and rhythms that sustain us in the way of Christ.

Vow Prayer: Almighty Father, we long for your Kingdom where kindness and truth will meet, where justice and peace will kiss. Give our minds wisdom, give our hearts empathy, and give our hands strength as we work on behalf of justice for all, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Evening

Call To Prayer: Our help is in the name of the Lord* The Maker of heaven and earth

Vow: In a world full of injustice, we will work at the grassroots level for visible social change and will be a voice for justice among the world's oppressed.

Scripture Related to the Vow: Leviticus 19:33-34

Do not take advantage of foreigners who live among you in your land. Treat them like native-born Israelites, and love them as you love yourself. Remember that you were once foreigners living in the land of Egypt. I am the Lord your God.

Evening Short Reading:

If you want to make peace with your enemy, you have to work with your enemy. Then he becomes your partner.
Nelson Mandela

Vow Prayer: Almighty Father, we long for your Kingdom where kindness and truth will meet, where justice and peace will kiss. Give our minds wisdom, give our hearts empathy, and give our hands strength as we work on behalf of justice for all, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Evening Gospel: Matthew 10:21-42

"A brother will betray his brother to death, a father will betray his own child, and children will rebel against their parents and cause them to be killed. And all nations will hate you because you are my followers. But everyone who endures to the end will be saved. When you are persecuted in one town, flee to the next. I tell you the truth, the Son of Man will return before you have reached all the towns of Israel.

"Students are not greater than their teacher, and slaves are not greater than their master. Students are to be like their teacher, and slaves are to be like their master. And since I, the master of the household, have been called the prince of demons, the members of my household will be called by even worse names!

"But don't be afraid of those who threaten you. For the time is coming when everything that is covered will be revealed, and all that is secret will be made known to all. What I tell you now in the darkness, shout abroad when daybreak comes. What I whisper in your ear, shout from the housetops for all to hear!

“Don’t be afraid of those who want to kill your body; they cannot touch your soul. Fear only God, who can destroy both soul and body in hell. What is the price of two sparrows—one copper coin? But not a single sparrow can fall to the ground without your Father knowing it. And the very hairs on your head are all numbered. So don’t be afraid; you are more valuable to God than a whole flock of sparrows.

“Everyone who acknowledges me publicly here on earth, I will also acknowledge before my Father in heaven. But everyone who denies me here on earth, I will also deny before my Father in heaven.

“Don’t imagine that I came to bring peace to the earth! I came not to bring peace, but a sword.

‘I have come to set a man against his father,
a daughter against her mother,
and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law.
Your enemies will be right in your own household!’

“If you love your father or mother more than you love me, you are not worthy of being mine; or if you love your son or daughter more than me, you are not worthy of being mine. If you refuse to take up your cross and follow me, you are not worthy of being mine. If you cling to your life, you will lose it; but if you give up your life for me, you will find it.

“Anyone who receives you receives me, and anyone who receives me receives the Father who sent me. If you receive a prophet as one who speaks for God, you will be given the same reward as a prophet. And if you receive righteous people because of their righteousness, you will be given a reward like theirs. And if you give even a cup of cold water to one of the least of my followers, you will surely be rewarded.”

Lord’s Prayer:

Our Father in heaven. Let your holiness be revealed
Let your kingdom come. Let your will be done on earth as in heaven
Give us today our daily bread. Erase our debts as we erase the debts of others.
Keep us from temptation and Rescue us from evil.
For kingdom, power and glory belong to you for ever and ever.
Amen.

Evening Psalm: Psalm 18:12-26

Thick clouds shielded the brightness around him
and rained down hail and burning coals.
The Lord thundered from heaven;
the voice of the Most High resounded
amid the hail and burning coals.
He shot his arrows and scattered his enemies;
his lightning flashed, and they were greatly confused.
Then at your command, O Lord,
at the blast of your breath,
the bottom of the sea could be seen,
and the foundations of the earth were laid bare.

He reached down from heaven and rescued me;
he drew me out of deep waters.
He rescued me from my powerful enemies,
from those who hated me and were too strong for me.
They attacked me at a moment when I was in distress,
but the Lord supported me.
He led me to a place of safety;
he rescued me because he delights in me.
The Lord rewarded me for doing right;
he restored me because of my innocence.
For I have kept the ways of the Lord;
I have not turned from my God to follow evil.

I have followed all his regulations;
I have never abandoned his decrees.
I am blameless before God;
I have kept myself from sin.
The Lord rewarded me for doing right.
He has seen my innocence.

To the faithful you show yourself faithful;
to those with integrity you show integrity.
To the pure you show yourself pure,
but to the wicked you show yourself hostile.

Intercession:

Concluding Prayer: Lord Jesus stay with us, for evening is at hand and the day is past. Be our companion in the way, kindle our hearts and awaken hope, that we may know you as you are revealed in Scripture and the breaking of bread. Grant this for the sake of your love. Amen.

May 11, 2011

Morning

Call To Prayer: In the morning, O Lord, you hear my voice,* In the morning I lay my requests before you and wait in expectation.

Vow: In a world full of injustice, we will work at the grassroots level for visible social change and will be a voice for justice among the world's oppressed.

Scripture Related to the Vow: Leviticus 19:33-34

Do not take advantage of foreigners who live among you in your land. Treat them like native-born Israelites, and love them as you love yourself. Remember that you were once foreigners living in the land of Egypt. I am the Lord your God.

Morning Short Reading:

Justice is to be observed not only in the distribution of wealth resulting from production, but also with respect to the conditions under which production takes place. For there is an innate demand in human nature that when men engage in production they should have the opportunity of exercising responsibility and of perfecting their personalities.

Pope John XXIII, *Mater et Magistra*

Vow Prayer: Almighty Father, we long for your Kingdom where kindness and truth will meet, where justice and peace will kiss. Give our minds wisdom, give our hearts empathy, and give our hands strength as we work on behalf of justice for all, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Morning Gospel: Matthew 11:1-15

When Jesus had finished giving these instructions to his twelve disciples, he went out to teach and preach in towns throughout the region.

John the Baptist, who was in prison, heard about all the things the Messiah was doing. So he sent his disciples to ask Jesus, "Are you the Messiah we've been expecting, or should we keep looking for someone else?"

Jesus told them, "Go back to John and tell him what you have heard and seen— the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cured, the deaf hear, the dead are raised to life, and the Good News is being preached to the poor. And tell him, 'God blesses those who do not turn away because of me.'"

As John's disciples were leaving, Jesus began talking about him to the crowds. "What kind of man did you go into the wilderness to see? Was he a weak reed, swayed by every breath of wind? Or were you expecting to see a man dressed in expensive clothes? No, people with expensive clothes live in palaces. Were you looking for a prophet? Yes, and he is more than a prophet. John is the man to whom the Scriptures refer when they say,

'Look, I am sending my messenger ahead of you,
and he will prepare your way before you.'

"I tell you the truth, of all who have ever lived, none is greater than John the Baptist. Yet even the least person in the Kingdom of Heaven is greater than he is! And from the time John the Baptist began preaching until now, the Kingdom of Heaven has been forcefully advancing, and violent people are attacking it. For before John came, all the prophets and the law of Moses looked forward to this present time. And if you are willing to accept what I say, he is Elijah, the one the prophets said would come. Anyone with ears to hear should listen and understand!

Lord's Prayer:

Our Father in heaven. Let your holiness be revealed
Let your kingdom come. Let your will be done on earth as in heaven
Give us today our daily bread. Erase our debts as we erase the debts of others.
Keep us from temptation and Rescue us from evil.
For kingdom, power and glory belong to you for ever and ever.
Amen.

Morning Psalm: Psalm 18: 27-39

You rescue the humble,
but you humiliate the proud.
You light a lamp for me.
The Lord, my God, lights up my darkness.
In your strength I can crush an army;
with my God I can scale any wall.

God's way is perfect.
All the Lord's promises prove true.
He is a shield for all who look to him for protection.
For who is God except the Lord?
Who but our God is a solid rock?
God arms me with strength,
and he makes my way perfect.
He makes me as surefooted as a deer,
enabling me to stand on mountain heights.
He trains my hands for battle;
he strengthens my arm to draw a bronze bow.
You have given me your shield of victory.
Your right hand supports me;
your help has made me great.
You have made a wide path for my feet
to keep them from slipping.

I chased my enemies and caught them;
I did not stop until they were conquered.
I struck them down so they could not get up;
they fell beneath my feet.
You have armed me with strength for the battle;
you have subdued my enemies under my feet.

Intercession:

Concluding Prayer: Lord God, Almighty and Everlasting Father, you have brought us in safety to this new day. Preserve us with your mighty power that we may not fall into sin nor be overcome by adversity and in all we do direct us to the fulfilling of your purpose through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Midday

Vow: In a world of shallow living we'll develop habits and rhythms that sustain us in the way of Christ.

Vow Prayer: Almighty Father, we long for your Kingdom where kindness and truth will meet, where justice and peace will kiss. Give our minds wisdom, give our hearts empathy, and give our hands strength as we work on behalf of justice for all, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Evening

Call To Prayer: Our help is in the name of the Lord* The Maker of heaven and earth

Vow: In a world full of injustice, we will work at the grassroots level for visible social change and will be a voice for justice among the world's oppressed.

Scripture Related to the Vow: Leviticus 19:33-34

Do not take advantage of foreigners who live among you in your land. Treat them like native-born Israelites, and love them as you love yourself. Remember that you were once foreigners living in the land of Egypt. I am the Lord your God.

Evening Short Reading:

The cries for righteousness and justice must not go unheeded. God, who is just, calls us to do justice, not only in regard to suffering humans but also with respect to an aching earth. We must have the courage of our convictions and treat others justly. That which needs special treatment - homeless people, fragile land, rare species - we are obligated to treat with special care. In all that we do and say, we must gratefully acknowledge our Creator-Redeemer, the Maker of heaven and earth, who richly provisions us for the journey."

- Steven Bouma-Prediger, *For The Beauty of the Earth: a Christian Vision for Creation Care*

Vow Prayer: Almighty Father, we long for your Kingdom where kindness and truth will meet, where justice and peace will kiss. Give our minds wisdom, give our hearts empathy, and give our hands strength as we work on behalf of justice for all, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Evening Gospel: Matthew 11:16-30

"To what can I compare this generation? It is like children playing a game in the public square. They complain to their friends,

'We played wedding songs,
and you didn't dance,
so we played funeral songs,
and you didn't mourn.'

For John didn't spend his time eating and drinking, and you say, 'He's possessed by a demon.' The Son of Man, on the other hand, feasts and drinks, and you say, 'He's a glutton and a drunkard, and a friend of tax collectors and other sinners!' But wisdom is shown to be right by its results."

Then Jesus began to denounce the towns where he had done so many of his miracles, because they hadn't repented of their sins and turned to God. "What sorrow awaits you, Korazin and Bethsaida! For if the miracles I did in you had been done in wicked Tyre and Sidon, their people would have repented of their sins long ago, clothing themselves in burlap and throwing ashes on their heads to show their remorse. I tell you, Tyre and Sidon will be better off on judgment day than you.

"And you people of Capernaum, will you be honored in heaven? No, you will go down to the place of the dead. For if the miracles I did for you had been done in wicked Sodom, it would still be here today. I tell you, even Sodom will be better off on judgment day than you."

At that time Jesus prayed this prayer “O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, thank you for hiding these things from those who think themselves wise and clever, and for revealing them to the childlike. Yes, Father, it pleased you to do it this way!

“My Father has entrusted everything to me. No one truly knows the Son except the Father, and no one truly knows the Father except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.”

Then Jesus said, “Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you. Let me teach you, because I am humble and gentle at heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy to bear, and the burden I give you is light.”

Lord’s Prayer:

Our Father in heaven. Let your holiness be revealed
Let your kingdom come. Let your will be done on earth as in heaven
Give us today our daily bread. Erase our debts as we erase the debts of others.
Keep us from temptation and Rescue us from evil.
For kingdom, power and glory belong to you for ever and ever.
Amen.

Evening Psalm: Psalm 18: 40-51

You placed my foot on their necks.
I have destroyed all who hated me.
They called for help, but no one came to their rescue.
They even cried to the Lord, but he refused to answer.
I ground them as fine as dust in the wind.
I swept them into the gutter like dirt.
You gave me victory over my accusers.
You appointed me ruler over nations;
people I don’t even know now serve me.
As soon as they hear of me, they submit;
foreign nations cringe before me.
They all lose their courage
and come trembling from their strongholds.

The Lord lives! Praise to my Rock!
May the God of my salvation be exalted!
He is the God who pays back those who harm me;
he subdues the nations under me
and rescues me from my enemies.
You hold me safe beyond the reach of my enemies;
you save me from violent opponents.
For this, O Lord, I will praise you among the nations;
I will sing praises to your name.
You give great victories to your king;
you show unfailing love to your anointed,
to David and all his descendants forever.

Intercession:

Concluding Prayer: Lord Jesus stay with us, for evening is at hand and the day is past. Be our companion in the way, kindle our hearts and awaken hope, that we may know you as you are revealed in Scripture and the breaking of bread. Grant this for the sake of your love. Amen.

May 12, 2011

Morning

Call To Prayer: In the morning, O Lord, you hear my voice,* In the morning I lay my requests before you and wait in expectation.

Vow: In a world full of injustice, we will work at the grassroots level for visible social change and will be a voice for justice among the world's oppressed.

Scripture Related to the Vow: Leviticus 19:33-34

Do not take advantage of foreigners who live among you in your land. Treat them like native-born Israelites, and love them as you love yourself. Remember that you were once foreigners living in the land of Egypt. I am the Lord your God.

Morning Short Reading:

If the organization and operation of an economic system are such as to compromise the human dignity of those who engage in it, or to blunt their sense of responsibility, or to impede the exercise of personal initiative, such an economic system is unjust. And this is so even if, by hypothesis, the wealth produced in such a system reaches a high level and this wealth is distributed according to standards of justice and equity.

Pope John XXIII, Mater et Magistra

Vow Prayer: Almighty Father, we long for your Kingdom where kindness and truth will meet, where justice and peace will kiss. Give our minds wisdom, give our hearts empathy, and give our hands strength as we work on behalf of justice for all, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Morning Gospel: Matthew 12:1-14

At about that time Jesus was walking through some grain-fields on the Sabbath. His disciples were hungry, so they began breaking off some heads of grain and eating them. But some Pharisees saw them do it and protested, "Look, your disciples are breaking the law by harvesting grain on the Sabbath."

Jesus said to them, "Haven't you read in the Scriptures what David did when he and his companions were hungry? He went into the house of God, and he and his companions broke the law by eating the sacred loaves of bread that only the priests are allowed to eat. And haven't you read in the law of Moses that the priests on duty in the Temple may work on the Sabbath? I tell you, there is one here who is even greater than the Temple! But you would not have condemned my innocent disciples if you knew the meaning of this Scripture 'I want you to show mercy, not offer sacrifices.' For the Son of Man is Lord, even over the Sabbath!"

Then Jesus went over to their synagogue, where he noticed a man with a deformed hand. The Pharisees asked Jesus, "Does the law permit a person to work by healing on the Sabbath?" (They were hoping he would say yes, so they could bring charges against him.)

And he answered, "If you had a sheep that fell into a well on the Sabbath, wouldn't you work to pull it out? Of course you would. And how much more valuable is a person than a sheep! Yes, the law permits a person to do good on the Sabbath."

Then he said to the man, "Hold out your hand." So the man held out his hand, and it was restored, just like the other one! Then the Pharisees called a meeting to plot how to kill Jesus.

Lord's Prayer:

Our Father in heaven. Let your holiness be revealed
Let your kingdom come. Let your will be done on earth as in heaven
Give us today our daily bread. Erase our debts as we erase the debts of others.
Keep us from temptation and Rescue us from evil.
For kingdom, power and glory belong to you for ever and ever.
Amen.

Morning Psalm: Psalm 19

For the choir director: A psalm of David.
The heavens proclaim the glory of God.
The skies display his craftsmanship.
Day after day they continue to speak;
night after night they make him known.
They speak without a sound or word;
their voice is never heard.
Yet their message has gone throughout the earth,
and their words to all the world.

God has made a home in the heavens for the sun.
It bursts forth like a radiant bridegroom after his wedding.
It rejoices like a great athlete eager to run the race.
The sun rises at one end of the heavens
and follows its course to the other end.
Nothing can hide from its heat.

The instructions of the Lord are perfect,
reviving the soul.
The decrees of the Lord are trustworthy,
making wise the simple.
The commandments of the Lord are right,
bringing joy to the heart.
The commands of the Lord are clear,
giving insight for living.
Reverence for the Lord is pure,
lasting forever.
The laws of the Lord are true;
each one is fair.
They are more desirable than gold,
even the finest gold.
They are sweeter than honey,
even honey dripping from the comb.
They are a warning to your servant,
a great reward for those who obey them.

How can I know all the sins lurking in my heart?
Cleanse me from these hidden faults.
Keep your servant from deliberate sins!
Don't let them control me.
Then I will be free of guilt
and innocent of great sin.

May the words of my mouth
and the meditation of my heart
be pleasing to you,
O Lord, my rock and my redeemer.

Intercession:

Concluding Prayer: Lord God, Almighty and Everlasting Father, you have brought us in safety to this new day. Preserve us with your mighty power that we may not fall into sin nor be overcome by adversity and in all we do direct us to the fulfilling of your purpose through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Midday

Vow: In a world of shallow living we'll develop habits and rhythms that sustain us in the way of Christ.

Vow Prayer: Almighty Father, we long for your Kingdom where kindness and truth will meet, where justice and peace will kiss. Give our minds wisdom, give our hearts empathy, and give our hands strength as we work on behalf of justice for all, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Evening

Call To Prayer: Our help is in the name of the Lord* The Maker of heaven and earth

Vow: In a world full of injustice, we will work at the grassroots level for visible social change and will be a voice for justice among the world's oppressed.

Scripture Related to the Vow: Leviticus 19:33-34

Do not take advantage of foreigners who live among you in your land. Treat them like native-born Israelites, and love them as you love yourself. Remember that you were once foreigners living in the land of Egypt. I am the Lord your God.

Evening Short Reading:

In short, righteousness and justice are integral features of God's world of shalom. We have the moral obligation to treat others fairly, giving special care to those creatures who by virtue of circumstance require it. Therefore, we must cultivate the moral excellences of justice and courage - while discouraging the vices of injustice, cowardice, and rashness - in the formation of our individual and collective character.

Steven Bouma-Prediger, *For The Beauty of the Earth: a Christian Vision for Creation Care*

Vow Prayer: Almighty Father, we long for your Kingdom where kindness and truth will meet, where justice and peace will kiss. Give our minds wisdom, give our hearts empathy, and give our hands strength as we work on behalf of justice for all, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Evening Gospel: Matthew 12:15-37

But Jesus knew what they were planning. So he left that area, and many people followed him. He healed all the sick among them, but he warned them not to reveal who he was. This fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah concerning him

“Look at my Servant, whom I have chosen.

He is my Beloved, who pleases me.

I will put my Spirit upon him,

and he will proclaim justice to the nations.

He will not fight or shout

or raise his voice in public.

He will not crush the weakest reed

or put out a flickering candle.

Finally he will cause justice to be victorious.

And his name will be the hope

of all the world.”

Then a demon-possessed man, who was blind and couldn't speak, was brought to Jesus. He healed the man so that he could both speak and see. The crowd was amazed and asked, "Could it be that Jesus is the Son of David, the Messiah?"

But when the Pharisees heard about the miracle, they said, "No wonder he can cast out demons. He gets his power from Satan, the prince of demons."

Jesus knew their thoughts and replied, "Any kingdom divided by civil war is doomed. A town or family splintered by feuding will fall apart. And if Satan is casting out Satan, he is divided and fighting against himself. His own kingdom will not survive. And if I am empowered by Satan, what about your own exorcists? They cast out demons, too, so they will condemn you for what you have said. But if I am casting out demons by the Spirit of God, then the Kingdom of God has arrived among you. For who is powerful enough to enter the house of a strong man like Satan and plunder his goods? Only someone even stronger—someone who could tie him up and then plunder his house.

"Anyone who isn't with me opposes me, and anyone who isn't working with me is actually working against me.

"So I tell you, every sin and blasphemy can be forgiven—except blasphemy against the Holy Spirit, which will never be forgiven. Anyone who speaks against the Son of Man can be forgiven, but anyone who speaks against the Holy Spirit will never be forgiven, either in this world or in the world to come.

"A tree is identified by its fruit. If a tree is good, its fruit will be good. If a tree is bad, its fruit will be bad. You brood of snakes! How could evil men like you speak what is good and right? For whatever is in your heart determines what you say. A good person produces good things from the treasury of a good heart, and an evil person produces evil things from the treasury of an evil heart. And I tell you this, you must give an account on judgment day for every idle word you speak. The words you say will either acquit you or condemn you."

Lord's Prayer:

Our Father in heaven. Let your holiness be revealed
Let your kingdom come. Let your will be done on earth as in heaven
Give us today our daily bread. Erase our debts as we erase the debts of others.
Keep us from temptation and Rescue us from evil.
For kingdom, power and glory belong to you for ever and ever.
Amen.

Evening Psalm: Psalm 20

For the choir director: A psalm of David.

In times of trouble, may the Lord answer your cry.

May the name of the God of Jacob keep you safe from all harm.

May he send you help from his sanctuary
and strengthen you from Jerusalem.

May he remember all your gifts
and look favorably on your burnt offerings.

Interlude

May he grant your heart's desires
and make all your plans succeed.

May we shout for joy when we hear of your victory
and raise a victory banner in the name of our God.

May the Lord answer all your prayers.

Now I know that the Lord rescues his anointed king.

He will answer him from his holy heaven
and rescue him by his great power.

Some nations boast of their chariots and horses,
but we boast in the name of the Lord our God.

Those nations will fall down and collapse,
but we will rise up and stand firm.

Give victory to our king, O Lord!
Answer our cry for help.

Intercession:

Concluding Prayer: Lord Jesus stay with us, for evening is at hand and the day is past. Be our companion in the way, kindle our hearts and awaken hope, that we may know you as you are revealed in Scripture and the breaking of bread. Grant this for the sake of your love. Amen.

May 13, 2011

Morning

Call To Prayer: In the morning, O Lord, you hear my voice,* In the morning I lay my requests before you and wait in expectation.

Vow: In a world full of injustice, we will work at the grassroots level for visible social change and will be a voice for justice among the world's oppressed.

Scripture Related to the Vow: Leviticus 19:33-34

Do not take advantage of foreigners who live among you in your land. Treat them like native-born Israelites, and love them as you love yourself. Remember that you were once foreigners living in the land of Egypt. I am the Lord your God.

Morning Short Reading:

The historical evolution of human affairs brings into ever greater relief the fact that the demands of justice and equity have a bearing not only on relations between dependent working men and contractors or employers, but also on relations between different economic sectors, between areas economically more advanced and those that are underdeveloped within the same nation, and, from a world point of view, on relations among countries at different stages of socioeconomic development.

Pope John XXIII, Mater et Magistra

Vow Prayer: Almighty Father, we long for your Kingdom where kindness and truth will meet, where justice and peace will kiss. Give our minds wisdom, give our hearts empathy, and give our hands strength as we work on behalf of justice for all, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Morning Gospel: Matthew 12:38-50

One day some teachers of religious law and Pharisees came to Jesus and said, "Teacher, we want you to show us a miraculous sign to prove your authority."

But Jesus replied, "Only an evil, adulterous generation would demand a miraculous sign; but the only sign I will give them is the sign of the prophet Jonah. For as Jonah was in the belly of the great fish for three days and three nights, so will the Son of Man be in the heart of the earth for three days and three nights.

"The people of Nineveh will stand up against this generation on judgment day and condemn it, for they repented of their sins at the preaching of Jonah. Now someone greater than Jonah is here—but you refuse to repent. The queen of Sheba will also stand up against this generation on judgment day and condemn it, for she came from a distant land to hear the wisdom of Solomon. Now someone greater than Solomon is here—but you refuse to listen.

"When an evil spirit leaves a person, it goes into the desert, seeking rest but finding none. Then it says, 'I will return to the person I came from.' So it returns and finds its former home empty, swept, and in order. Then the spirit finds seven other spirits more evil than itself, and they all enter the person and live there. And so that person is worse off than before. That will be the experience of this evil generation."

As Jesus was speaking to the crowd, his mother and brothers stood outside, asking to speak to him. Someone told Jesus, "Your mother and your brothers are outside, and they want to speak to you."

Jesus asked, "Who is my mother? Who are my brothers?" Then he pointed to his disciples and said, "Look, these are my mother and brothers. Anyone who does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother and sister and mother!"

Lord's Prayer:

Our Father in heaven. Let your holiness be revealed
Let your kingdom come. Let your will be done on earth as in heaven
Give us today our daily bread. Erase our debts as we erase the debts of others.
Keep us from temptation and Rescue us from evil.
For kingdom, power and glory belong to you for ever and ever.
Amen.

Morning Psalm: Psalm 21

How the king rejoices in your strength, O Lord!
He shouts with joy because you give him victory.
For you have given him his heart's desire;
you have withheld nothing he requested.
Interlude

You welcomed him back with success and prosperity.
You placed a crown of finest gold on his head.
He asked you to preserve his life,
and you granted his request.
The days of his life stretch on forever.
Your victory brings him great honor,
and you have clothed him with splendor and majesty.
You have endowed him with eternal blessings
and given him the joy of your presence.
For the king trusts in the Lord.
The unfailing love of the Most High will keep him from stumbling.
You will capture all your enemies.
Your strong right hand will seize all who hate you.
You will throw them in a flaming furnace
when you appear.
The Lord will consume them in his anger;
fire will devour them.
You will wipe their children from the face of the earth;
they will never have descendants.
Although they plot against you,
their evil schemes will never succeed.
For they will turn and run
when they see your arrows aimed at them.
Rise up, O Lord, in all your power.
With music and singing we celebrate your mighty acts

Intercession:

Concluding Prayer: Lord God, Almighty and Everlasting Father, you have brought us in safety to this new day. Preserve us with your mighty power that we may not fall into sin nor be overcome by adversity and in all we do direct us to the fulfilling of your purpose through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Midday

Vow: In a world of shallow living we'll develop habits and rhythms that sustain us in the way of Christ.

Vow Prayer: Almighty Father, we long for your Kingdom where kindness and truth will meet, where justice and peace will kiss. Give our minds wisdom, give our hearts empathy, and give our hands strength as we work on behalf of justice for all, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Evening

Call To Prayer: Our help is in the name of the Lord* The Maker of heaven and earth

Vow: In a world full of injustice, we will work at the grassroots level for visible social change and will be a voice for justice among the world's oppressed.

Scripture Related to the Vow: Leviticus 19:33-34

Do not take advantage of foreigners who live among you in your land. Treat them like native-born Israelites, and love them as you love yourself. Remember that you were once foreigners living in the land of Egypt. I am the Lord your God.

Evening Short Reading:

A Native American taught me that the division between ecology and human rights was an artificial one, that the environmental and social justice movements addressed two sides of a single larger dilemma. The way we harm the earth affects all people, and how we treat one another is reflected in how we treat the earth."

Paul Hawken, *Blessed Unrest: How the Largest Movement in the World Came into Being and Why No One Saw It Coming*

Vow Prayer: Almighty Father, we long for your Kingdom where kindness and truth will meet, where justice and peace will kiss. Give our minds wisdom, give our hearts empathy, and give our hands strength as we work on behalf of justice for all, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Evening Gospel: Matthew 13:1-23

Later that same day Jesus left the house and sat beside the lake. A large crowd soon gathered around him, so he got into a boat. Then he sat there and taught as the people stood on the shore. He told many stories in the form of parables, such as this one

"Listen! A farmer went out to plant some seeds. As he scattered them across his field, some seeds fell on a footpath, and the birds came and ate them. Other seeds fell on shallow soil with underlying rock. The seeds sprouted quickly because the soil was shallow. But the plants soon wilted under the hot sun, and since they didn't have deep roots, they died. Other seeds fell among thorns that grew up and choked out the tender plants. Still other seeds fell on fertile soil, and they produced a crop that was thirty, sixty, and even a hundred times as much as had been planted! Anyone with ears to hear should listen and understand."

His disciples came and asked him, "Why do you use parables when you talk to the people?"

He replied, "You are permitted to understand the secrets of the Kingdom of Heaven, but others are not. To those who listen to my teaching, more understanding will be given, and they will have an abundance of knowledge. But for those who are not listening, even what little understanding they have will be taken away from them. That is why I use these parables,

For they look, but they don't really see.

They hear, but they don't really listen or understand.

This fulfills the prophecy of Isaiah that says,

‘When you hear what I say,
you will not understand.
When you see what I do,
you will not comprehend.
For the hearts of these people are hardened,
and their ears cannot hear,
and they have closed their eyes—
so their eyes cannot see,
and their ears cannot hear,
and their hearts cannot understand,
and they cannot turn to me
and let me heal them.’

“But blessed are your eyes, because they see; and your ears, because they hear. I tell you the truth, many prophets and righteous people longed to see what you see, but they didn’t see it. And they longed to hear what you hear, but they didn’t hear it.

“Now listen to the explanation of the parable about the farmer planting seeds. The seed that fell on the footpath represents those who hear the message about the Kingdom and don’t understand it. Then the evil one comes and snatches away the seed that was planted in their hearts. The seed on the rocky soil represents those who hear the message and immediately receive it with joy. But since they don’t have deep roots, they don’t last long. They fall away as soon as they have problems or are persecuted for believing God’s word. The seed that fell among the thorns represents those who hear God’s word, but all too quickly the message is crowded out by the worries of this life and the lure of wealth, so no fruit is produced. The seed that fell on good soil represents those who truly hear and understand God’s word and produce a harvest of thirty, sixty, or even a hundred times as much as had been planted!”

Lord’s Prayer:

Our Father in heaven. Let your holiness be revealed
Let your kingdom come. Let your will be done on earth as in heaven
Give us today our daily bread. Erase our debts as we erase the debts of others.
Keep us from temptation and Rescue us from evil.
For kingdom, power and glory belong to you for ever and ever.
Amen.

Evening Psalm: Psalm 22: 1-11

For the choir director: A psalm of David, to be sung to the tune “Doe of the Dawn.”

My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?
Why are you so far away when I groan for help?
Every day I call to you, my God, but you do not answer.
Every night you hear my voice, but I find no relief.

Yet you are holy,
enthroned on the praises of Israel.
Our ancestors trusted in you,
and you rescued them.
They cried out to you and were saved.
They trusted in you and were never disgraced.

But I am a worm and not a man.
I am scorned and despised by all!
Everyone who sees me mocks me.
They sneer and shake their heads, saying,
“Is this the one who relies on the Lord?
Then let the Lord save him!
If the Lord loves him so much,
let the Lord rescue him!”

Yet you brought me safely from my mother’s womb
and led me to trust you at my mother’s breast.

I was thrust into your arms at my birth.
You have been my God from the moment I was born.

Do not stay so far from me,
for trouble is near,
and no one else can help me.

Intercession:

Concluding Prayer: Lord Jesus stay with us, for evening is at hand and the day is past. Be our companion in the way, kindle our hearts and awaken hope, that we may know you as you are revealed in Scripture and the breaking of bread. Grant this for the sake of your love. Amen.

May 14, 2011

Morning

Call To Prayer: In the morning, O Lord, you hear my voice,* In the morning I lay my requests before you and wait in expectation.

Vow: In a world full of injustice, we will work at the grassroots level for visible social change and will be a voice for justice among the world's oppressed.

Scripture Related to the Vow: Leviticus 19:33-34

Do not take advantage of foreigners who live among you in your land. Treat them like native-born Israelites, and love them as you love yourself. Remember that you were once foreigners living in the land of Egypt. I am the Lord your God.

Morning Short Reading:

The solidarity which binds all men and makes them members, in a sense, of the same family requires that nations enjoying an abundance of material goods should not remain indifferent to those nations whose citizens suffer from internal problems that result in poverty, hunger and an inability to enjoy even the more elementary human rights.
Pope John XXIII, *Mater et Magistra*

Vow Prayer: Almighty Father, we long for your Kingdom where kindness and truth will meet, where justice and peace will kiss. Give our minds wisdom, give our hearts empathy, and give our hands strength as we work on behalf of justice for all, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Morning Gospel: Matthew 13:24-43

Here is another story Jesus told “The Kingdom of Heaven is like a farmer who planted good seed in his field. But that night as the workers slept, his enemy came and planted weeds among the wheat, then slipped away. When the crop began to grow and produce grain, the weeds also grew.

“The farmer’s workers went to him and said, ‘Sir, the field where you planted that good seed is full of weeds! Where did they come from?’

“‘An enemy has done this!’ the farmer exclaimed.

“‘Should we pull out the weeds?’ they asked.

“‘No,’ he replied, ‘you’ll uproot the wheat if you do. Let both grow together until the harvest. Then I will tell the harvesters to sort out the weeds, tie them into bundles, and burn them, and to put the wheat in the barn.’”

Here is another illustration Jesus used “The Kingdom of Heaven is like a mustard seed planted in a field. It is the smallest of all seeds, but it becomes the largest of garden plants; it grows into a tree, and birds come and make nests in its branches.”

Jesus also used this illustration “The Kingdom of Heaven is like the yeast a woman used in making bread. Even though she put only a little yeast in three measures of flour, it permeated every part of the dough.”

Jesus always used stories and illustrations like these when speaking to the crowds. In fact, he never spoke to them without using such parables. This fulfilled what God had spoken through the prophet

“I will speak to you in parables.

I will explain things hidden since the creation of the world.”

Then, leaving the crowds outside, Jesus went into the house. His disciples said, "Please explain to us the story of the weeds in the field."

Jesus replied, "The Son of Man is the farmer who plants the good seed. The field is the world, and the good seed represents the people of the Kingdom. The weeds are the people who belong to the evil one. The enemy who planted the weeds among the wheat is the devil. The harvest is the end of the world, and the harvesters are the angels.

"Just as the weeds are sorted out and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of the world. The Son of Man will send his angels, and they will remove from his Kingdom everything that causes sin and all who do evil. And the angels will throw them into the fiery furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Then the righteous will shine like the sun in their Father's Kingdom. Anyone with ears to hear should listen and understand!

Lord's Prayer:

Our Father in heaven. Let your holiness be revealed
Let your kingdom come. Let your will be done on earth as in heaven
Give us today our daily bread. Erase our debts as we erase the debts of others.
Keep us from temptation and Rescue us from evil.
For kingdom, power and glory belong to you for ever and ever.
Amen.

Morning Psalm: Psalm 22: 12-23

My enemies surround me like a herd of bulls;
fierce bulls of Bashan have hemmed me in!
Like lions they open their jaws against me,
roaring and tearing into their prey.
My life is poured out like water,
and all my bones are out of joint.
My heart is like wax,
melting within me.
My strength has dried up like sunbaked clay.
My tongue sticks to the roof of my mouth.
You have laid me in the dust and left me for dead.
My enemies surround me like a pack of dogs;
an evil gang closes in on me.
They have pierced my hands and feet.
I can count all my bones.
My enemies stare at me and gloat.
They divide my garments among themselves
and throw dice for my clothing.

O Lord, do not stay far away!
You are my strength; come quickly to my aid!
Save me from the sword;
spare my precious life from these dogs.
Snatch me from the lion's jaws
and from the horns of these wild oxen.

I will proclaim your name to my brothers and sisters.
I will praise you among your assembled people.
Praise the Lord, all you who fear him!
Honor him, all you descendants of Jacob!
Show him reverence, all you descendants of Israel!

Intercession:

Concluding Prayer: Lord God, Almighty and Everlasting Father, you have brought us in safety to this new day. Preserve us with your mighty power that we may not fall into sin nor be overcome by adversity and in all we do direct us to the fulfilling of your purpose through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Midday

Vow: In a world of shallow living we'll develop habits and rhythms that sustain us in the way of Christ.

Vow Prayer: Almighty Father, we long for your Kingdom where kindness and truth will meet, where justice and peace will kiss. Give our minds wisdom, give our hearts empathy, and give our hands strength as we work on behalf of justice for all, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Evening

Call To Prayer: Our help is in the name of the Lord* The Maker of heaven and earth

Vow: In a world full of injustice, we will work at the grassroots level for visible social change and will be a voice for justice among the world's oppressed.

Scripture Related to the Vow: Leviticus 19:33-34

Do not take advantage of foreigners who live among you in your land. Treat them like native-born Israelites, and love them as you love yourself. Remember that you were once foreigners living in the land of Egypt. I am the Lord your God.

Evening Short Reading:

King came to Montgomery well prepared to both pastor an African American Baptist church and to play a supporting role in the growing struggle for civil rights...Evil was no longer a theory, but something he and his fellow activists faced day in and day out. Its passing was not inevitable, but would require tireless struggle and sacrifice. He knew full well the resolve of those in power to maintain the status quo. And King was prepared to suffer and even die to resist this evil. This was possible because his faith had moved from an intellectual theory to a heartfelt belief. No longer was King's call to ministry only understood as a way to contribute to society. Now ministry was about leading a community to trust in the power and justice and righteousness of God even when evil seemed to triumph.

Troy Jackson, *Becoming King: Martin Luther King, Jr. and the Making of a National Leader*

Vow Prayer: Almighty Father, we long for your Kingdom where kindness and truth will meet, where justice and peace will kiss. Give our minds wisdom, give our hearts empathy, and give our hands strength as we work on behalf of justice for all, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Evening Gospel: Matthew 13:44-58

"The Kingdom of Heaven is like a treasure that a man discovered hidden in a field. In his excitement, he hid it again and sold everything he owned to get enough money to buy the field.

"Again, the Kingdom of Heaven is like a merchant on the lookout for choice pearls. When he discovered a pearl of great value, he sold everything he owned and bought it!

“Again, the Kingdom of Heaven is like a fishing net that was thrown into the water and caught fish of every kind. When the net was full, they dragged it up onto the shore, sat down, and sorted the good fish into crates, but threw the bad ones away. That is the way it will be at the end of the world. The angels will come and separate the wicked people from the righteous, throwing the wicked into the fiery furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Do you understand all these things?”

“Yes,” they said, “we do.”

Then he added, “Every teacher of religious law who becomes a disciple in the Kingdom of Heaven is like a homeowner who brings from his storeroom new gems of truth as well as old.”

When Jesus had finished telling these stories and illustrations, he left that part of the country. He returned to Nazareth, his hometown. When he taught there in the synagogue, everyone was amazed and said, “Where does he get this wisdom and the power to do miracles?” Then they scoffed, “He’s just the carpenter’s son, and we know Mary, his mother, and his brothers—James, Joseph, Simon, and Judas. All his sisters live right here among us. Where did he learn all these things?” And they were deeply offended and refused to believe in him.

Then Jesus told them, “A prophet is honored everywhere except in his own hometown and among his own family.” And so he did only a few miracles there because of their unbelief.

Lord’s Prayer:

Our Father in heaven. Let your holiness be revealed
Let your kingdom come. Let your will be done on earth as in heaven
Give us today our daily bread. Erase our debts as we erase the debts of others.
Keep us from temptation and Rescue us from evil.
For kingdom, power and glory belong to you for ever and ever.
Amen.

Evening Psalm: Psalm 22: 24-31

For he has not ignored or belittled the suffering of the needy.
He has not turned his back on them,
but has listened to their cries for help.

I will praise you in the great assembly.
I will fulfill my vows in the presence of those who worship you.
The poor will eat and be satisfied.
All who seek the Lord will praise him.
Their hearts will rejoice with everlasting joy.
The whole earth will acknowledge the Lord and return to him.
All the families of the nations will bow down before him.
For royal power belongs to the Lord.
He rules all the nations.

Let the rich of the earth feast and worship.
Bow before him, all who are mortal,
all whose lives will end as dust.
Our children will also serve him.
Future generations will hear about the wonders of the Lord.
His righteous acts will be told to those not yet born.
They will hear about everything he has done.

Intercession:

Concluding Prayer: Lord Jesus stay with us, for evening is at hand and the day is past. Be our companion in the way, kindle our hearts and awaken hope, that we may know you as you are revealed in Scripture and the breaking of bread. Grant this for the sake of your love. Amen.

May 15, 2011

Morning

Call To Prayer: In the morning, O Lord, you hear my voice,* In the morning I lay my requests before you and wait in expectation.

Vow: In a world full of injustice, we will work at the grassroots level for visible social change and will be a voice for justice among the world's oppressed.

Scripture Related to the Vow: Leviticus 19:33-34

Do not take advantage of foreigners who live among you in your land. Treat them like native-born Israelites, and love them as you love yourself. Remember that you were once foreigners living in the land of Egypt. I am the Lord your God.

Morning Short Reading:

It is necessary to awaken men's consciences to a sense of the responsibility which weighs upon everyone, especially upon those who are more richly endowed with this world's goods. Pope John XXIII, *Mater et Magistra*

Vow Prayer: Almighty Father, we long for your Kingdom where kindness and truth will meet, where justice and peace will kiss. Give our minds wisdom, give our hearts empathy, and give our hands strength as we work on behalf of justice for all, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Morning Gospel: Matthew 14:1-21

When Herod Antipas, the ruler of Galilee, heard about Jesus, he said to his advisers, "This must be John the Baptist raised from the dead! That is why he can do such miracles."

For Herod had arrested and imprisoned John as a favor to his wife Herodias (the former wife of Herod's brother Philip). John had been telling Herod, "It is against God's law for you to marry her." Herod wanted to kill John, but he was afraid of a riot, because all the people believed John was a prophet.

But at a birthday party for Herod, Herodias's daughter performed a dance that greatly pleased him, so he promised with a vow to give her anything she wanted. At her mother's urging, the girl said, "I want the head of John the Baptist on a tray!" Then the king regretted what he had said; but because of the vow he had made in front of his guests, he issued the necessary orders. So John was beheaded in the prison, and his head was brought on a tray and given to the girl, who took it to her mother. Later, John's disciples came for his body and buried it. Then they went and told Jesus what had happened.

As soon as Jesus heard the news, he left in a boat to a remote area to be alone. But the crowds heard where he was headed and followed on foot from many towns. Jesus saw the huge crowd as he stepped from the boat, and he had compassion on them and healed their sick.

That evening the disciples came to him and said, "This is a remote place, and it's already getting late. Send the crowds away so they can go to the villages and buy food for themselves."

But Jesus said, "That isn't necessary—you feed them."

"But we have only five loaves of bread and two fish!" they answered.

"Bring them here," he said. Then he told the people to sit down on the grass. Jesus took the five loaves and two fish, looked up toward heaven, and blessed them. Then, breaking the loaves into pieces, he gave the bread to the disciples, who distributed it to the people. They

all ate as much as they wanted, and afterward, the disciples picked up twelve baskets of leftovers. About 5,000 men were fed that day, in addition to all the women and children!

Lord's Prayer:

Our Father in heaven. Let your holiness be revealed
Let your kingdom come. Let your will be done on earth as in heaven
Give us today our daily bread. Erase our debts as we erase the debts of others.
Keep us from temptation and Rescue us from evil.
For kingdom, power and glory belong to you for ever and ever.
Amen.

Morning Psalm: Psalm 23

A psalm of David.
The Lord is my shepherd;
I have all that I need.
He lets me rest in green meadows;
he leads me beside peaceful streams.
He renews my strength.
He guides me along right paths,
bringing honor to his name.
Even when I walk
through the darkest valley,
I will not be afraid,
for you are close beside me.
Your rod and your staff
protect and comfort me.
You prepare a feast for me
in the presence of my enemies.
You honor me by anointing my head with oil.
My cup overflows with blessings.
Surely your goodness and unfailing love will pursue me
all the days of my life,
and I will live in the house of the Lord
forever.

Intercession:

Concluding Prayer: Lord God, Almighty and Everlasting Father, you have brought us in safety to this new day. Preserve us with your mighty power that we may not fall into sin nor be overcome by adversity and in all we do direct us to the fulfilling of your purpose through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Midday

Vow: In a world of shallow living we'll develop habits and rhythms that sustain us in the way of Christ.

Vow Prayer: Almighty Father, we long for your Kingdom where kindness and truth will meet, where justice and peace will kiss. Give our minds wisdom, give our hearts empathy, and give our hands strength as we work on behalf of justice for all, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Evening

Call To Prayer: Our help is in the name of the Lord* The Maker of heaven and earth

Vow: In a world full of injustice, we will work at the grassroots level for visible social change and will be a voice for justice among the world's oppressed.

Scripture Related to the Vow: Leviticus 19:33-34

Do not take advantage of foreigners who live among you in your land. Treat them like native-born Israelites, and love them as you love yourself. Remember that you were once foreigners living in the land of Egypt. I am the Lord your God.

Evening Short Reading:

Because sin has become embedded in socioeconomic structures, justice requires structural change. And because the problem lies deeper than mere social systems and is located finally in distorted human hearts, personal spiritual conversion is also essential for long-term societal improvement. This biblical understanding of God, the world and history, the nature of persons, wealth, work, and sin provides the best framework for designing successful programs to overcome poverty."

Ronald J. Sider, *Just Generosity: A New Vision for Overcoming Poverty in America*

Vow Prayer: Almighty Father, we long for your Kingdom where kindness and truth will meet, where justice and peace will kiss. Give our minds wisdom, give our hearts empathy, and give our hands strength as we work on behalf of justice for all, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Evening Gospel: Matthew 14:22-36

Immediately after this, Jesus insisted that his disciples get back into the boat and cross to the other side of the lake, while he sent the people home. After sending them home, he went up into the hills by himself to pray. Night fell while he was there alone.

Meanwhile, the disciples were in trouble far away from land, for a strong wind had risen, and they were fighting heavy waves. About three o'clock in the morning Jesus came toward them, walking on the water. When the disciples saw him walking on the water, they were terrified. In their fear, they cried out, "It's a ghost!"

But Jesus spoke to them at once. "Don't be afraid," he said. "Take courage. I am here!"

Then Peter called to him, "Lord, if it's really you, tell me to come to you, walking on the water."

"Yes, come," Jesus said.

So Peter went over the side of the boat and walked on the water toward Jesus. But when he saw the strong wind and the waves, he was terrified and began to sink. "Save me, Lord!" he shouted.

Jesus immediately reached out and grabbed him. "You have so little faith," Jesus said. "Why did you doubt me?"

When they climbed back into the boat, the wind stopped. Then the disciples worshiped him. “You really are the Son of God!” they exclaimed.

After they had crossed the lake, they landed at Gennesaret. When the people recognized Jesus, the news of his arrival spread quickly throughout the whole area, and soon people were bringing all their sick to be healed. They begged him to let the sick touch at least the fringe of his robe, and all who touched him were healed.

Lord’s Prayer:

Our Father in heaven. Let your holiness be revealed
Let your kingdom come. Let your will be done on earth as in heaven
Give us today our daily bread. Erase our debts as we erase the debts of others.
Keep us from temptation and Rescue us from evil.
For kingdom, power and glory belong to you for ever and ever.
Amen.

Evening Psalm: Psalm 24

A psalm of David.

The earth is the Lord’s, and everything in it.
The world and all its people belong to him.
For he laid the earth’s foundation on the seas
and built it on the ocean depths.

Who may climb the mountain of the Lord?
Who may stand in his holy place?
Only those whose hands and hearts are pure,
who do not worship idols
and never tell lies.
They will receive the Lord’s blessing
and have a right relationship with God their savior.
Such people may seek you
and worship in your presence, O God of Jacob.
Interlude

Open up, ancient gates!
Open up, ancient doors,
and let the King of glory enter.
Who is the King of glory?
The Lord, strong and mighty;
the Lord, invincible in battle.
Open up, ancient gates!
Open up, ancient doors,
and let the King of glory enter.
Who is the King of glory?
The Lord of Heaven’s Armies—
he is the King of glory.
Interlude

Intercession:

Concluding Prayer: Lord Jesus stay with us, for evening is at hand and the day is past. Be our companion in the way, kindle our hearts and awaken hope, that we may know you as you are revealed in Scripture and the breaking of bread. Grant this for the sake of your love. Amen.

May 16, 2011

Morning

Call To Prayer: In the morning, O Lord, you hear my voice,* In the morning I lay my requests before you and wait in expectation.

Vow: In a world full of injustice, we will work at the grassroots level for visible social change and will be a voice for justice among the world's oppressed.

Scripture Related to the Vow: Luke 11:42

“What sorrow awaits you Pharisees! For you are careful to tithe even the tiniest income from your herb gardens, but you ignore justice and the love of God. You should tithe, yes, but do not neglect the more important things.”

Morning Short Reading:

Peace and law, peace and justice, can never be separated from each other.
Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, *Values in a Time of Upheaval*

Vow Prayer: Almighty Father, we long for your Kingdom where kindness and truth will meet, where justice and peace will kiss. Give our minds wisdom, give our hearts empathy, and give our hands strength as we work on behalf of justice for all, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Morning Gospel: Matthew 15:1-28

Some Pharisees and teachers of religious law now arrived from Jerusalem to see Jesus. They asked him, “Why do your disciples disobey our age old tradition? For they ignore our tradition of ceremonial hand washing before they eat.”

Jesus replied, “And why do you, by your traditions, violate the direct commandments of God? For instance, God says, ‘Honor your father and mother,’ and ‘Anyone who speaks disrespectfully of father or mother must be put to death.’ But you say it is all right for people to say to their parents, ‘Sorry, I can’t help you. For I have vowed to give to God what I would have given to you.’ In this way, you say they don’t need to honor their parents. And so you cancel the word of God for the sake of your own tradition. You hypocrites! Isaiah was right when he prophesied about you, for he wrote,

‘These people honor me with their lips,
but their hearts are far from me.
Their worship is a farce,
for they teach man-made ideas as commands from God.’”

Then Jesus called to the crowd to come and hear. “Listen,” he said, “and try to understand. It’s not what goes into your mouth that defiles you; you are defiled by the words that come out of your mouth.”

Then the disciples came to him and asked, “Do you realize you offended the Pharisees by what you just said?”

Jesus replied, “Every plant not planted by my heavenly Father will be uprooted, so ignore them. They are blind guides leading the blind, and if one blind person guides another, they will both fall into a ditch.”

Then Peter said to Jesus, “Explain to us the parable that says people aren’t defiled by what they eat.”

“Don’t you understand yet?” Jesus asked. “Anything you eat passes through the stomach and then goes into the sewer. But the words you speak come from the heart—that’s what defiles you. For from the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, all sexual immorality, theft,

lying, and slander. These are what defile you. Eating with unwashed hands will never defile you.”

Then Jesus left Galilee and went north to the region of Tyre and Sidon. A Gentile woman who lived there came to him, pleading, “Have mercy on me, O Lord, Son of David! For my daughter is possessed by a demon that torments her severely.”

But Jesus gave her no reply, not even a word. Then his disciples urged him to send her away. “Tell her to go away,” they said. “She is bothering us with all her begging.”

Then Jesus said to the woman, “I was sent only to help God’s lost sheep—the people of Israel.”

But she came and worshiped him, pleading again, “Lord, help me!”

Jesus responded, “It isn’t right to take food from the children and throw it to the dogs.”

She replied, “That’s true, Lord, but even dogs are allowed to eat the scraps that fall beneath their masters’ table.”

“Dear woman,” Jesus said to her, “your faith is great. Your request is granted.” And her daughter was instantly healed.

Lord’s Prayer:

Our Father in heaven. Let your holiness be revealed
Let your kingdom come. Let your will be done on earth as in heaven
Give us today our daily bread. Erase our debts as we erase the debts of others.
Keep us from temptation and Rescue us from evil.
For kingdom, power and glory belong to you for ever and ever.
Amen.

Morning Psalm: Psalm 25: 1-11

A psalm of David.

O Lord, I give my life to you.
I trust in you, my God!
Do not let me be disgraced,
or let my enemies rejoice in my defeat.
No one who trusts in you will ever be disgraced,
but disgrace comes to those who try to deceive others.

Show me the right path, O Lord;
point out the road for me to follow.
Lead me by your truth and teach me,
for you are the God who saves me.
All day long I put my hope in you.
Remember, O Lord, your compassion and unfailing love,
which you have shown from long ages past.
Do not remember the rebellious sins of my youth.
Remember me in the light of your unfailing love,
for you are merciful, O Lord.

The Lord is good and does what is right;
he shows the proper path to those who go astray.
He leads the humble in doing right,
teaching them his way.
The Lord leads with unfailing love and faithfulness
all who keep his covenant and obey his demands.

For the honor of your name, O Lord,
forgive my many, many sins.

Intercession:

Concluding Prayer: Lord God, Almighty and Everlasting Father, you have brought us in safety to this new day. Preserve us with your mighty power that we may not fall into sin nor be overcome by adversity and in all we do direct us to the fulfilling of your purpose through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Midday

Vow: In a world of shallow living we'll develop habits and rhythms that sustain us in the way of Christ.

Vow Prayer: Almighty Father, we long for your Kingdom where kindness and truth will meet, where justice and peace will kiss. Give our minds wisdom, give our hearts empathy, and give our hands strength as we work on behalf of justice for all, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Evening

Call To Prayer: Our help is in the name of the Lord* The Maker of heaven and earth

Vow: In a world full of injustice, we will work at the grassroots level for visible social change and will be a voice for justice among the world's oppressed.

Scripture Related to the Vow: Luke 11:42

"What sorrow awaits you Pharisees! For you are careful to tithe even the tiniest income from your herb gardens, but you ignore justice and the love of God. You should tithe, yes, but do not neglect the more important things."

Evening Short Reading:

Biblical justice, however, also includes positive rights, which are the responsibility of the community to guarantee. Biblical justice has both an economic and a legal focus. The goal of justice is not only integrity in the legal system, it also includes the restoration of the community as a place where all live together in wholeness. The wrong to which justice responds is not merely an illegitimate process (like stealing). What is wrong is also an end result in which people are deprived of basic needs."

Ronald J. Sider, *Just Generosity: A New Vision for Overcoming Poverty in America*

Vow Prayer: Almighty Father, we long for your Kingdom where kindness and truth will meet, where justice and peace will kiss. Give our minds wisdom, give our hearts empathy, and give our hands strength as we work on behalf of justice for all, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Evening Gospel: Matthew 15:29-39

Jesus returned to the Sea of Galilee and climbed a hill and sat down. A vast crowd brought to him people who were lame, blind, crippled, those who couldn't speak, and many others.

They laid them before Jesus, and he healed them all. The crowd was amazed! Those who hadn't been able to speak were talking, the crippled were made well, the lame were walking, and the blind could see again! And they praised the God of Israel.

Then Jesus called his disciples and told them, "I feel sorry for these people. They have been here with me for three days, and they have nothing left to eat. I don't want to send them away hungry, or they will faint along the way."

The disciples replied, "Where would we get enough food here in the wilderness for such a huge crowd?"

Jesus asked, "How much bread do you have?"

They replied, "Seven loaves, and a few small fish."

So Jesus told all the people to sit down on the ground. Then he took the seven loaves and the fish, thanked God for them, and broke them into pieces. He gave them to the disciples, who distributed the food to the crowd.

They all ate as much as they wanted. Afterward, the disciples picked up seven large baskets of leftover food. There were 12,000 men who were fed that day, in addition to all the women and children. Then Jesus sent the people home, and he got into a boat and crossed over to the region of Magadan.

Lord's Prayer:

Our Father in heaven. Let your holiness be revealed
Let your kingdom come. Let your will be done on earth as in heaven
Give us today our daily bread. Erase our debts as we erase the debts of others.
Keep us from temptation and Rescue us from evil.
For kingdom, power and glory belong to you for ever and ever.
Amen.

Evening Psalm: Psalm 25: 12-22

Who are those who fear the Lord?
He will show them the path they should choose.
They will live in prosperity,
and their children will inherit the land.
The Lord is a friend to those who fear him.
He teaches them his covenant.
My eyes are always on the Lord,
for he rescues me from the traps of my enemies.

Turn to me and have mercy,
for I am alone and in deep distress.
My problems go from bad to worse.
Oh, save me from them all!
Feel my pain and see my trouble.
Forgive all my sins.
See how many enemies I have
and how viciously they hate me!
Protect me! Rescue my life from them!
Do not let me be disgraced, for in you I take refuge.
May integrity and honesty protect me,
for I put my hope in you.

O God, ransom Israel
from all its troubles.

Intercession:

Concluding Prayer: Lord Jesus stay with us, for evening is at hand and the day is past. Be our companion in the way, kindle our hearts and awaken hope, that we may know you as you are revealed in Scripture and the breaking of bread. Grant this for the sake of your love. Amen.

May 17, 2011

Morning

Call To Prayer: In the morning, O Lord, you hear my voice,* In the morning I lay my requests before you and wait in expectation.

Vow: In a world full of injustice, we will work at the grassroots level for visible social change and will be a voice for justice among the world's oppressed.

Scripture Related to the Vow: Luke 11:42

“What sorrow awaits you Pharisees! For you are careful to tithe even the tiniest income from your herb gardens, but you ignore justice and the love of God. You should tithe, yes, but do not neglect the more important things.”

Morning Short Reading:

Wherever law is destroyed, wherever injustice takes power, peace is put at risk, and indeed has already been damaged to some extent. Concern for peace is therefore first and foremost a concern to ensure a form of law that guarantees justice both for the individual and for society as a whole.

Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, *Values in a Time of Upheaval*

Vow Prayer: Almighty Father, we long for your Kingdom where kindness and truth will meet, where justice and peace will kiss. Give our minds wisdom, give our hearts empathy, and give our hands strength as we work on behalf of justice for all, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Morning Gospel: Matthew 16:1-12

One day the Pharisees and Sadducees came to test Jesus, demanding that he show them a miraculous sign from heaven to prove his authority.

He replied, “You know the saying, ‘Red sky at night means fair weather tomorrow; red sky in the morning means foul weather all day.’ You know how to interpret the weather signs in the sky, but you don’t know how to interpret the signs of the times! Only an evil, adulterous generation would demand a miraculous sign, but the only sign I will give them is the sign of the prophet Jonah.” Then Jesus left them and went away.

Later, after they crossed to the other side of the lake, the disciples discovered they had forgotten to bring any bread. “Watch out!” Jesus warned them. “Beware of the yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees.”

At this they began to argue with each other because they hadn’t brought any bread. Jesus knew what they were saying, so he said, “You have so little faith! Why are you arguing with each other about having no bread? Don’t you understand even yet? Don’t you remember the , I fed with five loaves, and the baskets of leftovers you picked up? Or the , I fed with seven loaves, and the large baskets of leftovers you picked up? Why can’t you understand that I’m not talking about bread? So again I say, ‘Beware of the yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees.’”

Then at last they understood that he wasn’t speaking about the yeast in bread, but about the deceptive teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees.

Lord’s Prayer:

Our Father in heaven. Let your holiness be revealed
Let your kingdom come. Let your will be done on earth as in heaven
Give us today our daily bread. Erase our debts as we erase the debts of others.
Keep us from temptation and Rescue us from evil.
For kingdom, power and glory belong to you for ever and ever.
Amen.

Morning Psalm: Psalm 26

A psalm of David.

Declare me innocent, O Lord,
for I have acted with integrity;
I have trusted in the Lord without wavering.
Put me on trial, Lord, and cross-examine me.
Test my motives and my heart.
For I am always aware of your unfailing love,
and I have lived according to your truth.
I do not spend time with liars
or go along with hypocrites.
I hate the gatherings of those who do evil,
and I refuse to join in with the wicked.
I wash my hands to declare my innocence.
I come to your altar, O Lord,
singing a song of thanksgiving
and telling of all your wonders.
I love your sanctuary, Lord,
the place where your glorious presence dwells.

Don't let me suffer the fate of sinners.
Don't condemn me along with murderers.
Their hands are dirty with evil schemes,
and they constantly take bribes.
But I am not like that; I live with integrity.
So redeem me and show me mercy.
Now I stand on solid ground,
and I will publicly praise the Lord.

Intercession:

Concluding Prayer: Lord God, Almighty and Everlasting Father, you have brought us in safety to this new day. Preserve us with your mighty power that we may not fall into sin nor be overcome by adversity and in all we do direct us to the fulfilling of your purpose through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Midday

Vow: In a world of shallow living we'll develop habits and rhythms that sustain us in the way of Christ.

Vow Prayer: Almighty Father, we long for your Kingdom where kindness and truth will meet, where justice and peace will kiss. Give our minds wisdom, give our hearts empathy, and give our hands strength as we work on behalf of justice for all, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Evening

Call To Prayer: Our help is in the name of the Lord* The Maker of heaven and earth

Vow: In a world full of injustice, we will work at the grassroots level for visible social change and will be a voice for justice among the world's oppressed.

Scripture Related to the Vow: Luke 11:42

“What sorrow awaits you Pharisees! For you are careful to tithe even the tiniest income from your herb gardens, but you ignore justice and the love of God. You should tithe, yes, but do not neglect the more important things.”

Evening Short Reading:

Ecological justice names the disposition to act fairly when faced with the competing claims of creatures human and nonhuman, of endangered species and damaged ecosystems.
Steven Bouma-Prediger, *For the Beauty of the Earth: a Christian Vision for Creation Care*

Vow Prayer: Almighty Father, we long for your Kingdom where kindness and truth will meet, where justice and peace will kiss. Give our minds wisdom, give our hearts empathy, and give our hands strength as we work on behalf of justice for all, through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Evening Gospel: Matthew 16:13-28

When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, “Who do people say that the Son of Man is?”

“Well,” they replied, “some say John the Baptist, some say Elijah, and others say Jeremiah or one of the other prophets.”

Then he asked them, “But who do you say I am?”

Simon Peter answered, “You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.”

Jesus replied, “You are blessed, Simon son of John, because my Father in heaven has revealed this to you. You did not learn this from any human being. Now I say to you that you are Peter (which means ‘rock’), and upon this rock I will build my church, and all the powers of hell will not conquer it. And I will give you the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven. Whatever you forbid on earth will be forbidden in heaven, and whatever you permit on earth will be permitted in heaven.”

Then he sternly warned the disciples not to tell anyone that he was the Messiah.

From then on Jesus began to tell his disciples plainly that it was necessary for him to go to Jerusalem, and that he would suffer many terrible things at the hands of the elders, the leading priests, and the teachers of religious law. He would be killed, but on the third day he would be raised from the dead.

But Peter took him aside and began to reprimand him[i] for saying such things. “Heaven forbid, Lord,” he said. “This will never happen to you!”

Jesus turned to Peter and said, “Get away from me, Satan! You are a dangerous trap to me. You are seeing things merely from a human point of view, not from God’s.”

Then Jesus said to his disciples, "If any of you wants to be my follower, you must turn from your selfish ways, take up your cross, and follow me. If you try to hang on to your life, you will lose it. But if you give up your life for my sake, you will save it. And what do you benefit if you gain the whole world but lose your own soul? Is anything worth more than your soul? For the Son of Man will come with his angels in the glory of his Father and will judge all people according to their deeds. And I tell you the truth, some standing here right now will not die before they see the Son of Man coming in his Kingdom."

Lord's Prayer:

Our Father in heaven. Let your holiness be revealed
Let your kingdom come. Let your will be done on earth as in heaven
Give us today our daily bread. Erase our debts as we erase the debts of others.
Keep us from temptation and Rescue us from evil.
For kingdom, power and glory belong to you for ever and ever.
Amen.

Evening Psalm: Psalm 27

A psalm of David.

The Lord is my light and my salvation—
so why should I be afraid?
The Lord is my fortress, protecting me from danger,
so why should I tremble?
When evil people come to devour me,
when my enemies and foes attack me,
they will stumble and fall.
Though a mighty army surrounds me,
my heart will not be afraid.
Even if I am attacked,
I will remain confident.

The one thing I ask of the Lord—
the thing I seek most—
is to live in the house of the Lord all the days of my life,
delighting in the Lord's perfections
and meditating in his Temple.
For he will conceal me there when troubles come;
he will hide me in his sanctuary.
He will place me out of reach on a high rock.
Then I will hold my head high
above my enemies who surround me.
At his sanctuary I will offer sacrifices with shouts of joy,
singing and praising the Lord with music.

Hear me as I pray, O Lord.
Be merciful and answer me!
My heart has heard you say, "Come and talk with me."
And my heart responds, "Lord, I am coming."
Do not turn your back on me.
Do not reject your servant in anger.
You have always been my helper.
Don't leave me now; don't abandon me,
O God of my salvation!
Even if my father and mother abandon me,
the Lord will hold me close.

Teach me how to live, O Lord.
Lead me along the right path,
for my enemies are waiting for me.
Do not let me fall into their hands.
For they accuse me of things I've never done;
with every breath they threaten me with violence.

Yet I am confident I will see the Lord's goodness
while I am here in the land of the living.

Wait patiently for the Lord.
Be brave and courageous.
Yes, wait patiently for the Lord.

Intercession:

Concluding Prayer: Lord Jesus stay with us, for evening is at hand and the day is past. Be our companion in the way, kindle our hearts and awaken hope, that we may know you as you are revealed in Scripture and the breaking of bread. Grant this for the sake of your love. Amen.

May 18, 2011

Morning

Call To Prayer: In the morning, O Lord, you hear my voice,* In the morning I lay my requests before you and wait in expectation.

Vow: In a world full of injustice, we will work at the grassroots level for visible social change and will be a voice for justice among the world's oppressed.

Scripture Related to the Vow: Luke 11:42

“What sorrow awaits you Pharisees! For you are careful to tithe even the tiniest income from your herb gardens, but you ignore justice and the love of God. You should tithe, yes, but do not neglect the more important things.”

Morning Short Reading:

We Christians must join all our fellow citizens in elaborating a moral justification of law and of justice that is nourished by fundamental Christian insights, no matter how the individual would justify these and no matter how he connects them to the totality of his life.

Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, *Values in a Time of Upheaval*

Vow Prayer: Almighty Father, we long for your Kingdom where kindness and truth will meet, where justice and peace will kiss. Give our minds wisdom, give our hearts empathy, and give our hands strength as we work on behalf of justice for all, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Morning Gospel: Matthew 17:1-13

Six days later Jesus took Peter and the two brothers, James and John, and led them up a high mountain to be alone. As the men watched, Jesus' appearance was transformed so that his face shone like the sun, and his clothes became as white as light. Suddenly, Moses and Elijah appeared and began talking with Jesus.

Peter exclaimed, “Lord, it's wonderful for us to be here! If you want, I'll make three shelters as memorials—one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah.”

But even as he spoke, a bright cloud overshadowed them, and a voice from the cloud said, “This is my dearly loved Son, who brings me great joy. Listen to him.” The disciples were terrified and fell face down on the ground.

Then Jesus came over and touched them. “Get up,” he said. “Don't be afraid.” And when they looked up, Moses and Elijah were gone, and they saw only Jesus.

As they went back down the mountain, Jesus commanded them, “Don't tell anyone what you have seen until the Son of Man has been raised from the dead.”

Then his disciples asked him, “Why do the teachers of religious law insist that Elijah must return before the Messiah comes?”

Jesus replied, “Elijah is indeed coming first to get everything ready. But I tell you, Elijah has already come, but he wasn't recognized, and they chose to abuse him. And in the same way they will also make the Son of Man suffer.” Then the disciples realized he was talking about John the Baptist.

Lord's Prayer:

Our Father in heaven. Let your holiness be revealed
Let your kingdom come. Let your will be done on earth as in heaven
Give us today our daily bread. Erase our debts as we erase the debts of others.
Keep us from temptation and Rescue us from evil.

For kingdom, power and glory belong to you for ever and ever.
Amen.

Morning Psalm: Psalm 28

A psalm of David.

I pray to you, O Lord, my rock.
Do not turn a deaf ear to me.
For if you are silent,
I might as well give up and die.
Listen to my prayer for mercy
as I cry out to you for help,
as I lift my hands toward your holy sanctuary.

Do not drag me away with the wicked—
with those who do evil—
those who speak friendly words to their neighbors
while planning evil in their hearts.
Give them the punishment they so richly deserve!
Measure it out in proportion to their wickedness.
Pay them back for all their evil deeds!
Give them a taste of what they have done to others.
They care nothing for what the Lord has done
or for what his hands have made.
So he will tear them down,
and they will never be rebuilt!

Praise the Lord!
For he has heard my cry for mercy.
The Lord is my strength and shield.
I trust him with all my heart.
He helps me, and my heart is filled with joy.
I burst out in songs of thanksgiving.

The Lord gives his people strength.
He is a safe fortress for his anointed king.
Save your people!
Bless Israel, your special possession.
Lead them like a shepherd,
and carry them in your arms forever.

Intercession:

Concluding Prayer: Lord God, Almighty and Everlasting Father, you have brought us in safety to this new day. Preserve us with your mighty power that we may not fall into sin nor be overcome by adversity and in all we do direct us to the fulfilling of your purpose through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Midday

Vow: In a world of shallow living we'll develop habits and rhythms that sustain us in the way of Christ.

Vow Prayer: Almighty Father, we long for your Kingdom where kindness and truth will meet, where justice and peace will kiss. Give our minds wisdom, give our hearts empathy, and give our hands strength as we work on behalf of justice for all, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Evening

Call To Prayer: Our help is in the name of the Lord* The Maker of heaven and earth

Vow: In a world full of injustice, we will work at the grassroots level for visible social change and will be a voice for justice among the world's oppressed.

Scripture Related to the Vow: Luke 11:42

"What sorrow awaits you Pharisees! For you are careful to tithe even the tiniest income from your herb gardens, but you ignore justice and the love of God. You should tithe, yes, but do not neglect the more important things."

Evening Short Reading:

Instead of asking, what should we do? [Christian ecological virtue ethics] asks, what kind of people should we be? Instead of focusing on conduct it zeroes in on character. More exactly, the questions posed here are: What particular virtues arise from a biblically informed Christian ecological ethic? And how important are they? Are they merely nice to have, or are they necessary? Which ones are crucial for the health of household earth? It is my contention that certain virtues are indispensable if Christians are to responsibly fulfill their calling as earthkeepers. Certain traits of character are central to earth-care."

Steven Bouma-Prediger, *For the Beauty of the Earth: A Christian Vision for Creation Care*

Vow Prayer: Almighty Father, we long for your Kingdom where kindness and truth will meet, where justice and peace will kiss. Give our minds wisdom, give our hearts empathy, and give our hands strength as we work on behalf of justice for all, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Evening Gospel: Matthew 17:14-27

At the foot of the mountain, a large crowd was waiting for them. A man came and knelt before Jesus and said, "Lord, have mercy on my son. He has seizures and suffers terribly. He often falls into the fire or into the water. So I brought him to your disciples, but they couldn't heal him."

Jesus said, "You faithless and corrupt people! How long must I be with you? How long must I put up with you? Bring the boy here to me." Then Jesus rebuked the demon in the boy, and it left him. From that moment the boy was well.

Afterward the disciples asked Jesus privately, "Why couldn't we cast out that demon?"

"You don't have enough faith," Jesus told them. "I tell you the truth, if you had faith even as small as a mustard seed, you could say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it would move. Nothing would be impossible."

After they gathered again in Galilee, Jesus told them, “The Son of Man is going to be betrayed into the hands of his enemies. He will be killed, but on the third day he will be raised from the dead.” And the disciples were filled with grief.

On their arrival in Capernaum, the collectors of the Temple tax came to Peter and asked him, “Doesn’t your teacher pay the Temple tax?”

“Yes, he does,” Peter replied. Then he went into the house.

But before he had a chance to speak, Jesus asked him, “What do you think, Peter? Do kings tax their own people or the people they have conquered?”

“They tax the people they have conquered,” Peter replied.

“Well, then,” Jesus said, “the citizens are free! However, we don’t want to offend them, so go down to the lake and throw in a line. Open the mouth of the first fish you catch, and you will find a large silver coin. Take it and pay the tax for both of us.”

Lord’s Prayer:

Our Father in heaven. Let your holiness be revealed
Let your kingdom come. Let your will be done on earth as in heaven
Give us today our daily bread. Erase our debts as we erase the debts of others.
Keep us from temptation and Rescue us from evil.
For kingdom, power and glory belong to you for ever and ever.
Amen.

Evening Psalm: Psalm 29

A psalm of David.

Honor the Lord, you heavenly beings;
 honor the Lord for his glory and strength.
Honor the Lord for the glory of his name.
 Worship the Lord in the splendor of his holiness.

The voice of the Lord echoes above the sea.
 The God of glory thunders.
 The Lord thunders over the mighty sea.
The voice of the Lord is powerful;
 the voice of the Lord is majestic.
The voice of the Lord splits the mighty cedars;
 the Lord shatters the cedars of Lebanon.
He makes Lebanon’s mountains skip like a calf;
 he makes Mount Hermon leap like a young wild ox.
The voice of the Lord strikes
 with bolts of lightning.
The voice of the Lord makes the barren wilderness quake;
 the Lord shakes the wilderness of Kadesh.
The voice of the Lord twists mighty oaks
 and strips the forests bare.
In his Temple everyone shouts, “Glory!”

The Lord rules over the floodwaters.
 The Lord reigns as king forever.
The Lord gives his people strength.
 The Lord blesses them with peace.

Intercession:

Concluding Prayer: Lord Jesus stay with us, for evening is at hand and the day is past. Be our companion in the way, kindle our hearts and awaken hope, that we may know you as you are revealed in Scripture and the breaking of bread. Grant this for the sake of your love. Amen.

May 19, 2011

Morning

Call To Prayer: In the morning, O Lord, you hear my voice,* In the morning I lay my requests before you and wait in expectation.

Vow: In a world full of injustice, we will work at the grassroots level for visible social change and will be a voice for justice among the world's oppressed.

Scripture Related to the Vow: Luke 11:42

“What sorrow awaits you Pharisees! For you are careful to tithe even the tiniest income from your herb gardens, but you ignore justice and the love of God. You should tithe, yes, but do not neglect the more important things.”

Morning Short Reading:

God holds the world in his hands, but he does so to no small extent by means of our freedom, and we must use this--as a freedom to choose the good--to oppose the freedom of evil.
Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, *Values in a Time of Upheaval*

Vow Prayer: Almighty Father, we long for your Kingdom where kindness and truth will meet, where justice and peace will kiss. Give our minds wisdom, give our hearts empathy, and give our hands strength as we work on behalf of justice for all, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Morning Gospel: Matthew 18:1-14

About that time the disciples came to Jesus and asked, “Who is greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven?”

Jesus called a little child to him and put the child among them. Then he said, “I tell you the truth, unless you turn from your sins and become like little children, you will never get into the Kingdom of Heaven. So anyone who becomes as humble as this little child is the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven.

“And anyone who welcomes a little child like this on my behalf is welcoming me. But if you cause one of these little ones who trusts in me to fall into sin, it would be better for you to have a large millstone tied around your neck and be drowned in the depths of the sea.

“What sorrow awaits the world, because it tempts people to sin. Temptations are inevitable, but what sorrow awaits the person who does the tempting. So if your hand or foot causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. It's better to enter eternal life with only one hand or one foot than to be thrown into eternal fire with both of your hands and feet. And if your eye causes you to sin, gouge it out and throw it away. It's better to enter eternal life with only one eye than to have two eyes and be thrown into the fire of hell.

“Beware that you don't look down on any of these little ones. For I tell you that in heaven their angels are always in the presence of my heavenly Father.

“If a man has a hundred sheep and one of them wanders away, what will he do? Won't he leave the ninety-nine others on the hills and go out to search for the one that is lost? And if he finds it, I tell you the truth, he will rejoice over it more than over the ninety-nine that didn't wander away! In the same way, it is not my heavenly Father's will that even one of these little ones should perish.

And if he finds it, I tell you the truth, he will rejoice over it more than over the ninety-nine that didn't wander away! In the same way, it is not my heavenly Father's will that even one of these little ones should perish.

Lord's Prayer:

Our Father in heaven. Let your holiness be revealed
Let your kingdom come. Let your will be done on earth as in heaven
Give us today our daily bread. Erase our debts as we erase the debts of others.
Keep us from temptation and Rescue us from evil.
For kingdom, power and glory belong to you for ever and ever.
Amen.

Morning Psalm: Psalm 30

A psalm of David. A song for the dedication of the Temple.
I will exalt you, Lord, for you rescued me.
You refused to let my enemies triumph over me.
O Lord my God, I cried to you for help,
and you restored my health.
You brought me up from the grave, O Lord.
You kept me from falling into the pit of death.

Sing to the Lord, all you godly ones!
Praise his holy name.
For his anger lasts only a moment,
but his favor lasts a lifetime!
Weeping may last through the night,
but joy comes with the morning.

When I was prosperous, I said,
"Nothing can stop me now!"
Your favor, O Lord, made me as secure as a mountain.
Then you turned away from me, and I was shattered.

I cried out to you, O Lord.
I begged the Lord for mercy, saying,
"What will you gain if I die,
if I sink into the grave?
Can my dust praise you?
Can it tell of your faithfulness?
Hear me, Lord, and have mercy on me.
Help me, O Lord."

You have turned my mourning into joyful dancing.
You have taken away my clothes of mourning and clothed me with joy,
that I might sing praises to you and not be silent.
O Lord my God, I will give you thanks forever!

Intercession:

Concluding Prayer: Lord God, Almighty and Everlasting Father, you have brought us in safety to this new day. Preserve us with your mighty power that we may not fall into sin nor be overcome by adversity and in all we do direct us to the fulfilling of your purpose through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Midday

Vow: In a world of shallow living we'll develop habits and rhythms that sustain us in the way of Christ.

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Evening

Call To Prayer: Our help is in the name of the Lord* The Maker of heaven and earth

Vow: In a world full of injustice, we will work at the grassroots level for visible social change and will be a voice for justice among the world's oppressed.

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Evening Short Reading:

The spirituality of life and peace invites us to a dedication to the praxis of justice. Justice provides a ground upon which peace and life grow. It has been mentioned that experience is an essential aspect of spirituality. To that measure, spirituality builds on our experience and leads to praxis in our life. Otherwise, our spirituality would become vain. At the same time, praxis must be nourished by spirituality. Otherwise, praxis becomes sterile or cannot endure. It is submitted here that a spirituality of life and peace be expressed and actualized as a commitment to ecological justice and social justice.

Cho Hyun-Chul, *An Ecological Vision Of The World: Towards A Christian Ecological Theology For Our Age*

Vow Prayer: Almighty Father, we long for your Kingdom where kindness and truth will meet, where justice and peace will kiss. Give our minds wisdom, give our hearts empathy, and give our hands strength as we work on behalf of justice for all, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Evening Gospel: Matthew 18:13-35

“If another believer sins against you, go privately and point out the offense. If the other person listens and confesses it, you have won that person back. But if you are unsuccessful, take one or two others with you and go back again, so that everything you say may be confirmed by two or three witnesses. If the person still refuses to listen, take your case to the church. Then if he or she won't accept the church's decision, treat that person as a pagan or a corrupt tax collector.

“I tell you the truth, whatever you forbid on earth will be forbidden in heaven, and whatever you permit on earth will be permitted in heaven.

“I also tell you this If two of you agree here on earth concerning anything you ask, my Father in heaven will do it for you. For where two or three gather together as my followers, I am there among them.”

Then Peter came to him and asked, “Lord, how often should I forgive someone who sins against me? Seven times?”

“No, not seven times,” Jesus replied, “but seventy times seven!

“Therefore, the Kingdom of Heaven can be compared to a king who decided to bring his accounts up to date with servants who had borrowed money from him. In the process, one of his debtors was brought in who owed him millions of dollars. He couldn’t pay, so his master ordered that he be sold—along with his wife, his children, and everything he owned—to pay the debt.

“But the man fell down before his master and begged him, ‘Please, be patient with me, and I will pay it all.’ Then his master was filled with pity for him, and he released him and forgave his debt.

“But when the man left the king, he went to a fellow servant who owed him a few thousand dollars.[i] He grabbed him by the throat and demanded instant payment.

“His fellow servant fell down before him and begged for a little more time. ‘Be patient with me, and I will pay it,’ he pleaded. But his creditor wouldn’t wait. He had the man arrested and put in prison until the debt could be paid in full.

“When some of the other servants saw this, they were very upset. They went to the king and told him everything that had happened. Then the king called in the man he had forgiven and said, ‘You evil servant! I forgave you that tremendous debt because you pleaded with me. Shouldn’t you have mercy on your fellow servant, just as I had mercy on you?’ Then the angry king sent the man to prison to be tortured until he had paid his entire debt.

“That’s what my heavenly Father will do to you if you refuse to forgive your brothers and sisters from your heart.”

Lord’s Prayer:

Our Father in heaven. Let your holiness be revealed
Let your kingdom come. Let your will be done on earth as in heaven
Give us today our daily bread. Erase our debts as we erase the debts of others.
Keep us from temptation and Rescue us from evil.
For kingdom, power and glory belong to you for ever and ever.
Amen.

Evening Psalm: Psalm 31: 1-11

For the choir director: A psalm of David.

O Lord, I have come to you for protection;
don’t let me be disgraced.

Save me, for you do what is right.

Turn your ear to listen to me;
rescue me quickly.

Be my rock of protection,
a fortress where I will be safe.

You are my rock and my fortress.

For the honor of your name, lead me out of this danger.

Pull me from the trap my enemies set for me,
for I find protection in you alone.

I entrust my spirit into your hand.
Rescue me, Lord, for you are a faithful God.

I hate those who worship worthless idols.
I trust in the Lord.

I will be glad and rejoice in your unfailing love,
for you have seen my troubles,
and you care about the anguish of my soul.

You have not handed me over to my enemies
but have set me in a safe place.

Have mercy on me, Lord, for I am in distress.

Tears blur my eyes.
My body and soul are withering away.
I am dying from grief;
my years are shortened by sadness.
Sin has drained my strength;
I am wasting away from within.
I am scorned by all my enemies
and despised by my neighbors—
even my friends are afraid to come near me.
When they see me on the street,
they run the other way.

Intercession:

Concluding Prayer: Lord Jesus stay with us, for evening is at hand and the day is past. Be our companion in the way, kindle our hearts and awaken hope, that we may know you as you are revealed in Scripture and the breaking of bread. Grant this for the sake of your love. Amen.

May 20, 2011

Morning

Call To Prayer: In the morning, O Lord, you hear my voice,* In the morning I lay my requests before you and wait in expectation.

Vow: In a world full of injustice, we will work at the grassroots level for visible social change and will be a voice for justice among the world's oppressed.

Scripture Related to the Vow: Luke 11:42

“What sorrow awaits you Pharisees! For you are careful to tithe even the tiniest income from your herb gardens, but you ignore justice and the love of God. You should tithe, yes, but do not neglect the more important things.”

Morning Short Reading:

Faith does not create a better world, but it does call forth and strengthen the freedom of the good against the temptation to misuse our freedom to do evil.
Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, *Values in a Time of Upheaval*

Vow Prayer: Almighty Father, we long for your Kingdom where kindness and truth will meet, where justice and peace will kiss. Give our minds wisdom, give our hearts empathy, and give our hands strength as we work on behalf of justice for all, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Morning Gospel: Matthew 19:1-15

When Jesus had finished saying these things, he left Galilee and went down to the region of Judea east of the Jordan River. Large crowds followed him there, and he healed their sick. Some Pharisees came and tried to trap him with this question “Should a man be allowed to divorce his wife for just any reason?”

“Haven't you read the Scriptures?” Jesus replied. “They record that from the beginning ‘God made them male and female.’ And he said, ‘This explains why a man leaves his father and mother and is joined to his wife, and the two are united into one.’ Since they are no longer two but one, let no one split apart what God has joined together.”

“Then why did Moses say in the law that a man could give his wife a written notice of divorce and send her away?” they asked.

Jesus replied, “Moses permitted divorce only as a concession to your hard hearts, but it was not what God had originally intended. And I tell you this, whoever divorces his wife and marries someone else commits adultery—unless his wife has been unfaithful.”

Jesus' disciples then said to him, “If this is the case, it is better not to marry!”

“Not everyone can accept this statement,” Jesus said. “Only those whom God helps. Some are born as eunuchs, some have been made eunuchs by others, and some choose not to marry for the sake of the Kingdom of Heaven. Let anyone accept this who can.”

One day some parents brought their children to Jesus so he could lay his hands on them and pray for them. But the disciples scolded the parents for bothering him.

But Jesus said, “Let the children come to me. Don't stop them! For the Kingdom of Heaven belongs to those who are like these children.” And he placed his hands on their heads and blessed them before he left.

Lord's Prayer:

Our Father in heaven. Let your holiness be revealed
Let your kingdom come. Let your will be done on earth as in heaven
Give us today our daily bread. Erase our debts as we erase the debts of others.
Keep us from temptation and Rescue us from evil.
For kingdom, power and glory belong to you for ever and ever.
Amen.

Morning Psalm: Psalm 31: 12-24

I am ignored as if I were dead,
as if I were a broken pot.
I have heard the many rumors about me,
and I am surrounded by terror.
My enemies conspire against me,
plotting to take my life.

But I am trusting you, O Lord,
saying, “You are my God!”
My future is in your hands.
Rescue me from those who hunt me down relentlessly.
Let your favor shine on your servant.
In your unfailing love, rescue me.
Don’t let me be disgraced, O Lord,
for I call out to you for help.
Let the wicked be disgraced;
let them lie silent in the grave.
Silence their lying lips—
those proud and arrogant lips that accuse the godly.

How great is the goodness
you have stored up for those who fear you.
You lavish it on those who come to you for protection,
blessing them before the watching world.
You hide them in the shelter of your presence,
safe from those who conspire against them.
You shelter them in your presence,
far from accusing tongues.

Praise the Lord,
for he has shown me the wonders of his unfailing love.
He kept me safe when my city was under attack.
In panic I cried out,
“I am cut off from the Lord!”
But you heard my cry for mercy
and answered my call for help.

Love the Lord, all you godly ones!
For the Lord protects those who are loyal to him,
but he harshly punishes the arrogant.
So be strong and courageous,
all you who put your hope in the Lord!

Intercession:

Concluding Prayer: Lord God, Almighty and Everlasting Father, you have brought us in safety to this new day. Preserve us with your mighty power that we may not fall into sin nor be

overcome by adversity and in all we do direct us to the fulfilling of your purpose through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Midday

Vow: In a world of shallow living we'll develop habits and rhythms that sustain us in the way of Christ.

Vow Prayer: Almighty Father, we long for your Kingdom where kindness and truth will meet, where justice and peace will kiss. Give our minds wisdom, give our hearts empathy, and give our hands strength as we work on behalf of justice for all, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Evening

Call To Prayer: Our help is in the name of the Lord* The Maker of heaven and earth

Vow: In a world full of injustice, we will work at the grassroots level for visible social change and will be a voice for justice among the world's oppressed.

Scripture Related to the Vow: Luke 11:42

"What sorrow awaits you Pharisees! For you are careful to tithe even the tiniest income from your herb gardens, but you ignore justice and the love of God. You should tithe, yes, but do not neglect the more important things."

Evening Short Reading:

Peace must be secured in order that life may sprout and thrive. Justice is what brings forth peace. Peace and life are guaranteed only when we pursue and practice justice. At the same time, an ecological vision of the world requires that the justice for which we strive be comprehensive of both humanity and nature.

Cho Hyun-Chul, *An Ecological Vision Of The World: Towards A Christian Ecological Theology For Our Age*

Vow Prayer: Almighty Father, we long for your Kingdom where kindness and truth will meet, where justice and peace will kiss. Give our minds wisdom, give our hearts empathy, and give our hands strength as we work on behalf of justice for all, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Evening Gospel: Matthew 19:16-30

Someone came to Jesus with this question "Teacher, what good deed must I do to have eternal life?"

"Why ask me about what is good?" Jesus replied. "There is only One who is good. But to answer your question—if you want to receive eternal life, keep the commandments."

"Which ones?" the man asked.

And Jesus replied "You must not murder. You must not commit adultery. You must not steal. You must not testify falsely. Honor your father and mother. Love your neighbor as yourself."

"I've obeyed all these commandments," the young man replied. "What else must I do?"

Jesus told him, "If you want to be perfect, go and sell all your possessions and give the money to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me."

But when the young man heard this, he went away sad, for he had many possessions.

Then Jesus said to his disciples, “I tell you the truth, it is very hard for a rich person to enter the Kingdom of Heaven. I’ll say it again—it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter the Kingdom of God!”

The disciples were astounded. “Then who in the world can be saved?” they asked.

Jesus looked at them intently and said, “Humanly speaking, it is impossible. But with God everything is possible.”

Then Peter said to him, “We’ve given up everything to follow you. What will we get?”

Jesus replied, “I assure you that when the world is made new and the Son of Man sits upon his glorious throne, you who have been my followers will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. And everyone who has given up houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or property, for my sake, will receive a hundred times as much in return and will inherit eternal life. But many who are the greatest now will be least important then, and those who seem least important now will be the greatest then.

Lord’s Prayer:

Our Father in heaven. Let your holiness be revealed
Let your kingdom come. Let your will be done on earth as in heaven
Give us today our daily bread. Erase our debts as we erase the debts of others.
Keep us from temptation and Rescue us from evil.
For kingdom, power and glory belong to you for ever and ever.
Amen.

Evening Psalm: Psalm 32

A psalm of David.

Oh, what joy for those
whose disobedience is forgiven,
whose sin is put out of sight!
Yes, what joy for those
whose record the Lord has cleared of guilt,
whose lives are lived in complete honesty!
When I refused to confess my sin,
my body wasted away,
and I groaned all day long.

Day and night your hand of discipline was heavy on me.
My strength evaporated like water in the summer heat.

Interlude

Finally, I confessed all my sins to you
and stopped trying to hide my guilt.
I said to myself, “I will confess my rebellion to the Lord.”
And you forgave me! All my guilt is gone.

Interlude

Therefore, let all the godly pray to you while there is still time,
that they may not drown in the floodwaters of judgment.

For you are my hiding place;
you protect me from trouble.
You surround me with songs of victory.

Interlude

The Lord says, “I will guide you along the best pathway for your life.
I will advise you and watch over you.
Do not be like a senseless horse or mule
that needs a bit and bridle to keep it under control.”

Many sorrows come to the wicked,
but unfailing love surrounds those who trust the Lord.
So rejoice in the Lord and be glad, all you who obey him!
Shout for joy, all you whose hearts are pure!

Intercession:

Concluding Prayer: Lord Jesus stay with us, for evening is at hand and the day is past. Be our companion in the way, kindle our hearts and awaken hope, that we may know you as you are revealed in Scripture and the breaking of bread. Grant this for the sake of your love. Amen.

May 21, 2011

Morning

Call To Prayer: In the morning, O Lord, you hear my voice,* In the morning I lay my requests before you and wait in expectation.

Vow: In a world full of injustice, we will work at the grassroots level for visible social change and will be a voice for justice among the world's oppressed.

Scripture Related to the Vow: Luke 11:42

“What sorrow awaits you Pharisees! For you are careful to tithe even the tiniest income from your herb gardens, but you ignore justice and the love of God. You should tithe, yes, but do not neglect the more important things.”

Morning Short Reading:

God promised Abraham that he would not destroy the city of Sodom if ten righteous men were found there. We ought to do all we can to ensure that the ten righteous ones who can save a city are never lacking.

Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, *Values in a Time of Upheaval*

Vow Prayer: Almighty Father, we long for your Kingdom where kindness and truth will meet, where justice and peace will kiss. Give our minds wisdom, give our hearts empathy, and give our hands strength as we work on behalf of justice for all, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Morning Gospel: Matthew 20:1-16

“For the Kingdom of Heaven is like the landowner who went out early one morning to hire workers for his vineyard. He agreed to pay the normal daily wage and sent them out to work.

“At nine o'clock in the morning he was passing through the marketplace and saw some people standing around doing nothing. So he hired them, telling them he would pay them whatever was right at the end of the day. So they went to work in the vineyard. At noon and again at three o'clock he did the same thing.

“At five o'clock that afternoon he was in town again and saw some more people standing around. He asked them, ‘Why haven't you been working today?’

“They replied, ‘Because no one hired us.’

“The landowner told them, ‘Then go out and join the others in my vineyard.’

“That evening he told the foreman to call the workers in and pay them, beginning with the last workers first. When those hired at five o'clock were paid, each received a full day's wage. When those hired first came to get their pay, they assumed they would receive more. But they, too, were paid a day's wage. When they received their pay, they protested to the owner, ‘Those people worked only one hour, and yet you've paid them just as much as you paid us who worked all day in the scorching heat.’

“He answered one of them, ‘Friend, I haven't been unfair! Didn't you agree to work all day for the usual wage? Take your money and go. I wanted to pay this last worker the same as you. Is it against the law for me to do what I want with my money? Should you be jealous because I am kind to others?’

“So those who are last now will be first then, and those who are first will be last.”

Lord's Prayer:

Our Father in heaven. Let your holiness be revealed

Let your kingdom come. Let your will be done on earth as in heaven
Give us today our daily bread. Erase our debts as we erase the debts of others.
Keep us from temptation and Rescue us from evil.
For kingdom, power and glory belong to you for ever and ever.
Amen.

Morning Psalm: Psalm 33: 1-12

Let the godly sing for joy to the Lord;
it is fitting for the pure to praise him.
Praise the Lord with melodies on the lyre;
make music for him on the ten-stringed harp.
Sing a new song of praise to him;
play skillfully on the harp, and sing with joy.
For the word of the Lord holds true,
and we can trust everything he does.
He loves whatever is just and good;
the unfailing love of the Lord fills the earth.

The Lord merely spoke,
and the heavens were created.
He breathed the word,
and all the stars were born.
He assigned the sea its boundaries
and locked the oceans in vast reservoirs.
Let the whole world fear the Lord,
and let everyone stand in awe of him.
For when he spoke, the world began!
It appeared at his command.

The Lord frustrates the plans of the nations
and thwarts all their schemes.
But the Lord's plans stand firm forever;
his intentions can never be shaken.

What joy for the nation whose God is the Lord,
whose people he has chosen as his inheritance.

Intercession:

Concluding Prayer: Lord God, Almighty and Everlasting Father, you have brought us in safety to this new day. Preserve us with your mighty power that we may not fall into sin nor be overcome by adversity and in all we do direct us to the fulfilling of your purpose through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Midday

Vow: In a world of shallow living we'll develop habits and rhythms that sustain us in the way of Christ.

Vow Prayer: Almighty Father, we long for your Kingdom where kindness and truth will meet, where justice and peace will kiss. Give our minds wisdom, give our hearts empathy, and give

our hands strength as we work on behalf of justice for all, through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Evening

Call To Prayer: Our help is in the name of the Lord* The Maker of heaven and earth

Vow: In a world full of injustice, we will work at the grassroots level for visible social change and will be a voice for justice among the world's oppressed.

Scripture Related to the Vow: Luke 11:42

“What sorrow awaits you Pharisees! For you are careful to tithe even the tiniest income from your herb gardens, but you ignore justice and the love of God. You should tithe, yes, but do not neglect the more important things.”

Evening Short Reading:

What is needed today is both social justice and ecological justice, i.e., cosmic justice, which embraces nature and humans. A spirituality of life and peace rooted in interconnectedness and intrinsic value invites us to dedicate ourselves to ecological concern as well as social concern.

Cho Hyun-Chul, *An Ecological Vision Of The World: Towards A Christian Ecological Theology For Our Age*

Vow Prayer: Almighty Father, we long for your Kingdom where kindness and truth will meet, where justice and peace will kiss. Give our minds wisdom, give our hearts empathy, and give our hands strength as we work on behalf of justice for all, through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Evening Gospel: Matthew 20:17-34

As Jesus was going up to Jerusalem, he took the twelve disciples aside privately and told them what was going to happen to him. “Listen,” he said, “we’re going up to Jerusalem, where the Son of Man will be betrayed to the leading priests and the teachers of religious law. They will sentence him to die. Then they will hand him over to the Romans to be mocked, flogged with a whip, and crucified. But on the third day he will be raised from the dead.”

Then the mother of James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came to Jesus with her sons. She knelt respectfully to ask a favor. “What is your request?” he asked.

She replied, “In your Kingdom, please let my two sons sit in places of honor next to you, one on your right and the other on your left.”

But Jesus answered by saying to them, “You don’t know what you are asking! Are you able to drink from the bitter cup of suffering I am about to drink?”

“Oh yes,” they replied, “we are able!”

Jesus told them, “You will indeed drink from my bitter cup. But I have no right to say who will sit on my right or my left. My Father has prepared those places for the ones he has chosen.”

When the ten other disciples heard what James and John had asked, they were indignant. But Jesus called them together and said, “You know that the rulers in this world lord it over their people, and officials flaunt their authority over those under them. But among you it will be different. Whoever wants to be a leader among you must be your servant, and whoever

wants to be first among you must become your slave. For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve others and to give his life as a ransom for many.”

As Jesus and the disciples left the town of Jericho, a large crowd followed behind. Two blind men were sitting beside the road. When they heard that Jesus was coming that way, they began shouting, “Lord, Son of David, have mercy on us!”

“Be quiet!” the crowd yelled at them.

But they only shouted louder, “Lord, Son of David, have mercy on us!”

When Jesus heard them, he stopped and called, “What do you want me to do for you?”

“Lord,” they said, “we want to see!” Jesus felt sorry for them and touched their eyes. Instantly they could see! Then they followed him.

Lord’s Prayer:

Our Father in heaven. Let your holiness be revealed
Let your kingdom come. Let your will be done on earth as in heaven
Give us today our daily bread. Erase our debts as we erase the debts of others.
Keep us from temptation and Rescue us from evil.
For kingdom, power and glory belong to you for ever and ever.
Amen.

Evening Psalm: Psalm 33: 13-24

The Lord looks down from heaven
and sees the whole human race.
From his throne he observes
all who live on the earth.
He made their hearts,
so he understands everything they do.
The best-equipped army cannot save a king,
nor is great strength enough to save a warrior.
Don’t count on your warhorse to give you victory—
for all its strength, it cannot save you.

But the Lord watches over those who fear him,
those who rely on his unfailing love.
He rescues them from death
and keeps them alive in times of famine.

We put our hope in the Lord.
He is our help and our shield.
In him our hearts rejoice,
for we trust in his holy name.
Let your unfailing love surround us, Lord,
for our hope is in you alone.

Intercession:

Concluding Prayer: Lord Jesus stay with us, for evening is at hand and the day is past. Be our companion in the way, kindle our hearts and awaken hope, that we may know you as you are revealed in Scripture and the breaking of bread. Grant this for the sake of your love. Amen.

May 22, 2011

Morning

Call To Prayer: In the morning, O Lord, you hear my voice,* In the morning I lay my requests before you and wait in expectation.

Vow: In a world full of injustice, we will work at the grassroots level for visible social change and will be a voice for justice among the world's oppressed.

Scripture Related to the Vow: Luke 11:42

"What sorrow awaits you Pharisees! For you are careful to tithe even the tiniest income from your herb gardens, but you ignore justice and the love of God. You should tithe, yes, but do not neglect the more important things."

Morning Short Reading:

The command "Be just" must be applied to many different and complex human situations, nor is it always easy to determine in any given situation what justice requires. Yet it is our uniquely human task to put into concrete practice the requirements of the norm of justice."
Albert M. Wolters, *Creation Regained: Biblical Basics for a Reformational Worldview*

Vow Prayer: Almighty Father, we long for your Kingdom where kindness and truth will meet, where justice and peace will kiss. Give our minds wisdom, give our hearts empathy, and give our hands strength as we work on behalf of justice for all, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Morning Gospel: Matthew 21:1-22

As Jesus and the disciples approached Jerusalem, they came to the town of Bethphage on the Mount of Olives. Jesus sent two of them on ahead. "Go into the village over there," he said. "As soon as you enter it, you will see a donkey tied there, with its colt beside it. Untie them and bring them to me. If anyone asks what you are doing, just say, 'The Lord needs them,' and he will immediately let you take them."

This took place to fulfill the prophecy that said,

"Tell the people of Israel,
'Look, your King is coming to you.
He is humble, riding on a donkey—
riding on a donkey's colt.'"

The two disciples did as Jesus commanded. They brought the donkey and the colt to him and threw their garments over the colt, and he sat on it.

Most of the crowd spread their garments on the road ahead of him, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. Jesus was in the center of the procession, and the people all around him were shouting,

"Praise God for the Son of David!
Blessings on the one who comes in the name of the Lord!
Praise God in highest heaven!"

The entire city of Jerusalem was in an uproar as he entered. "Who is this?" they asked.

And the crowds replied, "It's Jesus, the prophet from Nazareth in Galilee."

Jesus entered the Temple and began to drive out all the people buying and selling animals for sacrifice. He knocked over the tables of the money changers and the chairs of those

selling doves. He said to them, “The Scriptures declare, ‘My Temple will be called a house of prayer,’ but you have turned it into a den of thieves!”

The blind and the lame came to him in the Temple, and he healed them. The leading priests and the teachers of religious law saw these wonderful miracles and heard even the children in the Temple shouting, “Praise God for the Son of David.”

But the leaders were indignant. They asked Jesus, “Do you hear what these children are saying?”

“Yes,” Jesus replied. “Haven’t you ever read the Scriptures? For they say, ‘You have taught children and infants to give you praise.’” Then he returned to Bethany, where he stayed overnight.

In the morning, as Jesus was returning to Jerusalem, he was hungry, and he noticed a fig tree beside the road. He went over to see if there were any figs, but there were only leaves. Then he said to it, “May you never bear fruit again!” And immediately the fig tree withered up.

The disciples were amazed when they saw this and asked, “How did the fig tree wither so quickly?”

Then Jesus told them, “I tell you the truth, if you have faith and don’t doubt, you can do things like this and much more. You can even say to this mountain, ‘May you be lifted up and thrown into the sea,’ and it will happen. You can pray for anything, and if you have faith, you will receive it.”

Lord’s Prayer:

Our Father in heaven. Let your holiness be revealed
Let your kingdom come. Let your will be done on earth as in heaven
Give us today our daily bread. Erase our debts as we erase the debts of others.
Keep us from temptation and Rescue us from evil.
For kingdom, power and glory belong to you for ever and ever.
Amen.

Morning Psalm: Psalm 34: 1-11

A psalm of David, regarding the time he pretended to be insane in front of Abimelech, who sent him away.

I will praise the Lord at all times.
I will constantly speak his praises.
I will boast only in the Lord;
let all who are helpless take heart.
Come, let us tell of the Lord’s greatness;
let us exalt his name together.

I prayed to the Lord, and he answered me.
He freed me from all my fears.
Those who look to him for help will be radiant with joy;
no shadow of shame will darken their faces.
In my desperation I prayed, and the Lord listened;
he saved me from all my troubles.
For the angel of the Lord is a guard;
he surrounds and defends all who fear him.

Taste and see that the Lord is good.
Oh, the joys of those who take refuge in him!
Fear the Lord, you his godly people,
for those who fear him will have all they need.
Even strong young lions sometimes go hungry,
but those who trust in the Lord will lack no good thing.

Come, my children, and listen to me,
and I will teach you to fear the Lord.

Intercession:

Concluding Prayer: Lord God, Almighty and Everlasting Father, you have brought us in safety to this new day. Preserve us with your mighty power that we may not fall into sin nor be overcome by adversity and in all we do direct us to the fulfilling of your purpose through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Midday

Vow: In a world of shallow living we'll develop habits and rhythms that sustain us in the way of Christ.

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Evening

Call To Prayer: Our help is in the name of the Lord* The Maker of heaven and earth

Vow: In a world full of injustice, we will work at the grassroots level for visible social change and will be a voice for justice among the world's oppressed.

Scripture Related to the Vow: Luke 11:42

“What sorrow awaits you Pharisees! For you are careful to tithe even the tiniest income from your herb gardens, but you ignore justice and the love of God. You should tithe, yes, but do not neglect the more important things.”

Evening Short Reading:

Man is himself the author, center, and goal of all economic and social life. The decisive point of the social question is that goods created by God for everyone should in fact reach everyone in accordance with justice and with the help of charity.
Catechism of the Catholic Church, #2459

Vow Prayer: Almighty Father, we long for your Kingdom where kindness and truth will meet, where justice and peace will kiss. Give our minds wisdom, give our hearts empathy, and give our hands strength as we work on behalf of justice for all, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Evening Gospel: Matthew 21:23-46

When Jesus returned to the Temple and began teaching, the leading priests and elders came up to him. They demanded, “By what authority are you doing all these things? Who gave you the right?”

“I’ll tell you by what authority I do these things if you answer one question,” Jesus replied. “Did John’s authority to baptize come from heaven, or was it merely human?”

They talked it over among themselves. “If we say it was from heaven, he will ask us why we didn’t believe John. But if we say it was merely human, we’ll be mobbed because the people believe John was a prophet.” So they finally replied, “We don’t know.”

And Jesus responded, “Then I won’t tell you by what authority I do these things.

“But what do you think about this? A man with two sons told the older boy, ‘Son, go out and work in the vineyard today.’ The son answered, ‘No, I won’t go,’ but later he changed his mind and went anyway. Then the father told the other son, ‘You go,’ and he said, ‘Yes, sir, I will.’ But he didn’t go.

“Which of the two obeyed his father?”

They replied, “The first.”

Then Jesus explained his meaning “I tell you the truth, corrupt tax collectors and prostitutes will get into the Kingdom of God before you do. For John the Baptist came and showed you the right way to live, but you didn’t believe him, while tax collectors and prostitutes did. And even when you saw this happening, you refused to believe him and repent of your sins.

“Now listen to another story. A certain landowner planted a vineyard, built a wall around it, dug a pit for pressing out the grape juice, and built a lookout tower. Then he leased the vineyard to tenant farmers and moved to another country. At the time of the grape harvest, he sent his servants to collect his share of the crop. But the farmers grabbed his servants, beat one, killed one, and stoned another. So the landowner sent a larger group of his servants to collect for him, but the results were the same.

“Finally, the owner sent his son, thinking, ‘Surely they will respect my son.’

“But when the tenant farmers saw his son coming, they said to one another, ‘Here comes the heir to this estate. Come on, let’s kill him and get the estate for ourselves!’ So they grabbed him, dragged him out of the vineyard, and murdered him.

“When the owner of the vineyard returns,” Jesus asked, “what do you think he will do to those farmers?”

The religious leaders replied, “He will put the wicked men to a horrible death and lease the vineyard to others who will give him his share of the crop after each harvest.”

Then Jesus asked them, “Didn’t you ever read this in the Scriptures?

‘The stone that the builders rejected
has now become the cornerstone.
This is the Lord’s doing,
and it is wonderful to see.’

I tell you, the Kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a nation that will produce the proper fruit. Anyone who stumbles over that stone will be broken to pieces, and it will crush anyone it falls on.”

When the leading priests and Pharisees heard this parable, they realized he was telling the story against them—they were the wicked farmers. They wanted to arrest him, but they were afraid of the crowds, who considered Jesus to be a prophet.

Lord’s Prayer:

Our Father in heaven. Let your holiness be revealed
Let your kingdom come. Let your will be done on earth as in heaven
Give us today our daily bread. Erase our debts as we erase the debts of others.

Keep us from temptation and Rescue us from evil.
For kingdom, power and glory belong to you for ever and ever.
Amen.

Evening Psalm: Psalm 34: 12-22

Does anyone want to live a life
that is long and prosperous?
Then keep your tongue from speaking evil
and your lips from telling lies!
Turn away from evil and do good.
Search for peace, and work to maintain it.

The eyes of the Lord watch over those who do right;
his ears are open to their cries for help.
But the Lord turns his face against those who do evil;
he will erase their memory from the earth.
The Lord hears his people when they call to him for help.
He rescues them from all their troubles.
The Lord is close to the brokenhearted;
he rescues those whose spirits are crushed.

The righteous person faces many troubles,
but the Lord comes to the rescue each time.
For the Lord protects the bones of the righteous;
not one of them is broken!

Calamity will surely overtake the wicked,
and those who hate the righteous will be punished.
But the Lord will redeem those who serve him.
No one who takes refuge in him will be condemned.

Intercession:

Concluding Prayer: Lord Jesus stay with us, for evening is at hand and the day is past. Be our companion in the way, kindle our hearts and awaken hope, that we may know you as you are revealed in Scripture and the breaking of bread. Grant this for the sake of your love. Amen.

May 23, 2011

Morning

Call To Prayer: In the morning, O Lord, you hear my voice,* In the morning I lay my requests before you and wait in expectation.

Vow: In a world full of injustice, we will work at the grassroots level for visible social change and will be a voice for justice among the world's oppressed.

Scripture Related to the Vow: Luke 11:42

“What sorrow awaits you Pharisees! For you are careful to tithe even the tiniest income from your herb gardens, but you ignore justice and the love of God. You should tithe, yes, but do not neglect the more important things.”

Morning Short Reading:

He put the planets in their orbits, makes the seasons come and go at the proper time, makes seeds grow and animals reproduce, but entrusts to mankind the tasks of making tools, doing justice, producing art, and pursuing scholarship. In other words, God's rule of law is immediate in the nonhuman realm but mediate in culture and society. In the human realm men and women become coworkers with God; as creatures made in God's image they too have a kind of lordship over the earth, are God's viceroys in creation.

Albert M. Wolters, *Creation Regained: Biblical Basics for a Reformational Worldview*

Vow Prayer: Almighty Father, we long for your Kingdom where kindness and truth will meet, where justice and peace will kiss. Give our minds wisdom, give our hearts empathy, and give our hands strength as we work on behalf of justice for all, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Morning Gospel: Matthew 22:1-22

Jesus also told them other parables. He said, “The Kingdom of Heaven can be illustrated by the story of a king who prepared a great wedding feast for his son. When the banquet was ready, he sent his servants to notify those who were invited. But they all refused to come!

“So he sent other servants to tell them, ‘The feast has been prepared. The bulls and fattened cattle have been killed, and everything is ready. Come to the banquet!’ But the guests he had invited ignored them and went their own way, one to his farm, another to his business. Others seized his messengers and insulted them and killed them.

“The king was furious, and he sent out his army to destroy the murderers and burn their town. And he said to his servants, ‘The wedding feast is ready, and the guests I invited aren't worthy of the honor. Now go out to the street corners and invite everyone you see.’ So the servants brought in everyone they could find, good and bad alike, and the banquet hall was filled with guests.

“But when the king came in to meet the guests, he noticed a man who wasn't wearing the proper clothes for a wedding. ‘Friend,’ he asked, ‘how is it that you are here without wedding clothes?’ But the man had no reply. Then the king said to his aides, ‘Bind his hands and feet and throw him into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’

“For many are called, but few are chosen.”

Then the Pharisees met together to plot how to trap Jesus into saying something for which he could be arrested. They sent some of their disciples, along with the supporters of Herod, to meet with him. “Teacher,” they said, “we know how honest you are. You teach the way of God truthfully. You are impartial and don't play favorites. Now tell us what you think about this Is it right to pay taxes to Caesar or not?”

But Jesus knew their evil motives. “You hypocrites!” he said. “Why are you trying to trap me? Here, show me the coin used for the tax.” When they handed him a Roman coin, he asked, “Whose picture and title are stamped on it?”

“Caesar’s,” they replied.

“Well, then,” he said, “give to Caesar what belongs to Caesar, and give to God what belongs to God.”

His reply amazed them, and they went away.

Lord’s Prayer:

Our Father in heaven. Let your holiness be revealed
Let your kingdom come. Let your will be done on earth as in heaven
Give us today our daily bread. Erase our debts as we erase the debts of others.
Keep us from temptation and Rescue us from evil.
For kingdom, power and glory belong to you for ever and ever.
Amen.

Morning Psalm: Psalm 35: 1-14

A psalm of David.

O Lord, oppose those who oppose me.
Fight those who fight against me.
Put on your armor, and take up your shield.
Prepare for battle, and come to my aid.
Lift up your spear and javelin
against those who pursue me.
Let me hear you say,
“I will give you victory!”
Bring shame and disgrace on those trying to kill me;
turn them back and humiliate those who want to harm me.
Blow them away like chaff in the wind—
a wind sent by the angel of the Lord.
Make their path dark and slippery,
with the angel of the Lord pursuing them.
I did them no wrong, but they laid a trap for me.
I did them no wrong, but they dug a pit to catch me.
So let sudden ruin come upon them!
Let them be caught in the trap they set for me!
Let them be destroyed in the pit they dug for me.

Then I will rejoice in the Lord.
I will be glad because he rescues me.
With every bone in my body I will praise him:
“Lord, who can compare with you?
Who else rescues the helpless from the strong?
Who else protects the helpless and poor from those who rob them?”

Malicious witnesses testify against me.
They accuse me of crimes I know nothing about.
They repay me evil for good.
I am sick with despair.
Yet when they were ill, I grieved for them.
I denied myself by fasting for them,
but my prayers returned unanswered.
I was sad, as though they were my friends or family,
as if I were grieving for my own mother.

Intercession:

Concluding Prayer: Lord God, Almighty and Everlasting Father, you have brought us in safety to this new day. Preserve us with your mighty power that we may not fall into sin nor be overcome by adversity and in all we do direct us to the fulfilling of your purpose through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Midday

Vow: In a world of shallow living we'll develop habits and rhythms that sustain us in the way of Christ.

Vow Prayer: Almighty Father, we long for your Kingdom where kindness and truth will meet, where justice and peace will kiss. Give our minds wisdom, give our hearts empathy, and give our hands strength as we work on behalf of justice for all, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Evening

Call To Prayer: Our help is in the name of the Lord* The Maker of heaven and earth

Vow: In a world full of injustice, we will work at the grassroots level for visible social change and will be a voice for justice among the world's oppressed.

Scripture Related to the Vow: Luke 11:42

“What sorrow awaits you Pharisees! For you are careful to tithe even the tiniest income from your herb gardens, but you ignore justice and the love of God. You should tithe, yes, but do not neglect the more important things.”

Evening Short Reading:

“The Church’s love for the poor... is part of her constant tradition.” This love is inspired by the Gospel of the Beatitudes, of the poverty of Jesus, and of His concern for the poor. Love for the poor is even one of the motives for the duty of working so as to “be able to give to those in need.”

Catechism of the Catholic Church, #2444

Vow Prayer: Almighty Father, we long for your Kingdom where kindness and truth will meet, where justice and peace will kiss. Give our minds wisdom, give our hearts empathy, and give our hands strength as we work on behalf of justice for all, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Evening Gospel: Matthew 22:23-46

That same day Jesus was approached by some Sadducees—religious leaders who say there is no resurrection from the dead. They posed this question “Teacher, Moses said, ‘If a man dies without children, his brother should marry the widow and have a child who will carry on the brother’s name.’ Well, suppose there were seven brothers. The oldest one married and then died without children, so his brother married the widow. But the second brother also died, and the third brother married her. This continued with all seven of them. Last of all, the

woman also died. So tell us, whose wife will she be in the resurrection? For all seven were married to her.”

Jesus replied, “Your mistake is that you don’t know the Scriptures, and you don’t know the power of God. For when the dead rise, they will neither marry nor be given in marriage. In this respect they will be like the angels in heaven.

“But now, as to whether there will be a resurrection of the dead—haven’t you ever read about this in the Scriptures? Long after Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob had died, God said, ‘I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.’ So he is the God of the living, not the dead.”

When the crowds heard him, they were astounded at his teaching.

But when the Pharisees heard that he had silenced the Sadducees with his reply, they met together to question him again. One of them, an expert in religious law, tried to trap him with this question “Teacher, which is the most important commandment in the law of Moses?”

Jesus replied, “‘You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment. A second is equally important ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ The entire law and all the demands of the prophets are based on these two commandments.”

Then, surrounded by the Pharisees, Jesus asked them a question “What do you think about the Messiah? Whose son is he?”

They replied, “He is the son of David.”

Jesus responded, “Then why does David, speaking under the inspiration of the Spirit, call the Messiah ‘my Lord’? For David said,

‘The Lord said to my Lord,
Sit in the place of honor at my right hand
until I humble your enemies beneath your feet.’

Since David called the Messiah ‘my Lord,’ how can the Messiah be his son?”

No one could answer him. And after that, no one dared to ask him any more questions.

Lord’s Prayer:

Our Father in heaven. Let your holiness be revealed
Let your kingdom come. Let your will be done on earth as in heaven
Give us today our daily bread. Erase our debts as we erase the debts of others.
Keep us from temptation and Rescue us from evil.
For kingdom, power and glory belong to you for ever and ever.
Amen.

Evening Psalm: Psalm 35: 15-28

But they are glad now that I am in trouble;
they gleefully join together against me.
I am attacked by people I don’t even know;
they slander me constantly.
They mock me and call me names;
they snarl at me.

How long, O Lord, will you look on and do nothing?
Rescue me from their fierce attacks.
Protect my life from these lions!
Then I will thank you in front of the great assembly.
I will praise you before all the people.
Don’t let my treacherous enemies rejoice over my defeat.
Don’t let those who hate me without cause gloat over my sorrow.
They don’t talk of peace;
they plot against innocent people who mind their own business.
They shout, “Aha! Aha!

With our own eyes we saw him do it!"

O Lord, you know all about this.

Do not stay silent.

Do not abandon me now, O Lord.

Wake up! Rise to my defense!

Take up my case, my God and my Lord.

Declare me not guilty, O Lord my God, for you give justice.

Don't let my enemies laugh about me in my troubles.

Don't let them say, "Look, we got what we wanted!

Now we will eat him alive!"

May those who rejoice at my troubles
be humiliated and disgraced.

May those who triumph over me
be covered with shame and dishonor.

But give great joy to those who came to my defense.

Let them continually say, "Great is the Lord,
who delights in blessing his servant with peace!"

Then I will proclaim your justice,
and I will praise you all day long.

Intercession:

Concluding Prayer: Lord Jesus stay with us, for evening is at hand and the day is past. Be our companion in the way, kindle our hearts and awaken hope, that we may know you as you are revealed in Scripture and the breaking of bread. Grant this for the sake of your love. Amen.

May 24, 2011

Morning

Call To Prayer: In the morning, O Lord, you hear my voice,* In the morning I lay my requests before you and wait in expectation.

Vow: In a world full of injustice, we will work at the grassroots level for visible social change and will be a voice for justice among the world's oppressed.

Scripture Related to the Vow: Mark 7:24-30

Then Jesus left Galilee and went north to the region of Tyre. He didn't want anyone to know which house he was staying in, but he couldn't keep it a secret. Right away a woman who had heard about him came and fell at his feet. Her little girl was possessed by an evil spirit, and she begged him to cast out the demon from her daughter.

Since she was a Gentile, born in Syrian Phoenicia, Jesus told her, "First I should feed the children—my own family, the Jews. It isn't right to take food from the children and throw it to the dogs."

She replied, "That's true, Lord, but even the dogs under the table are allowed to eat the scraps from the children's plates."

"Good answer!" he said. "Now go home, for the demon has left your daughter." And when she arrived home, she found her little girl lying quietly in bed, and the demon was gone.

Morning Short Reading:

I don't know if Jesus actually rolls his eyes, but that is what I picture him doing every time he hears the "realistic" and "mature" Christian give fourteen reasons why there is nothing we can do to stop violence and injustice.

Gary Haugen, author and founder of International Justice Mission

Vow Prayer: Almighty Father, we long for your Kingdom where kindness and truth will meet, where justice and peace will kiss. Give our minds wisdom, give our hearts empathy, and give our hands strength as we work on behalf of justice for all, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Morning Gospel: Matthew 23:1-22

Then Jesus said to the crowds and to his disciples, "The teachers of religious law and the Pharisees are the official interpreters of the law of Moses. So practice and obey whatever they tell you, but don't follow their example. For they don't practice what they teach. They crush people with unbearable religious demands and never lift a finger to ease the burden.

"Everything they do is for show. On their arms they wear extra wide prayer boxes with Scripture verses inside, and they wear robes with extra long tassels. And they love to sit at the head table at banquets and in the seats of honor in the synagogues. They love to receive respectful greetings as they walk in the marketplaces, and to be called 'Rabbi.'

"Don't let anyone call you 'Rabbi,' for you have only one teacher, and all of you are equal as brothers and sisters. And don't address anyone here on earth as 'Father,' for only God in heaven is your spiritual Father. And don't let anyone call you 'Teacher,' for you have only one teacher, the Messiah. The greatest among you must be a servant. But those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted.

"What sorrow awaits you teachers of religious law and you Pharisees. Hypocrites! For you shut the door of the Kingdom of Heaven in people's faces. You won't go in yourselves, and you don't let others enter either.

"What sorrow awaits you teachers of religious law and you Pharisees. Hypocrites! For you cross land and sea to make one convert, and then you turn that person into twice the child of hell you yourselves are!

“Blind guides! What sorrow awaits you! For you say that it means nothing to swear ‘by God’s Temple,’ but that it is binding to swear ‘by the gold in the Temple.’ Blind fools! Which is more important—the gold or the Temple that makes the gold sacred? And you say that to swear ‘by the altar’ is not binding, but to swear ‘by the gifts on the altar’ is binding. How blind! For which is more important—the gift on the altar or the altar that makes the gift sacred? When you swear ‘by the altar,’ you are swearing by it and by everything on it. And when you swear ‘by the Temple,’ you are swearing by it and by God, who lives in it. And when you swear ‘by heaven,’ you are swearing by the throne of God and by God, who sits on the throne.

Lord’s Prayer:

Our Father in heaven. Let your holiness be revealed
Let your kingdom come. Let your will be done on earth as in heaven
Give us today our daily bread. Erase our debts as we erase the debts of others.
Keep us from temptation and Rescue us from evil.
For kingdom, power and glory belong to you for ever and ever.
Amen.

Morning Psalm: Psalm 36

For the choir director: A psalm of David, the servant of the Lord.

Sin whispers to the wicked, deep within their hearts.
They have no fear of God at all.
In their blind conceit,
they cannot see how wicked they really are.
Everything they say is crooked and deceitful.
They refuse to act wisely or do good.
They lie awake at night, hatching sinful plots.
Their actions are never good.
They make no attempt to turn from evil.

Your unfailing love, O Lord, is as vast as the heavens;
your faithfulness reaches beyond the clouds.
Your righteousness is like the mighty mountains,
your justice like the ocean depths.
You care for people and animals alike, O Lord.
How precious is your unfailing love, O God!
All humanity finds shelter
in the shadow of your wings.
You feed them from the abundance of your own house,
letting them drink from your river of delights.
For you are the fountain of life,
the light by which we see.

Pour out your unfailing love on those who love you;
give justice to those with honest hearts.
Don’t let the proud trample me
or the wicked push me around.
Look! Those who do evil have fallen!
They are thrown down, never to rise again.

Intercession:

Concluding Prayer: Lord God, Almighty and Everlasting Father, you have brought us in safety to this new day. Preserve us with your mighty power that we may not fall into sin nor be

overcome by adversity and in all we do direct us to the fulfilling of your purpose through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Midday

Vow: In a world of shallow living we'll develop habits and rhythms that sustain us in the way of Christ.

Vow Prayer: Almighty Father, we long for your Kingdom where kindness and truth will meet, where justice and peace will kiss. Give our minds wisdom, give our hearts empathy, and give our hands strength as we work on behalf of justice for all, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Evening

Call To Prayer: Our help is in the name of the Lord* The Maker of heaven and earth

Vow: In a world full of injustice, we will work at the grassroots level for visible social change and will be a voice for justice among the world's oppressed.

Scripture Related to the Vow: Mark 7:24-30

Then Jesus left Galilee and went north to the region of Tyre. He didn't want anyone to know which house he was staying in, but he couldn't keep it a secret. Right away a woman who had heard about him came and fell at his feet. Her little girl was possessed by an evil spirit, and she begged him to cast out the demon from her daughter.

Since she was a Gentile, born in Syrian Phoenicia, Jesus told her, "First I should feed the children—my own family, the Jews. It isn't right to take food from the children and throw it to the dogs."

She replied, "That's true, Lord, but even the dogs under the table are allowed to eat the scraps from the children's plates."

"Good answer!" he said. "Now go home, for the demon has left your daughter." And when she arrived home, she found her little girl lying quietly in bed, and the demon was gone.

Evening Short Reading:

Everyone should be able to draw from work the means of providing for his life and that of his family, and of serving the human community."

Catechism of the Catholic Church, #2428

Vow Prayer: Almighty Father, we long for your Kingdom where kindness and truth will meet, where justice and peace will kiss. Give our minds wisdom, give our hearts empathy, and give our hands strength as we work on behalf of justice for all, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Evening Gospel: Matthew 23:23-39

"What sorrow awaits you teachers of religious law and you Pharisees. Hypocrites! For you are careful to tithe even the tiniest income from your herb gardens, but you ignore the more important aspects of the law—justice, mercy, and faith. You should tithe, yes, but do not neglect the more important things. Blind guides! You strain your water so you won't accidentally swallow a gnat, but you swallow a camel!

"What sorrow awaits you teachers of religious law and you Pharisees. Hypocrites! For you are so careful to clean the outside of the cup and the dish, but inside you are filthy—full of greed

and self-indulgence! You blind Pharisee! First wash the inside of the cup and the dish, and then the outside will become clean, too.

“What sorrow awaits you teachers of religious law and you Pharisees. Hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs—beautiful on the outside but filled on the inside with dead people’s bones and all sorts of impurity. Outwardly you look like righteous people, but inwardly your hearts are filled with hypocrisy and lawlessness.

“What sorrow awaits you teachers of religious law and you Pharisees. Hypocrites! For you build tombs for the prophets your ancestors killed, and you decorate the monuments of the godly people your ancestors destroyed. Then you say, ‘If we had lived in the days of our ancestors, we would never have joined them in killing the prophets.’

“But in saying that, you testify against yourselves that you are indeed the descendants of those who murdered the prophets. Go ahead and finish what your ancestors started. Snakes! Sons of vipers! How will you escape the judgment of hell?”

“Therefore, I am sending you prophets and wise men and teachers of religious law. But you will kill some by crucifixion, and you will flog others with whips in your synagogues, chasing them from city to city. As a result, you will be held responsible for the murder of all godly people of all time—from the murder of righteous Abel to the murder of Zechariah son of Barachiah, whom you killed in the Temple between the sanctuary and the altar. I tell you the truth, this judgment will fall on this very generation.

“O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones God’s messengers! How often I have wanted to gather your children together as a hen protects her chicks beneath her wings, but you wouldn’t let me. And now, look, your house is abandoned and desolate. For I tell you this, you will never see me again until you say, ‘Blessings on the one who comes in the name of the Lord!’”

Lord’s Prayer:

Our Father in heaven. Let your holiness be revealed
Let your kingdom come. Let your will be done on earth as in heaven
Give us today our daily bread. Erase our debts as we erase the debts of others.
Keep us from temptation and Rescue us from evil.
For kingdom, power and glory belong to you for ever and ever.
Amen.

Evening Psalm: Psalm 37: 1-10

A psalm of David.

Don’t worry about the wicked
or envy those who do wrong.
For like grass, they soon fade away.
Like spring flowers, they soon wither.

Trust in the Lord and do good.
Then you will live safely in the land and prosper.
Take delight in the Lord,
and he will give you your heart’s desires.

Commit everything you do to the Lord.
Trust him, and he will help you.
He will make your innocence radiate like the dawn,
and the justice of your cause will shine like the noonday sun.

Be still in the presence of the Lord,
and wait patiently for him to act.
Don’t worry about evil people who prosper
or fret about their wicked schemes.

Stop being angry!
Turn from your rage!
Do not lose your temper—
it only leads to harm.
For the wicked will be destroyed,
but those who trust in the Lord will possess the land.

Soon the wicked will disappear.
Though you look for them, they will be gone.

Intercession:

Concluding Prayer: Lord Jesus stay with us, for evening is at hand and the day is past. Be our companion in the way, kindle our hearts and awaken hope, that we may know you as you are revealed in Scripture and the breaking of bread. Grant this for the sake of your love. Amen.

May 25, 2011

Morning

Call To Prayer: In the morning, O Lord, you hear my voice,* In the morning I lay my requests before you and wait in expectation.

Vow: In a world full of injustice, we will work at the grassroots level for visible social change and will be a voice for justice among the world's oppressed.

Scripture Related to the Vow: Mark 7:24-30

Then Jesus left Galilee and went north to the region of Tyre. He didn't want anyone to know which house he was staying in, but he couldn't keep it a secret. Right away a woman who had heard about him came and fell at his feet. Her little girl was possessed by an evil spirit, and she begged him to cast out the demon from her daughter.

Since she was a Gentile, born in Syrian Phoenicia, Jesus told her, "First I should feed the children—my own family, the Jews. It isn't right to take food from the children and throw it to the dogs."

She replied, "That's true, Lord, but even the dogs under the table are allowed to eat the scraps from the children's plates."

"Good answer!" he said. "Now go home, for the demon has left your daughter." And when she arrived home, she found her little girl lying quietly in bed, and the demon was gone.

Morning Short Reading:

God has a plan to help bring justice to the world -- and his plan is us.
Gary Haugen

Vow Prayer: Almighty Father, we long for your Kingdom where kindness and truth will meet, where justice and peace will kiss. Give our minds wisdom, give our hearts empathy, and give our hands strength as we work on behalf of justice for all, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Morning Gospel: Matthew 24:1-25

As Jesus was leaving the Temple grounds, his disciples pointed out to him the various Temple buildings. But he responded, "Do you see all these buildings? I tell you the truth, they will be completely demolished. Not one stone will be left on top of another!"

Later, Jesus sat on the Mount of Olives. His disciples came to him privately and said, "Tell us, when will all this happen? What sign will signal your return and the end of the world?"

Jesus told them, "Don't let anyone mislead you, for many will come in my name, claiming, 'I am the Messiah.' They will deceive many. And you will hear of wars and threats of wars, but don't panic. Yes, these things must take place, but the end won't follow immediately. Nation will go to war against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be famines and earthquakes in many parts of the world. But all this is only the first of the birth pains, with more to come.

"Then you will be arrested, persecuted, and killed. You will be hated all over the world because you are my followers. And many will turn away from me and betray and hate each other. And many false prophets will appear and will deceive many people. Sin will be rampant everywhere, and the love of many will grow cold. But the one who endures to the end will be saved. And the Good News about the Kingdom will be preached throughout the whole world, so that all nations will hear it; and then the end will come.

"The day is coming when you will see what Daniel the prophet spoke about—the sacrilegious object that causes desecration standing in the Holy Place." (Reader, pay attention!) "Then those in Judea must flee to the hills. A person out on the deck of a roof must not go down into the house to pack. A person out in the field must not return even to get a coat. How

terrible it will be for pregnant women and for nursing mothers in those days. And pray that your flight will not be in winter or on the Sabbath. For there will be greater anguish than at any time since the world began. And it will never be so great again. In fact, unless that time of calamity is shortened, not a single person will survive. But it will be shortened for the sake of God's chosen ones.

"Then if anyone tells you, 'Look, here is the Messiah,' or 'There he is,' don't believe it. For false messiahs and false prophets will rise up and perform great signs and wonders so as to deceive, if possible, even God's chosen ones. See, I have warned you about this ahead of time.

Lord's Prayer:

Our Father in heaven. Let your holiness be revealed
Let your kingdom come. Let your will be done on earth as in heaven
Give us today our daily bread. Erase our debts as we erase the debts of others.
Keep us from temptation and Rescue us from evil.
For kingdom, power and glory belong to you for ever and ever.
Amen.

Morning Psalm: Psalm 37: 11-23

The lowly will possess the land
and will live in peace and prosperity.

The wicked plot against the godly;
they snarl at them in defiance.
But the Lord just laughs,
for he sees their day of judgment coming.

The wicked draw their swords
and string their bows
to kill the poor and the oppressed,
to slaughter those who do right.
But their swords will stab their own hearts,
and their bows will be broken.

It is better to be godly and have little
than to be evil and rich.
For the strength of the wicked will be shattered,
but the Lord takes care of the godly.

Day by day the Lord takes care of the innocent,
and they will receive an inheritance that lasts forever.
They will not be disgraced in hard times;
even in famine they will have more than enough.

But the wicked will die.
The Lord's enemies are like flowers in a field—
they will disappear like smoke.

The wicked borrow and never repay,
but the godly are generous givers.
Those the Lord blesses will possess the land,
but those he curses will die.

The Lord directs the steps of the godly.
He delights in every detail of their lives.

Intercession:

Concluding Prayer: Lord God, Almighty and Everlasting Father, you have brought us in safety to this new day. Preserve us with your mighty power that we may not fall into sin nor be overcome by adversity and in all we do direct us to the fulfilling of your purpose through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Midday

Vow: In a world of shallow living we'll develop habits and rhythms that sustain us in the way of Christ.

Vow Prayer: Almighty Father, we long for your Kingdom where kindness and truth will meet, where justice and peace will kiss. Give our minds wisdom, give our hearts empathy, and give our hands strength as we work on behalf of justice for all, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Evening

Call To Prayer: Our help is in the name of the Lord* The Maker of heaven and earth

Vow: In a world full of injustice, we will work at the grassroots level for visible social change and will be a voice for justice among the world's oppressed.

Scripture Related to the Vow: Mark 7:24-30

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Since she was a Gentile, born in Syrian Phoenicia, Jesus told her, "First I should feed the children—my own family, the Jews. It isn't right to take food from the children and throw it to the dogs."

She replied, "That's true, Lord, but even the dogs under the table are allowed to eat the scraps from the children's plates."

"Good answer!" he said. "Now go home, for the demon has left your daughter." And when she arrived home, she found her little girl lying quietly in bed, and the demon was gone.

Evening Short Reading:

There are so many hungry people in this world, and their hunger is more than physical. Children are starving for love and affection. The elderly are groaning out of loneliness. People in our families and circle of friends are craving our time and attention. The poor and sick yearn for care and understanding. The wealthy hunger for meaning. Our challenge as Eucharistic people is to become the Bread of Life for others. As St. Augustine put it: "Become what you receive." We, as Christians, must become the bread that feeds the hungry people around us. We are called to feed others with love, care, compassion, concern, hospitality, and justice.

Albert Haase, O.F.M., *Swimming In the Sun*

Vow Prayer: Almighty Father, we long for your Kingdom where kindness and truth will meet, where justice and peace will kiss. Give our minds wisdom, give our hearts empathy, and give

our hands strength as we work on behalf of justice for all, through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Evening Gospel: Matthew 24:26-51

“So if someone tells you, ‘Look, the Messiah is out in the desert,’ don’t bother to go and look. Or, ‘Look, he is hiding here,’ don’t believe it! For as the lightning flashes in the east and shines to the west, so it will be when the Son of Man comes. Just as the gathering of vultures shows there is a carcass nearby, so these signs indicate that the end is near.

“Immediately after the anguish of those days,

the sun will be darkened,
the moon will give no light,
the stars will fall from the sky,
and the powers in the heavens will be shaken.

And then at last, the sign that the Son of Man is coming will appear in the heavens, and there will be deep mourning among all the peoples of the earth. And they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he will send out his angels with the mighty blast of a trumpet, and they will gather his chosen ones from all over the world—from the farthest ends of the earth and heaven.

“Now learn a lesson from the fig tree. When its branches bud and its leaves begin to sprout, you know that summer is near. In the same way, when you see all these things, you can know his return is very near, right at the door. I tell you the truth, this generation will not pass from the scene until all these things take place. Heaven and earth will disappear, but my words will never disappear.

“However, no one knows the day or hour when these things will happen, not even the angels in heaven or the Son himself. Only the Father knows.

“When the Son of Man returns, it will be like it was in Noah’s day. In those days before the flood, the people were enjoying banquets and parties and weddings right up to the time Noah entered his boat. People didn’t realize what was going to happen until the flood came and swept them all away. That is the way it will be when the Son of Man comes.

“Two men will be working together in the field; one will be taken, the other left. Two women will be grinding flour at the mill; one will be taken, the other left.

“So you, too, must keep watch! For you don’t know what day your Lord is coming. Understand this If a homeowner knew exactly when a burglar was coming, he would keep watch and not permit his house to be broken into. You also must be ready all the time, for the Son of Man will come when least expected.

“A faithful, sensible servant is one to whom the master can give the responsibility of managing his other household servants and feeding them. If the master returns and finds that the servant has done a good job, there will be a reward. I tell you the truth, the master will put that servant in charge of all he owns. But what if the servant is evil and thinks, ‘My master won’t be back for a while,’ and he begins beating the other servants, partying, and getting drunk? The master will return unannounced and unexpected, and he will cut the servant to pieces and assign him a place with the hypocrites. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Lord’s Prayer:

Our Father in heaven. Let your holiness be revealed
Let your kingdom come. Let your will be done on earth as in heaven
Give us today our daily bread. Erase our debts as we erase the debts of others.
Keep us from temptation and Rescue us from evil.
For kingdom, power and glory belong to you for ever and ever.
Amen.

Evening Psalm: Psalm 37: 24-40

Though they stumble, they will never fall,
for the Lord holds them by the hand.

Once I was young, and now I am old.
Yet I have never seen the godly abandoned
or their children begging for bread.
The godly always give generous loans to others,
and their children are a blessing.

Turn from evil and do good,
and you will live in the land forever.
For the Lord loves justice,
and he will never abandon the godly.

He will keep them safe forever,
but the children of the wicked will die.
The godly will possess the land
and will live there forever.

The godly offer good counsel;
they teach right from wrong.
They have made God's law their own,
so they will never slip from his path.

The wicked wait in ambush for the godly,
looking for an excuse to kill them.
But the Lord will not let the wicked succeed
or let the godly be condemned when they are put on trial.

Put your hope in the Lord.
Travel steadily along his path.
He will honor you by giving you the land.
You will see the wicked destroyed.

I have seen wicked and ruthless people
flourishing like a tree in its native soil.
But when I looked again, they were gone!
Though I searched for them, I could not find them!

Look at those who are honest and good,
for a wonderful future awaits those who love peace.
But the rebellious will be destroyed;
they have no future.

The Lord rescues the godly;
he is their fortress in times of trouble.
The Lord helps them,
rescuing them from the wicked.
He saves them,
and they find shelter in him.

Intercession:

Concluding Prayer: Lord Jesus stay with us, for evening is at hand and the day is past. Be our companion in the way, kindle our hearts and awaken hope, that we may know you as you are revealed in Scripture and the breaking of bread. Grant this for the sake of your love. Amen.

May 26, 2011

Morning

Call To Prayer: In the morning, O Lord, you hear my voice,* In the morning I lay my requests before you and wait in expectation.

Vow: In a world full of injustice, we will work at the grassroots level for visible social change and will be a voice for justice among the world's oppressed.

Scripture Related to the Vow: Mark 7:24-30

Then Jesus left Galilee and went north to the region of Tyre. He didn't want anyone to know which house he was staying in, but he couldn't keep it a secret. Right away a woman who had heard about him came and fell at his feet. Her little girl was possessed by an evil spirit, and she begged him to cast out the demon from her daughter.

Since she was a Gentile, born in Syrian Phoenicia, Jesus told her, "First I should feed the children—my own family, the Jews. It isn't right to take food from the children and throw it to the dogs."

She replied, "That's true, Lord, but even the dogs under the table are allowed to eat the scraps from the children's plates."

"Good answer!" he said. "Now go home, for the demon has left your daughter." And when she arrived home, she found her little girl lying quietly in bed, and the demon was gone.

Morning Short Reading:

Kingdom people seek first the Kingdom of God and its justice; church people often put church work above concerns of justice, mercy and truth. Church people think about how to get people into the church; Kingdom people think about how to get the church into the world. Church people worry that the world might change the church; Kingdom people work to see the church change the world.

Howard Snyder

Vow Prayer: Almighty Father, we long for your Kingdom where kindness and truth will meet, where justice and peace will kiss. Give our minds wisdom, give our hearts empathy, and give our hands strength as we work on behalf of justice for all, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Morning Gospel: Matthew 25:1-13

"Then the Kingdom of Heaven will be like ten bridesmaids who took their lamps and went to meet the bridegroom. Five of them were foolish, and five were wise. The five who were foolish didn't take enough olive oil for their lamps, but the other five were wise enough to take along extra oil. When the bridegroom was delayed, they all became drowsy and fell asleep.

"At midnight they were roused by the shout, 'Look, the bridegroom is coming! Come out and meet him!'

"All the bridesmaids got up and prepared their lamps. Then the five foolish ones asked the others, 'Please give us some of your oil because our lamps are going out.'

"But the others replied, 'We don't have enough for all of us. Go to a shop and buy some for yourselves.'

"But while they were gone to buy oil, the bridegroom came. Then those who were ready went in with him to the marriage feast, and the door was locked. Later, when the other five bridesmaids returned, they stood outside, calling, 'Lord! Lord! Open the door for us!'

"But he called back, 'Believe me, I don't know you!'

“So you, too, must keep watch! For you do not know the day or hour of my return.

Lord’s Prayer:

Our Father in heaven. Let your holiness be revealed
Let your kingdom come. Let your will be done on earth as in heaven
Give us today our daily bread. Erase our debts as we erase the debts of others.
Keep us from temptation and Rescue us from evil.
For kingdom, power and glory belong to you for ever and ever.
Amen.

Morning Psalm: Psalm 38: 1-11

A psalm of David, asking God to remember him.

O Lord, don’t rebuke me in your anger
or discipline me in your rage!
Your arrows have struck deep,
and your blows are crushing me.
Because of your anger, my whole body is sick;
my health is broken because of my sins.
My guilt overwhelms me—
it is a burden too heavy to bear.
My wounds fester and stink
because of my foolish sins.
I am bent over and racked with pain.
All day long I walk around filled with grief.
A raging fever burns within me,
and my health is broken.
I am exhausted and completely crushed.
My groans come from an anguished heart.

You know what I long for, Lord;
you hear my every sigh.
My heart beats wildly, my strength fails,
and I am going blind.
My loved ones and friends stay away, fearing my disease.
Even my own family stands at a distance.

Intercession:

Concluding Prayer: Lord God, Almighty and Everlasting Father, you have brought us in safety to this new day. Preserve us with your mighty power that we may not fall into sin nor be overcome by adversity and in all we do direct us to the fulfilling of your purpose through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Midday

Vow: In a world of shallow living we’ll develop habits and rhythms that sustain us in the way of Christ.

Vow Prayer: Almighty Father, we long for your Kingdom where kindness and truth will meet, where justice and peace will kiss. Give our minds wisdom, give our hearts empathy, and give

our hands strength as we work on behalf of justice for all, through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Evening

Call To Prayer: Our help is in the name of the Lord* The Maker of heaven and earth

Vow: In a world full of injustice, we will work at the grassroots level for visible social change and will be a voice for justice among the world's oppressed.

Scripture Related to the Vow: Mark 7:24-30

Then Jesus left Galilee and went north to the region of Tyre. He didn't want anyone to know which house he was staying in, but he couldn't keep it a secret. Right away a woman who had heard about him came and fell at his feet. Her little girl was possessed by an evil spirit, and she begged him to cast out the demon from her daughter.

Since she was a Gentile, born in Syrian Phoenicia, Jesus told her, "First I should feed the children—my own family, the Jews. It isn't right to take food from the children and throw it to the dogs."

She replied, "That's true, Lord, but even the dogs under the table are allowed to eat the scraps from the children's plates."

"Good answer!" he said. "Now go home, for the demon has left your daughter." And when she arrived home, she found her little girl lying quietly in bed, and the demon was gone.

Evening Short Reading:

Socio-economic problems can be resolved only with the help of all forms of solidarity: solidarity of the poor among themselves, between the rich and the poor, of workers among themselves, between employers and employees in a business, solidarity among nations and peoples. International solidarity is a requirement of the moral order; world peace depends in part upon this."

Catechism of the Catholic Church, #1941

Vow Prayer: Almighty Father, we long for your Kingdom where kindness and truth will meet, where justice and peace will kiss. Give our minds wisdom, give our hearts empathy, and give our hands strength as we work on behalf of justice for all, through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Evening Gospel: Matthew 25:14-30

"Again, the Kingdom of Heaven can be illustrated by the story of a man going on a long trip. He called together his servants and entrusted his money to them while he was gone. He gave five bags of silver to one, two bags of silver to another, and one bag of silver to the last—dividing it in proportion to their abilities. He then left on his trip.

"The servant who received the five bags of silver began to invest the money and earned five more. The servant with two bags of silver also went to work and earned two more. But the servant who received the one bag of silver dug a hole in the ground and hid the master's money.

"After a long time their master returned from his trip and called them to give an account of how they had used his money. The servant to whom he had entrusted the five bags of silver came forward with five more and said, 'Master, you gave me five bags of silver to invest, and I have earned five more.'

“The master was full of praise. ‘Well done, my good and faithful servant. You have been faithful in handling this small amount, so now I will give you many more responsibilities. Let’s celebrate together!’

“The servant who had received the two bags of silver came forward and said, ‘Master, you gave me two bags of silver to invest, and I have earned two more.’

“The master said, ‘Well done, my good and faithful servant. You have been faithful in handling this small amount, so now I will give you many more responsibilities. Let’s celebrate together!’

“Then the servant with the one bag of silver came and said, ‘Master, I knew you were a harsh man, harvesting crops you didn’t plant and gathering crops you didn’t cultivate. I was afraid I would lose your money, so I hid it in the earth. Look, here is your money back.’

“But the master replied, ‘You wicked and lazy servant! If you knew I harvested crops I didn’t plant and gathered crops I didn’t cultivate, why didn’t you deposit my money in the bank? At least I could have gotten some interest on it.’

“Then he ordered, ‘Take the money from this servant, and give it to the one with the ten bags of silver. To those who use well what they are given, even more will be given, and they will have an abundance. But from those who do nothing, even what little they have will be taken away. Now throw this useless servant into outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’

Lord’s Prayer:

Our Father in heaven. Let your holiness be revealed
Let your kingdom come. Let your will be done on earth as in heaven
Give us today our daily bread. Erase our debts as we erase the debts of others.
Keep us from temptation and Rescue us from evil.
For kingdom, power and glory belong to you for ever and ever.
Amen.

Evening Psalm: Psalm 38: 12-22

Meanwhile, my enemies lay traps to kill me.
Those who wish me harm make plans to ruin me.
All day long they plan their treachery.

But I am deaf to all their threats.
I am silent before them as one who cannot speak.
I choose to hear nothing,
and I make no reply.
For I am waiting for you, O Lord.
You must answer for me, O Lord my God.
I prayed, “Don’t let my enemies gloat over me
or rejoice at my downfall.”

I am on the verge of collapse,
facing constant pain.
But I confess my sins;
I am deeply sorry for what I have done.
I have many aggressive enemies;
they hate me without reason.
They repay me evil for good
and oppose me for pursuing good.
Do not abandon me, O Lord.
Do not stand at a distance, my God.
Come quickly to help me,
O Lord my savior.

Intercession:

Concluding Prayer: Lord Jesus stay with us, for evening is at hand and the day is past. Be our companion in the way, kindle our hearts and awaken hope, that we may know you as you are revealed in Scripture and the breaking of bread. Grant this for the sake of your love. Amen.

May 27, 2011

Morning

Call To Prayer: In the morning, O Lord, you hear my voice,* In the morning I lay my requests before you and wait in expectation.

Vow: In a world full of injustice, we will work at the grassroots level for visible social change and will be a voice for justice among the world's oppressed.

Scripture Related to the Vow: Mark 7:24-30

Then Jesus left Galilee and went north to the region of Tyre. He didn't want anyone to know which house he was staying in, but he couldn't keep it a secret. Right away a woman who had heard about him came and fell at his feet. Her little girl was possessed by an evil spirit, and she begged him to cast out the demon from her daughter.

Since she was a Gentile, born in Syrian Phoenicia, Jesus told her, "First I should feed the children—my own family, the Jews. It isn't right to take food from the children and throw it to the dogs."

She replied, "That's true, Lord, but even the dogs under the table are allowed to eat the scraps from the children's plates."

"Good answer!" he said. "Now go home, for the demon has left your daughter." And when she arrived home, she found her little girl lying quietly in bed, and the demon was gone.

Morning Short Reading:

We are, on most days, a hard mix of true prophet and wayward voice, a mix of your call to justice and our hope for shalom. Here we are, as we are, mixed but faithful, compromised but committed, anxious but devoted to you. Use us and our gifts for your newness that pushes beyond all that we can say or imagine.

Walter Brueggemann

Vow Prayer: Almighty Father, we long for your Kingdom where kindness and truth will meet, where justice and peace will kiss. Give our minds wisdom, give our hearts empathy, and give our hands strength as we work on behalf of justice for all, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Morning Gospel: Matthew 25:31-46

"But when the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit upon his glorious throne. All the nations will be gathered in his presence, and he will separate the people as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. He will place the sheep at his right hand and the goats at his left.

"Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the creation of the world. For I was hungry, and you fed me. I was thirsty, and you gave me a drink. I was a stranger, and you invited me into your home. I was naked, and you gave me clothing. I was sick, and you cared for me. I was in prison, and you visited me.'

"Then these righteous ones will reply, 'Lord, when did we ever see you hungry and feed you? Or thirsty and give you something to drink? Or a stranger and show you hospitality? Or naked and give you clothing? When did we ever see you sick or in prison and visit you?'

"And the King will say, 'I tell you the truth, when you did it to one of the least of these my brothers and sisters, you were doing it to me!'

"Then the King will turn to those on the left and say, 'Away with you, you cursed ones, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his demons. For I was hungry, and you didn't feed me. I was thirsty, and you didn't give me a drink. I was a stranger, and you didn't invite me into

your home. I was naked, and you didn't give me clothing. I was sick and in prison, and you didn't visit me.'

"Then they will reply, 'Lord, when did we ever see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and not help you?'

"And he will answer, 'I tell you the truth, when you refused to help the least of these my brothers and sisters, you were refusing to help me.'

"And they will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous will go into eternal life."

Lord's Prayer:

Our Father in heaven. Let your holiness be revealed
Let your kingdom come. Let your will be done on earth as in heaven
Give us today our daily bread. Erase our debts as we erase the debts of others.
Keep us from temptation and Rescue us from evil.
For kingdom, power and glory belong to you for ever and ever.
Amen.

Morning Psalm: Psalm 39

For Jeduthun, the choir director: A psalm of David.

I said to myself, "I will watch what I do
and not sin in what I say.

I will hold my tongue
when the ungodly are around me."

But as I stood there in silence—
not even speaking of good things—
the turmoil within me grew worse.

The more I thought about it,
the hotter I got,
igniting a fire of words:

"Lord, remind me how brief my time on earth will be.
Remind me that my days are numbered—
how fleeting my life is.

You have made my life no longer than the width of my hand.
My entire lifetime is just a moment to you;
at best, each of us is but a breath."

Interlude

We are merely moving shadows,
and all our busy rushing ends in nothing.

We heap up wealth,
not knowing who will spend it.

And so, Lord, where do I put my hope?
My only hope is in you.

Rescue me from my rebellion.
Do not let fools mock me.

I am silent before you; I won't say a word,
for my punishment is from you.

But please stop striking me!
I am exhausted by the blows from your hand.

When you discipline us for our sins,
you consume like a moth what is precious to us.
Each of us is but a breath.

Interlude

Hear my prayer, O Lord!

Listen to my cries for help!
Don't ignore my tears.

For I am your guest—
a traveler passing through,

as my ancestors were before me.
Leave me alone so I can smile again
before I am gone and exist no more.

Intercession:

Concluding Prayer: Lord God, Almighty and Everlasting Father, you have brought us in safety to this new day. Preserve us with your mighty power that we may not fall into sin nor be overcome by adversity and in all we do direct us to the fulfilling of your purpose through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Midday

Vow: In a world of shallow living we'll develop habits and rhythms that sustain us in the way of Christ.

Vow Prayer: Almighty Father, we long for your Kingdom where kindness and truth will meet, where justice and peace will kiss. Give our minds wisdom, give our hearts empathy, and give our hands strength as we work on behalf of justice for all, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Evening

Call To Prayer: Our help is in the name of the Lord* The Maker of heaven and earth

Vow: In a world full of injustice, we will work at the grassroots level for visible social change and will be a voice for justice among the world's oppressed.

Scripture Related to the Vow: Mark 7:24-30

Then Jesus left Galilee and went north to the region of Tyre. He didn't want anyone to know which house he was staying in, but he couldn't keep it a secret. Right away a woman who had heard about him came and fell at his feet. Her little girl was possessed by an evil spirit, and she begged him to cast out the demon from her daughter.

Since she was a Gentile, born in Syrian Phoenicia, Jesus told her, "First I should feed the children—my own family, the Jews. It isn't right to take food from the children and throw it to the dogs."

She replied, "That's true, Lord, but even the dogs under the table are allowed to eat the scraps from the children's plates."

"Good answer!" he said. "Now go home, for the demon has left your daughter." And when she arrived home, she found her little girl lying quietly in bed, and the demon was gone.

Evening Short Reading:

The economy must serve people, not the other way around. All workers have a right to productive work, to decent and fair wages, and to safe working conditions. They also have a fundamental right to organize and join unions. People have a right to economic initiative and private property, but these rights have limits. No one is allowed to amass excessive wealth when others lack the basic necessities of life.

Catholic Social Teaching (website)

Vow Prayer: Almighty Father, we long for your Kingdom where kindness and truth will meet, where justice and peace will kiss. Give our minds wisdom, give our hearts empathy, and give our hands strength as we work on behalf of justice for all, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Evening Gospel: Matthew 26:1-30

When Jesus had finished saying all these things, he said to his disciples, “As you know, Passover begins in two days, and the Son of Man will be handed over to be crucified.”

At that same time the leading priests and elders were meeting at the residence of Caiaphas, the high priest, plotting how to capture Jesus secretly and kill him. “But not during the Passover celebration,” they agreed, “or the people may riot.”

Meanwhile, Jesus was in Bethany at the home of Simon, a man who had previously had leprosy. While he was eating, a woman came in with a beautiful alabaster jar of expensive perfume and poured it over his head.

The disciples were indignant when they saw this. “What a waste!” they said. “It could have been sold for a high price and the money given to the poor.”

But Jesus, aware of this, replied, “Why criticize this woman for doing such a good thing to me? You will always have the poor among you, but you will not always have me. She has poured this perfume on me to prepare my body for burial. I tell you the truth, wherever the Good News is preached throughout the world, this woman’s deed will be remembered and discussed.”

Then Judas Iscariot, one of the twelve disciples, went to the leading priests and asked, “How much will you pay me to betray Jesus to you?” And they gave him thirty pieces of silver. From that time on, Judas began looking for an opportunity to betray Jesus.

On the first day of the Festival of Unleavened Bread, the disciples came to Jesus and asked, “Where do you want us to prepare the Passover meal for you?”

“As you go into the city,” he told them, “you will see a certain man. Tell him, ‘The Teacher says My time has come, and I will eat the Passover meal with my disciples at your house.’” So the disciples did as Jesus told them and prepared the Passover meal there.

When it was evening, Jesus sat down at the table with the twelve disciples. While they were eating, he said, “I tell you the truth, one of you will betray me.”

Greatly distressed, each one asked in turn, “Am I the one, Lord?”

He replied, “One of you who has just eaten from this bowl with me will betray me. For the Son of Man must die, as the Scriptures declared long ago. But how terrible it will be for the one who betrays him. It would be far better for that man if he had never been born!”

Judas, the one who would betray him, also asked, “Rabbi, am I the one?”

And Jesus told him, “You have said it.”

As they were eating, Jesus took some bread and blessed it. Then he broke it in pieces and gave it to the disciples, saying, “Take this and eat it, for this is my body.”

And he took a cup of wine and gave thanks to God for it. He gave it to them and said, “Each of you drink from it, for this is my blood, which confirms the covenant between God and his people. It is poured out as a sacrifice to forgive the sins of many. Mark my words—I will not drink wine again until the day I drink it new with you in my Father’s Kingdom.”

Then they sang a hymn and went out to the Mount of Olives.

Lord's Prayer:

Our Father in heaven. Let your holiness be revealed
Let your kingdom come. Let your will be done on earth as in heaven
Give us today our daily bread. Erase our debts as we erase the debts of others.
Keep us from temptation and Rescue us from evil.
For kingdom, power and glory belong to you for ever and ever.
Amen.

Evening Psalm: Psalm 40

For the choir director: A psalm of David.

I waited patiently for the Lord to help me,
and he turned to me and heard my cry.
He lifted me out of the pit of despair,
out of the mud and the mire.
He set my feet on solid ground
and steadied me as I walked along.
He has given me a new song to sing,
a hymn of praise to our God.
Many will see what he has done and be amazed.
They will put their trust in the Lord.

Oh, the joys of those who trust the Lord,
who have no confidence in the proud
or in those who worship idols.
O Lord my God, you have performed many wonders for us.
Your plans for us are too numerous to list.
You have no equal.
If I tried to recite all your wonderful deeds,
I would never come to the end of them.

You take no delight in sacrifices or offerings.
Now that you have made me listen, I finally understand—
you don't require burnt offerings or sin offerings.
Then I said, "Look, I have come.
As is written about me in the Scriptures:
I take joy in doing your will, my God,
for your instructions are written on my heart."

I have told all your people about your justice.
I have not been afraid to speak out,
as you, O Lord, well know.
I have not kept the good news of your justice hidden in my heart;
I have talked about your faithfulness and saving power.
I have told everyone in the great assembly
of your unfailing love and faithfulness.

Lord, don't hold back your tender mercies from me.
Let your unfailing love and faithfulness always protect me.
For troubles surround me—
too many to count!
My sins pile up so high
I can't see my way out.
They outnumber the hairs on my head.
I have lost all courage.

Please, Lord, rescue me!
Come quickly, Lord, and help me.
May those who try to destroy me
be humiliated and put to shame.
May those who take delight in my trouble

be turned back in disgrace.
Let them be horrified by their shame,
for they said, "Aha! We've got him now!"

But may all who search for you
be filled with joy and gladness in you.
May those who love your salvation
repeatedly shout, "The Lord is great!"
As for me, since I am poor and needy,
let the Lord keep me in his thoughts.
You are my helper and my savior.
O my God, do not delay.

Intercession:

Concluding Prayer: Lord Jesus stay with us, for evening is at hand and the day is past. Be our companion in the way, kindle our hearts and awaken hope, that we may know you as you are revealed in Scripture and the breaking of bread. Grant this for the sake of your love. Amen.

May 28, 2011

Morning

Call To Prayer: In the morning, O Lord, you hear my voice,* In the morning I lay my requests before you and wait in expectation.

Vow: In a world full of injustice, we will work at the grassroots level for visible social change and will be a voice for justice among the world's oppressed.

Scripture Related to the Vow: Mark 7:24-30

Then Jesus left Galilee and went north to the region of Tyre. He didn't want anyone to know which house he was staying in, but he couldn't keep it a secret. Right away a woman who had heard about him came and fell at his feet. Her little girl was possessed by an evil spirit, and she begged him to cast out the demon from her daughter.

Since she was a Gentile, born in Syrian Phoenicia, Jesus told her, "First I should feed the children—my own family, the Jews. It isn't right to take food from the children and throw it to the dogs."

She replied, "That's true, Lord, but even the dogs under the table are allowed to eat the scraps from the children's plates."

"Good answer!" he said. "Now go home, for the demon has left your daughter." And when she arrived home, she found her little girl lying quietly in bed, and the demon was gone.

Morning Short Reading:

There can be no redemption unless the truth about the world is told and justice is done. To treat sin as if it were not there, when in fact it is there, amounts to living as if the world were redeemed when it in fact is not...Since the new world has become reality in the crucified and resurrected Christ (2 Cor 5:17) it is possible to live the new world in the midst of the old in an act of gratuitous forgiveness without giving up the struggle for truth and justice.
Miroslav Volf

Vow Prayer: Almighty Father, we long for your Kingdom where kindness and truth will meet, where justice and peace will kiss. Give our minds wisdom, give our hearts empathy, and give our hands strength as we work on behalf of justice for all, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Morning Gospel: Matthew 26:31-46

On the way, Jesus told them, "Tonight all of you will desert me. For the Scriptures say, 'God will strike the Shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be scattered.'

But after I have been raised from the dead, I will go ahead of you to Galilee and meet you there."

Peter declared, "Even if everyone else deserts you, I will never desert you."

Jesus replied, "I tell you the truth, Peter—this very night, before the rooster crows, you will deny three times that you even know me."

"No!" Peter insisted. "Even if I have to die with you, I will never deny you!" And all the other disciples vowed the same.

Then Jesus went with them to the olive grove called Gethsemane, and he said, "Sit here while I go over there to pray." He took Peter and Zebedee's two sons, James and John, and he became anguished and distressed. He told them, "My soul is crushed with grief to the point of death. Stay here and keep watch with me."

He went on a little farther and bowed with his face to the ground, praying, “My Father! If it is possible, let this cup of suffering be taken away from me. Yet I want your will to be done, not mine.”

Then he returned to the disciples and found them asleep. He said to Peter, “Couldn’t you watch with me even one hour? Keep watch and pray, so that you will not give in to temptation. For the spirit is willing, but the body is weak!”

Then Jesus left them a second time and prayed, “My Father! If this cup cannot be taken away unless I drink it, your will be done.” When he returned to them again, he found them sleeping, for they couldn’t keep their eyes open.

So he went to pray a third time, saying the same things again. Then he came to the disciples and said, “Go ahead and sleep. Have your rest. But look—the time has come. The Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. Up, let’s be going. Look, my betrayer is here!”

Lord’s Prayer:

Our Father in heaven. Let your holiness be revealed
Let your kingdom come. Let your will be done on earth as in heaven
Give us today our daily bread. Erase our debts as we erase the debts of others.
Keep us from temptation and Rescue us from evil.
For kingdom, power and glory belong to you for ever and ever.
Amen.

Morning Psalm: Psalm 41

For the choir director: A psalm of David.

Oh, the joys of those who are kind to the poor!
The Lord rescues them when they are in trouble.
The Lord protects them
and keeps them alive.
He gives them prosperity in the land
and rescues them from their enemies.
The Lord nurses them when they are sick
and restores them to health.

“O Lord,” I prayed, “have mercy on me.
Heal me, for I have sinned against you.”
But my enemies say nothing but evil about me.
“How soon will he die and be forgotten?” they ask.
They visit me as if they were my friends,
but all the while they gather gossip,
and when they leave, they spread it everywhere.
All who hate me whisper about me,
imagining the worst.
“He has some fatal disease,” they say.
“He will never get out of that bed!”
Even my best friend, the one I trusted completely,
the one who shared my food, has turned against me.

Lord, have mercy on me.
Make me well again, so I can pay them back!
I know you are pleased with me,
for you have not let my enemies triumph over me.
You have preserved my life because I am innocent;
you have brought me into your presence forever.

Praise the Lord, the God of Israel,
who lives from everlasting to everlasting.
Amen and amen!

Intercession:

Concluding Prayer: Lord God, Almighty and Everlasting Father, you have brought us in safety to this new day. Preserve us with your mighty power that we may not fall into sin nor be overcome by adversity and in all we do direct us to the fulfilling of your purpose through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Midday

Vow: In a world of shallow living we'll develop habits and rhythms that sustain us in the way of Christ.

Vow Prayer: Almighty Father, we long for your Kingdom where kindness and truth will meet, where justice and peace will kiss. Give our minds wisdom, give our hearts empathy, and give our hands strength as we work on behalf of justice for all, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Evening

Call To Prayer: Our help is in the name of the Lord* The Maker of heaven and earth

Vow: In a world full of injustice, we will work at the grassroots level for visible social change and will be a voice for justice among the world's oppressed.

Scripture Related to the Vow: Mark 7:24-30

Then Jesus left Galilee and went north to the region of Tyre. He didn't want anyone to know which house he was staying in, but he couldn't keep it a secret. Right away a woman who had heard about him came and fell at his feet. Her little girl was possessed by an evil spirit, and she begged him to cast out the demon from her daughter.

Since she was a Gentile, born in Syrian Phoenicia, Jesus told her, "First I should feed the children—my own family, the Jews. It isn't right to take food from the children and throw it to the dogs."

She replied, "That's true, Lord, but even the dogs under the table are allowed to eat the scraps from the children's plates."

"Good answer!" he said. "Now go home, for the demon has left your daughter." And when she arrived home, she found her little girl lying quietly in bed, and the demon was gone.

Evening Short Reading:

Today it is fashionable to talk about the poor. Unfortunately, it is not fashionable to talk with them.

Mother Teresa

Vow Prayer: Almighty Father, we long for your Kingdom where kindness and truth will meet, where justice and peace will kiss. Give our minds wisdom, give our hearts empathy, and give our hands strength as we work on behalf of justice for all, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Evening Gospel: Matthew 26:47-75

And even as Jesus said this, Judas, one of the twelve disciples, arrived with a crowd of men armed with swords and clubs. They had been sent by the leading priests and elders of the people. The traitor, Judas, had given them a prearranged signal “You will know which one to arrest when I greet him with a kiss.” So Judas came straight to Jesus. “Greetings, Rabbi!” he exclaimed and gave him the kiss.

Jesus said, “My friend, go ahead and do what you have come for.”

Then the others grabbed Jesus and arrested him. But one of the men with Jesus pulled out his sword and struck the high priest’s slave, slashing off his ear.

“Put away your sword,” Jesus told him. “Those who use the sword will die by the sword. Don’t you realize that I could ask my Father for thousands of angels to protect us, and he would send them instantly? But if I did, how would the Scriptures be fulfilled that describe what must happen now?”

Then Jesus said to the crowd, “Am I some dangerous revolutionary, that you come with swords and clubs to arrest me? Why didn’t you arrest me in the Temple? I was there teaching every day. But this is all happening to fulfill the words of the prophets as recorded in the Scriptures.” At that point, all the disciples deserted him and fled.

Then the people who had arrested Jesus led him to the home of Caiaphas, the high priest, where the teachers of religious law and the elders had gathered. Meanwhile, Peter followed him at a distance and came to the high priest’s courtyard. He went in and sat with the guards and waited to see how it would all end.

Inside, the leading priests and the entire high council were trying to find witnesses who would lie about Jesus, so they could put him to death. But even though they found many who agreed to give false witness, they could not use anyone’s testimony. Finally, two men came forward who declared, “This man said, ‘I am able to destroy the Temple of God and rebuild it in three days.’”

Then the high priest stood up and said to Jesus, “Well, aren’t you going to answer these charges? What do you have to say for yourself?” But Jesus remained silent. Then the high priest said to him, “I demand in the name of the living God—tell us if you are the Messiah, the Son of God.”

Jesus replied, “You have said it. And in the future you will see the Son of Man seated in the place of power at God’s right hand and coming on the clouds of heaven.” Then the high priest tore his clothing to show his horror and said, “Blasphemy! Why do we need other witnesses? You have all heard his blasphemy. What is your verdict?”

“Guilty!” they shouted. “He deserves to die!”

Then they began to spit in Jesus’ face and beat him with their fists. And some slapped him, jeering, “Prophecy to us, you Messiah! Who hit you that time?”

Meanwhile, Peter was sitting outside in the courtyard. A servant girl came over and said to him, “You were one of those with Jesus the Galilean.” But Peter denied it in front of everyone. “I don’t know what you’re talking about,” he said. Later, out by the gate, another servant girl noticed him and said to those standing around, “This man was with Jesus of Nazareth.” Again Peter denied it, this time with an oath. “I don’t even know the man,” he said.

A little later some of the other bystanders came over to Peter and said, “You must be one of them; we can tell by your Galilean accent.” Peter swore, “A curse on me if I’m lying—I don’t know the man!” And immediately the rooster crowed. Suddenly, Jesus’ words flashed through Peter’s mind “Before the rooster crows, you will deny three times that you even know me.” And he went away, weeping bitterly.

Lord’s Prayer:

Our Father in heaven. Let your holiness be revealed

Let your kingdom come. Let your will be done on earth as in heaven
Give us today our daily bread. Erase our debts as we erase the debts of others.
Keep us from temptation and Rescue us from evil.
For kingdom, power and glory belong to you for ever and ever.
Amen.

Evening Psalm: Psalm 42

For the choir director: A psalm of the descendants of Korah.

As the deer longs for streams of water,
so I long for you, O God.
I thirst for God, the living God.
When can I go and stand before him?
Day and night I have only tears for food,
while my enemies continually taunt me, saying,
“Where is this God of yours?”

My heart is breaking
as I remember how it used to be:
I walked among the crowds of worshipers,
leading a great procession to the house of God,
singing for joy and giving thanks
amid the sound of a great celebration!

Why am I discouraged?
Why is my heart so sad?
I will put my hope in God!
I will praise him again—
my Savior and my God!

Now I am deeply discouraged,
but I will remember you—
even from distant Mount Hermon, the source of the Jordan,
from the land of Mount Mizar.
I hear the tumult of the raging seas
as your waves and surging tides sweep over me.
But each day the Lord pours his unfailing love upon me,
and through each night I sing his songs,
praying to God who gives me life.

“O God my rock,” I cry,
“Why have you forgotten me?
Why must I wander around in grief,
oppressed by my enemies?”
Their taunts break my bones.
They scoff, “Where is this God of yours?”

Why am I discouraged?
Why is my heart so sad?
I will put my hope in God!
I will praise him again—
my Savior and my God!

Intercession:

Concluding Prayer: Lord Jesus stay with us, for evening is at hand and the day is past. Be our companion in the way, kindle our hearts and awaken hope, that we may know you as you are revealed in Scripture and the breaking of bread. Grant this for the sake of your love. Amen.

May 29, 2011

Morning

Call To Prayer: In the morning, O Lord, you hear my voice,* In the morning I lay my requests before you and wait in expectation.

Vow: In a world full of injustice, we will work at the grassroots level for visible social change and will be a voice for justice among the world's oppressed.

Scripture Related to the Vow: Mark 7:24-30

Then Jesus left Galilee and went north to the region of Tyre. He didn't want anyone to know which house he was staying in, but he couldn't keep it a secret. Right away a woman who had heard about him came and fell at his feet. Her little girl was possessed by an evil spirit, and she begged him to cast out the demon from her daughter.

Since she was a Gentile, born in Syrian Phoenicia, Jesus told her, "First I should feed the children—my own family, the Jews. It isn't right to take food from the children and throw it to the dogs."

She replied, "That's true, Lord, but even the dogs under the table are allowed to eat the scraps from the children's plates."

"Good answer!" he said. "Now go home, for the demon has left your daughter." And when she arrived home, she found her little girl lying quietly in bed, and the demon was gone.

Morning Short Reading:

A genuinely Christian reflection on social issues must be rooted in the self-giving love of the Divine Trinity as manifested on the cross of Christ; all the central themes of such reflection will have to be thought through from the perspective of the self-giving love of God.

Miroslav Volf

Vow Prayer: Almighty Father, we long for your Kingdom where kindness and truth will meet, where justice and peace will kiss. Give our minds wisdom, give our hearts empathy, and give our hands strength as we work on behalf of justice for all, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Morning Gospel: Matthew 27:1-31

Very early in the morning the leading priests and the elders met again to lay plans for putting Jesus to death. Then they bound him, led him away, and took him to Pilate, the Roman governor.

When Judas, who had betrayed him, realized that Jesus had been condemned to die, he was filled with remorse. So he took the thirty pieces of silver back to the leading priests and the elders. "I have sinned," he declared, "for I have betrayed an innocent man."

"What do we care?" they retorted. "That's your problem."

Then Judas threw the silver coins down in the Temple and went out and hanged himself.

The leading priests picked up the coins. "It wouldn't be right to put this money in the Temple treasury," they said, "since it was payment for murder." After some discussion they finally decided to buy the potter's field, and they made it into a cemetery for foreigners. That is why the field is still called the Field of Blood. This fulfilled the prophecy of Jeremiah that says,

"They took the thirty pieces of silver—
the price at which he was valued by the people of Israel,
and purchased the potter's field,
as the Lord directed."

Now Jesus was standing before Pilate, the Roman governor. “Are you the king of the Jews?” the governor asked him.

Jesus replied, “You have said it.”

But when the leading priests and the elders made their accusations against him, Jesus remained silent. “Don’t you hear all these charges they are bringing against you?” Pilate demanded. But Jesus made no response to any of the charges, much to the governor’s surprise.

Now it was the governor’s custom each year during the Passover celebration to release one prisoner to the crowd—anyone they wanted. This year there was a notorious prisoner, a man named Barabbas. As the crowds gathered before Pilate’s house that morning, he asked them, “Which one do you want me to release to you—Barabbas, or Jesus who is called the Messiah?” (He knew very well that the religious leaders had arrested Jesus out of envy.)

Just then, as Pilate was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent him this message “Leave that innocent man alone. I suffered through a terrible nightmare about him last night.”

Meanwhile, the leading priests and the elders persuaded the crowd to ask for Barabbas to be released and for Jesus to be put to death. So the governor asked again, “Which of these two do you want me to release to you?” The crowd shouted back, “Barabbas!”

Pilate responded, “Then what should I do with Jesus who is called the Messiah?” They shouted back, “Crucify him!” “Why?” Pilate demanded. “What crime has he committed?” But the mob roared even louder, “Crucify him!”

Pilate saw that he wasn’t getting anywhere and that a riot was developing. So he sent for a bowl of water and washed his hands before the crowd, saying, “I am innocent of this man’s blood. The responsibility is yours!”

And all the people yelled back, “We will take responsibility for his death—we and our children!” So Pilate released Barabbas to them. He ordered Jesus flogged with a lead-tipped whip, then turned him over to the Roman soldiers to be crucified.

Some of the governor’s soldiers took Jesus into their headquarters and called out the entire regiment. They stripped him and put a scarlet robe on him. They wove thorn branches into a crown and put it on his head, and they placed a reed stick in his right hand as a scepter. Then they knelt before him in mockery and taunted, “Hail! King of the Jews!” And they spit on him and grabbed the stick and struck him on the head with it. When they were finally tired of mocking him, they took off the robe and put his own clothes on him again. Then they led him away to be crucified.

Lord’s Prayer:

Our Father in heaven. Let your holiness be revealed
Let your kingdom come. Let your will be done on earth as in heaven
Give us today our daily bread. Erase our debts as we erase the debts of others.
Keep us from temptation and Rescue us from evil.
For kingdom, power and glory belong to you for ever and ever.
Amen.

Morning Psalm: Psalm 43

Declare me innocent, O God!
Defend me against these ungodly people.
Rescue me from these unjust liars.
For you are God, my only safe haven.
Why have you tossed me aside?
Why must I wander around in grief,
oppressed by my enemies?
Send out your light and your truth;
let them guide me.

Let them lead me to your holy mountain,
to the place where you live.
There I will go to the altar of God,
to God—the source of all my joy.
I will praise you with my harp,
O God, my God!

Why am I discouraged?
Why is my heart so sad?
I will put my hope in God!
I will praise him again—
my Savior and my God!

Intercession:

Concluding Prayer: Lord God, Almighty and Everlasting Father, you have brought us in safety to this new day. Preserve us with your mighty power that we may not fall into sin nor be overcome by adversity and in all we do direct us to the fulfilling of your purpose through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Midday

Vow: In a world of shallow living we'll develop habits and rhythms that sustain us in the way of Christ.

Vow Prayer: Almighty Father, we long for your Kingdom where kindness and truth will meet, where justice and peace will kiss. Give our minds wisdom, give our hearts empathy, and give our hands strength as we work on behalf of justice for all, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Evening

Call To Prayer: Our help is in the name of the Lord* The Maker of heaven and earth

Vow: In a world full of injustice, we will work at the grassroots level for visible social change and will be a voice for justice among the world's oppressed.

Scripture Related to the Vow: Mark 7:24-30

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Since she was a Gentile, born in Syrian Phoenicia, Jesus told her, "First I should feed the children—my own family, the Jews. It isn't right to take food from the children and throw it to the dogs."

She replied, "That's true, Lord, but even the dogs under the table are allowed to eat the scraps from the children's plates."

"Good answer!" he said. "Now go home, for the demon has left your daughter." And when she arrived home, she found her little girl lying quietly in bed, and the demon was gone.

Evening Short Reading:

Let us touch the dying, the poor, the lonely and the unwanted according to the graces we have received and let us not be ashamed or slow to do the humble work.
Mother Teresa

Vow Prayer: Almighty Father, we long for your Kingdom where kindness and truth will meet, where justice and peace will kiss. Give our minds wisdom, give our hearts empathy, and give our hands strength as we work on behalf of justice for all, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Evening Gospel: Matthew 27:32-56

Along the way, they came across a man named Simon, who was from Cyrene, and the soldiers forced him to carry Jesus' cross. And they went out to a place called Golgotha (which means "Place of the Skull"). The soldiers gave him wine mixed with bitter gall, but when he had tasted it, he refused to drink it.

After they had nailed him to the cross, the soldiers gambled for his clothes by throwing dice. Then they sat around and kept guard as he hung there. A sign was fastened to the cross above Jesus' head, announcing the charge against him. It read "This is Jesus, the King of the Jews." Two revolutionaries were crucified with him, one on his right and one on his left.

The people passing by shouted abuse, shaking their heads in mockery. "Look at you now!" they yelled at him. "You said you were going to destroy the Temple and rebuild it in three days. Well then, if you are the Son of God, save yourself and come down from the cross!"

The leading priests, the teachers of religious law, and the elders also mocked Jesus. "He saved others," they scoffed, "but he can't save himself! So he is the King of Israel, is he? Let him come down from the cross right now, and we will believe in him! He trusted God, so let God rescue him now if he wants him! For he said, 'I am the Son of God.'" Even the revolutionaries who were crucified with him ridiculed him in the same way.

At noon, darkness fell across the whole land until three o'clock. At about three o'clock, Jesus called out with a loud voice, "Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?" which means "My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?"

Some of the bystanders misunderstood and thought he was calling for the prophet Elijah. One of them ran and filled a sponge with sour wine, holding it up to him on a reed stick so he could drink. But the rest said, "Wait! Let's see whether Elijah comes to save him."

Then Jesus shouted out again, and he released his spirit. At that moment the curtain in the sanctuary of the Temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. The earth shook, rocks split apart, and tombs opened. The bodies of many godly men and women who had died were raised from the dead. They left the cemetery after Jesus' resurrection, went into the holy city of Jerusalem, and appeared to many people.

The Roman officer and the other soldiers at the crucifixion were terrified by the earthquake and all that had happened. They said, "This man truly was the Son of God!"

And many women who had come from Galilee with Jesus to care for him were watching from a distance. Among them were Mary Magdalene, Mary (the mother of James and Joseph), and the mother of James and John, the sons of Zebedee.

Lord's Prayer:

Our Father in heaven. Let your holiness be revealed
Let your kingdom come. Let your will be done on earth as in heaven
Give us today our daily bread. Erase our debts as we erase the debts of others.
Keep us from temptation and Rescue us from evil.
For kingdom, power and glory belong to you for ever and ever.
Amen.

Evening Psalm: Psalm 44

For the choir director: A psalm of the descendants of Korah.

O God, we have heard it with our own ears—
our ancestors have told us
of all you did in their day,
in days long ago:
You drove out the pagan nations by your power
and gave all the land to our ancestors.
You crushed their enemies
and set our ancestors free.
They did not conquer the land with their swords;
it was not their own strong arm that gave them victory.
It was your right hand and strong arm
and the blinding light from your face that helped them,
for you loved them.

You are my King and my God.
You command victories for Israel.
Only by your power can we push back our enemies;
only in your name can we trample our foes.
I do not trust in my bow;
I do not count on my sword to save me.
You are the one who gives us victory over our enemies;
you disgrace those who hate us.
O God, we give glory to you all day long
and constantly praise your name.
Interlude

But now you have tossed us aside in dishonor.
You no longer lead our armies to battle.
You make us retreat from our enemies
and allow those who hate us to plunder our land.
You have butchered us like sheep
and scattered us among the nations.
You sold your precious people for a pittance,
making nothing on the sale.
You let our neighbors mock us.
We are an object of scorn and derision to those around us.
You have made us the butt of their jokes;
they shake their heads at us in scorn.
We can't escape the constant humiliation;
shame is written across our faces.
All we hear are the taunts of our mockers.
All we see are our vengeful enemies.

All this has happened though we have not forgotten you.
We have not violated your covenant.
Our hearts have not deserted you.
We have not strayed from your path.
Yet you have crushed us in the jackal's desert home.
You have covered us with darkness and death.
If we had forgotten the name of our God
or spread our hands in prayer to foreign gods,
God would surely have known it,
for he knows the secrets of every heart.
But for your sake we are killed every day;
we are being slaughtered like sheep.

Wake up, O Lord! Why do you sleep?
Get up! Do not reject us forever.

Why do you look the other way?
Why do you ignore our suffering and oppression?
We collapse in the dust,
Lying face down in the dirt.
Rise up! Help us!
Ransom us because of your unfailing love.

Intercession:

Concluding Prayer: Lord Jesus stay with us, for evening is at hand and the day is past. Be our companion in the way, kindle our hearts and awaken hope, that we may know you as you are revealed in Scripture and the breaking of bread. Grant this for the sake of your love. Amen.

May 30, 2011

Morning

Call To Prayer: In the morning, O Lord, you hear my voice,* In the morning I lay my requests before you and wait in expectation.

Vow: In a world full of injustice, we will work at the grassroots level for visible social change and will be a voice for justice among the world's oppressed.

Scripture Related to the Vow: Mark 7:24-30

Then Jesus left Galilee and went north to the region of Tyre. He didn't want anyone to know which house he was staying in, but he couldn't keep it a secret. Right away a woman who had heard about him came and fell at his feet. Her little girl was possessed by an evil spirit, and she begged him to cast out the demon from her daughter.

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She replied, "That's true, Lord, but even the dogs under the table are allowed to eat the scraps from the children's plates."

"Good answer!" he said. "Now go home, for the demon has left your daughter." And when she arrived home, she found her little girl lying quietly in bed, and the demon was gone.

Morning Short Reading:

If you want justice, you must want more than justice here and now; if you want justice, you must want the reign of God...The more you seek justice, the more you realize it always remains outside your grasp. Hence figures such as Augustine and Edwards believed that if the world is to be enjoyed, it must be enjoyed in God, and if justice is to be realized, it must be granted to us with the gift of God's new world. Without God our hopes and we ourselves will remain diminished.

Miroslav Wolf, *Against the Tide: Love in a Time of Petty Dreams and Persisting Enmities*

Vow Prayer: Almighty Father, we long for your Kingdom where kindness and truth will meet, where justice and peace will kiss. Give our minds wisdom, give our hearts empathy, and give our hands strength as we work on behalf of justice for all, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Morning Gospel: Matthew 27:57-66

As evening approached, Joseph, a rich man from Arimathea who had become a follower of Jesus, went to Pilate and asked for Jesus' body. And Pilate issued an order to release it to him. Joseph took the body and wrapped it in a long sheet of clean linen cloth. He placed it in his own new tomb, which had been carved out of the rock. Then he rolled a great stone across the entrance and left. Both Mary Magdalene and the other Mary were sitting across from the tomb and watching.

The next day, on the Sabbath, the leading priests and Pharisees went to see Pilate. They told him, "Sir, we remember what that deceiver once said while he was still alive 'After three days I will rise from the dead.' So we request that you seal the tomb until the third day. This will prevent his disciples from coming and stealing his body and then telling everyone he was raised from the dead! If that happens, we'll be worse off than we were at first."

Pilate replied, "Take guards and secure it the best you can." So they sealed the tomb and posted guards to protect it.

Lord's Prayer:

Our Father in heaven. Let your holiness be revealed

Let your kingdom come. Let your will be done on earth as in heaven
Give us today our daily bread. Erase our debts as we erase the debts of others.
Keep us from temptation and Rescue us from evil.
For kingdom, power and glory belong to you for ever and ever.
Amen.

Morning Psalm: Psalm 45

For the choir director: A love song to be sung to the tune “Lilies.” A psalm of the descendants of Korah.

Beautiful words stir my heart.
I will recite a lovely poem about the king,
for my tongue is like the pen of a skillful poet.

You are the most handsome of all.
Gracious words stream from your lips.
God himself has blessed you forever.
Put on your sword, O mighty warrior!
You are so glorious, so majestic!
In your majesty, ride out to victory,
defending truth, humility, and justice.
Go forth to perform awe-inspiring deeds!
Your arrows are sharp, piercing your enemies hearts.
The nations fall beneath your feet.

Your throne, O God, endures forever and ever.
You rule with a scepter of justice.
You love justice and hate evil.
Therefore God, your God, has anointed you,
pouring out the oil of joy on you more than on anyone else.
Myrrh, aloes, and cassia perfume your robes.
In ivory palaces the music of strings entertains you.
Kings' daughters are among your noble women.
At your right side stands the queen,
wearing jewelry of finest gold from Ophir!

Listen to me, O royal daughter; take to heart what I say.
Forget your people and your family far away.
For your royal husband delights in your beauty;
honor him, for he is your lord.
The princess of Tyre will shower you with gifts.
The wealthy will beg your favor.
The bride, a princess, looks glorious
in her golden gown.
In her beautiful robes, she is led to the king,
accompanied by her bridesmaids.
What a joyful and enthusiastic procession
as they enter the king's palace!

Your sons will become kings like their father.
You will make them rulers over many lands.
I will bring honor to your name in every generation.
Therefore, the nations will praise you forever and ever.

Intercession:

Concluding Prayer: Lord God, Almighty and Everlasting Father, you have brought us in safety to this new day. Preserve us with your mighty power that we may not fall into sin nor be overcome by adversity and in all we do direct us to the fulfilling of your purpose through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Midday

Vow: In a world of shallow living we'll develop habits and rhythms that sustain us in the way of Christ.

Vow Prayer: Almighty Father, we long for your Kingdom where kindness and truth will meet, where justice and peace will kiss. Give our minds wisdom, give our hearts empathy, and give our hands strength as we work on behalf of justice for all, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Evening

Call To Prayer: Our help is in the name of the Lord* The Maker of heaven and earth

Vow: In a world full of injustice, we will work at the grassroots level for visible social change and will be a voice for justice among the world's oppressed.

Scripture Related to the Vow: Mark 7:24-30

Then Jesus left Galilee and went north to the region of Tyre. He didn't want anyone to know which house he was staying in, but he couldn't keep it a secret. Right away a woman who had heard about him came and fell at his feet. Her little girl was possessed by an evil spirit, and she begged him to cast out the demon from her daughter.

Since she was a Gentile, born in Syrian Phoenicia, Jesus told her, "First I should feed the children—my own family, the Jews. It isn't right to take food from the children and throw it to the dogs."

She replied, "That's true, Lord, but even the dogs under the table are allowed to eat the scraps from the children's plates."

"Good answer!" he said. "Now go home, for the demon has left your daughter." And when she arrived home, she found her little girl lying quietly in bed, and the demon was gone.

Evening Short Reading:

I am a shepherd who, with his people, has begun to learn a beautiful and difficult truth: our Christian faith requires that we submerge ourselves in the world... The world that the Church must serve is the world of the poor, and the poor are the ones who decide what it means for the Church to really live in the world... It is the poor who force us to understand what is really taking place... the persecution of the Church is a result of defending the poor. The poor are the Body of Christ today. Through them He lives on in history...

Archbishop Oscar Romero

Vow Prayer: Almighty Father, we long for your Kingdom where kindness and truth will meet, where justice and peace will kiss. Give our minds wisdom, give our hearts empathy, and give our hands strength as we work on behalf of justice for all, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Evening Gospel: Matthew 28:1-20

Early on Sunday morning, as the new day was dawning, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went out to visit the tomb.

Suddenly there was a great earthquake! For an angel of the Lord came down from heaven, rolled aside the stone, and sat on it. His face shone like lightning, and his clothing was as white as snow. The guards shook with fear when they saw him, and they fell into a dead faint.

Then the angel spoke to the women. “Don’t be afraid!” he said. “I know you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. He isn’t here! He is risen from the dead, just as he said would happen. Come, see where his body was lying. And now, go quickly and tell his disciples that he has risen from the dead, and he is going ahead of you to Galilee. You will see him there. Remember what I have told you.”

The women ran quickly from the tomb. They were very frightened but also filled with great joy, and they rushed to give the disciples the angel’s message. And as they went, Jesus met them and greeted them. And they ran to him, grasped his feet, and worshiped him. Then Jesus said to them, “Don’t be afraid! Go tell my brothers to leave for Galilee, and they will see me there.”

As the women were on their way, some of the guards went into the city and told the leading priests what had happened. A meeting with the elders was called, and they decided to give the soldiers a large bribe. They told the soldiers, “You must say, ‘Jesus’ disciples came during the night while we were sleeping, and they stole his body.’ If the governor hears about it, we’ll stand up for you so you won’t get in trouble.” So the guards accepted the bribe and said what they were told to say. Their story spread widely among the Jews, and they still tell it today.

Then the eleven disciples left for Galilee, going to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go. When they saw him, they worshiped him—but some of them doubted!

Jesus came and told his disciples, “I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth. Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”

Lord’s Prayer:

Our Father in heaven. Let your holiness be revealed
Let your kingdom come. Let your will be done on earth as in heaven
Give us today our daily bread. Erase our debts as we erase the debts of others.
Keep us from temptation and Rescue us from evil.
For kingdom, power and glory belong to you for ever and ever.
Amen.

Evening Psalm: Psalm 46

For the choir director: A song of the descendants of Korah, to be sung by soprano voices.

God is our refuge and strength,
always ready to help in times of trouble.
So we will not fear when earthquakes come
and the mountains crumble into the sea.
Let the oceans roar and foam.
Let the mountains tremble as the waters surge!

Interlude

A river brings joy to the city of our God,
the sacred home of the Most High.
God dwells in that city; it cannot be destroyed.
From the very break of day, God will protect it.
The nations are in chaos,
and their kingdoms crumble!
God’s voice thunders,
and the earth melts!

The Lord of Heaven's Armies is here among us;
the God of Israel is our fortress.
Interlude

Come, see the glorious works of the Lord:
See how he brings destruction upon the world.
He causes wars to end throughout the earth.
He breaks the bow and snaps the spear;
he burns the shields with fire.

"Be still, and know that I am God!
I will be honored by every nation.
I will be honored throughout the world."

The Lord of Heaven's Armies is here among us;
the God of Israel is our fortress.
Interlude

Intercession:

Concluding Prayer: Lord Jesus stay with us, for evening is at hand and the day is past. Be our companion in the way, kindle our hearts and awaken hope, that we may know you as you are revealed in Scripture and the breaking of bread. Grant this for the sake of your love. Amen.

May 31, 2011

Morning

Call To Prayer: In the morning, O Lord, you hear my voice,* In the morning I lay my requests before you and wait in expectation.

Vow: In a world full of injustice, we will work at the grassroots level for visible social change and will be a voice for justice among the world's oppressed.

Scripture Related to the Vow: Mark 7:24-30

Then Jesus left Galilee and went north to the region of Tyre. He didn't want anyone to know which house he was staying in, but he couldn't keep it a secret. Right away a woman who had heard about him came and fell at his feet. Her little girl was possessed by an evil spirit, and she begged him to cast out the demon from her daughter.

Since she was a Gentile, born in Syrian Phoenicia, Jesus told her, "First I should feed the children—my own family, the Jews. It isn't right to take food from the children and throw it to the dogs."

She replied, "That's true, Lord, but even the dogs under the table are allowed to eat the scraps from the children's plates."

"Good answer!" he said. "Now go home, for the demon has left your daughter." And when she arrived home, she found her little girl lying quietly in bed, and the demon was gone.

Morning Short Reading:

Do not wait for leaders; do it alone, person to person.
Mother Teresa

Vow Prayer: Almighty Father, we long for your Kingdom where kindness and truth will meet, where justice and peace will kiss. Give our minds wisdom, give our hearts empathy, and give our hands strength as we work on behalf of justice for all, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Morning Gospel: Acts 1

In my first book I told you, Theophilus, about everything Jesus began to do and teach until the day he was taken up to heaven after giving his chosen apostles further instructions through the Holy Spirit. During the forty days after his crucifixion, he appeared to the apostles from time to time, and he proved to them in many ways that he was actually alive. And he talked to them about the Kingdom of God.

Once when he was eating with them, he commanded them, "Do not leave Jerusalem until the Father sends you the gift he promised, as I told you before. John baptized with water, but in just a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit."

So when the apostles were with Jesus, they kept asking him, "Lord, has the time come for you to free Israel and restore our kingdom?"

He replied, "The Father alone has the authority to set those dates and times, and they are not for you to know. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. And you will be my witnesses, telling people about me everywhere—in Jerusalem, throughout Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

After saying this, he was taken up into a cloud while they were watching, and they could no longer see him. As they strained to see him rising into heaven, two white-robed men suddenly stood among them. "Men of Galilee," they said, "why are you standing here staring into heaven? Jesus has been taken from you into heaven, but someday he will return from heaven in the same way you saw him go!"

Then the apostles returned to Jerusalem from the Mount of Olives, a distance of half a mile. When they arrived, they went to the upstairs room of the house where they were staying.

Here are the names of those who were present: Peter, John, James, Andrew, Philip, Thomas, Bartholomew, Matthew, James (son of Alphaeus), Simon (the Zealot), and Judas (son of James). They all met together and were constantly united in prayer, along with Mary the mother of Jesus, several other women, and the brothers of Jesus.

During this time, when about 120 believers were together in one place, Peter stood up and addressed them. “Brothers,” he said, “the Scriptures had to be fulfilled concerning Judas, who guided those who arrested Jesus. This was predicted long ago by the Holy Spirit, speaking through King David. Judas was one of us and shared in the ministry with us.”

(Judas had bought a field with the money he received for his treachery. Falling headfirst there, his body split open, spilling out all his intestines. The news of his death spread to all the people of Jerusalem, and they gave the place the Aramaic name Akeldama, which means “Field of Blood.”)

Peter continued, “This was written in the book of Psalms, where it says, ‘Let his home become desolate, with no one living in it.’ It also says, ‘Let someone else take his position.’

“So now we must choose a replacement for Judas from among the men who were with us the entire time we were traveling with the Lord Jesus— from the time he was baptized by John until the day he was taken from us. Whoever is chosen will join us as a witness of Jesus’ resurrection.”

So they nominated two men: Joseph called Barsabbas (also known as Justus) and Matthias. Then they all prayed, “O Lord, you know every heart. Show us which of these men you have chosen as an apostle to replace Judas in this ministry, for he has deserted us and gone where he belongs.” Then they cast lots, and Matthias was selected to become an apostle with the other eleven.

Lord’s Prayer:

Our Father in heaven. Let your holiness be revealed
Let your kingdom come. Let your will be done on earth as in heaven
Give us today our daily bread. Erase our debts as we erase the debts of others.
Keep us from temptation and Rescue us from evil.
For kingdom, power and glory belong to you for ever and ever.
Amen.

Morning Psalm: Isaiah 38:9-20

When King Hezekiah was well again, he wrote this poem:

I said, “In the prime of my life,
must I now enter the place of the dead?
Am I to be robbed of the rest of my years?”
I said, “Never again will I see the Lord God
while still in the land of the living.
Never again will I see my friends
or be with those who live in this world.
My life has been blown away
like a shepherd’s tent in a storm.
It has been cut short,
as when a weaver cuts cloth from a loom.
Suddenly, my life was over.
I waited patiently all night,
but I was torn apart as though by lions.
Suddenly, my life was over.
Delirious, I chattered like a swallow or a crane,
and then I moaned like a mourning dove.
My eyes grew tired of looking to heaven for help.
I am in trouble, Lord. Help me!”

But what could I say?
For he himself sent this sickness.
Now I will walk humbly throughout my years
because of this anguish I have felt.
Lord, your discipline is good,
for it leads to life and health.
You restore my health
and allow me to live!
Yes, this anguish was good for me,
for you have rescued me from death
and forgiven all my sins.
For the dead cannot praise you;
they cannot raise their voices in praise.
Those who go down to the grave
can no longer hope in your faithfulness.
Only the living can praise you as I do today.
Each generation tells of your faithfulness to the next.
Think of it—the Lord is ready to heal me!
I will sing his praises with instruments
every day of my life
in the Temple of the Lord.

Intercession:

Concluding Prayer: Lord God, Almighty and Everlasting Father, you have brought us in safety to this new day. Preserve us with your mighty power that we may not fall into sin nor be overcome by adversity and in all we do direct us to the fulfilling of your purpose through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Midday

Vow: In a world of shallow living we'll develop habits and rhythms that sustain us in the way of Christ.

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"Good answer!" he said. "Now go home, for the demon has left your daughter." And when she arrived home, she found her little girl lying quietly in bed, and the demon was gone.

Evening Short Reading:

It is not enough for the Church to be engaged with the State in healing social ills, though this is important at times. But when the world can turn around and see a group of God's people exhibiting substantial healing in the area of human relationships in their present life, then the world will take notice. Each group of Christians is, as it were, a pilot plant, showing that something can be done in the present situation, if only we begin in the right way.

Francis Schaeffer, *The God who is There*

Vow Prayer: Almighty Father, we long for your Kingdom where kindness and truth will meet, where justice and peace will kiss. Give our minds wisdom, give our hearts empathy, and give our hands strength as we work on behalf of justice for all, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Evening Gospel: Acts 2

On the day of Pentecost all the believers were meeting together in one place. Suddenly, there was a sound from heaven like the roaring of a mighty windstorm, and it filled the house where they were sitting. Then, what looked like flames or tongues of fire appeared and settled on each of them. And everyone present was filled with the Holy Spirit and began speaking in other languages, as the Holy Spirit gave them this ability.

At that time there were devout Jews from every nation living in Jerusalem. When they heard the loud noise, everyone came running, and they were bewildered to hear their own languages being spoken by the believers.

They were completely amazed. "How can this be?" they exclaimed. "These people are all from Galilee, and yet we hear them speaking in our own native languages! Here we are—Parthians, Medes, Elamites, people from Mesopotamia, Judea, Cappadocia, Pontus, the province of Asia, Phrygia, Pamphylia, Egypt, and the areas of Libya around Cyrene, visitors from Rome (both Jews and converts to Judaism), Cretans, and Arabs. And we all hear these people speaking in our own languages about the wonderful things God has done!" They stood there amazed and perplexed. "What can this mean?" they asked each other.

But others in the crowd ridiculed them, saying, "They're just drunk, that's all!"

Then Peter stepped forward with the eleven other apostles and shouted to the crowd, "Listen carefully, all of you, fellow Jews and residents of Jerusalem! Make no mistake about this. These people are not drunk, as some of you are assuming. Nine o'clock in the morning is much too early for that. No, what you see was predicted long ago by the prophet Joel:

'In the last days,' God says,

'I will pour out my Spirit upon all people.

Your sons and daughters will prophesy.

Your young men will see visions,

and your old men will dream dreams.

In those days I will pour out my Spirit

even on my servants—men and women alike—

and they will prophesy.

And I will cause wonders in the heavens above

and signs on the earth below—
blood and fire and clouds of smoke.
The sun will become dark,
and the moon will turn blood red
before that great and glorious day of the Lord arrives.
But everyone who calls on the name of the Lord
will be saved.’

“People of Israel, listen! God publicly endorsed Jesus the Nazarene by doing powerful miracles, wonders, and signs through him, as you well know. But God knew what would happen, and his prearranged plan was carried out when Jesus was betrayed. With the help of lawless Gentiles, you nailed him to a cross and killed him. But God released him from the horrors of death and raised him back to life, for death could not keep him in its grip. King David said this about him:

‘I see that the Lord is always with me.
I will not be shaken, for he is right beside me.
No wonder my heart is glad,
and my tongue shouts his praises!
My body rests in hope.
For you will not leave my soul among the dead
or allow your Holy One to rot in the grave.
You have shown me the way of life,
and you will fill me with the joy of your presence.’

“Dear brothers, think about this! You can be sure that the patriarch David wasn’t referring to himself, for he died and was buried, and his tomb is still here among us. But he was a prophet, and he knew God had promised with an oath that one of David’s own descendants would sit on his throne. David was looking into the future and speaking of the Messiah’s resurrection. He was saying that God would not leave him among the dead or allow his body to rot in the grave.

“God raised Jesus from the dead, and we are all witnesses of this. Now he is exalted to the place of highest honor in heaven, at God’s right hand. And the Father, as he had promised, gave him the Holy Spirit to pour out upon us, just as you see and hear today. For David himself never ascended into heaven, yet he said,

‘The Lord said to my Lord,
“Sit in the place of honor at my right hand
until I humble your enemies,
making them a footstool under your feet.”’

“So let everyone in Israel know for certain that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, to be both Lord and Messiah!”

Peter’s words pierced their hearts, and they said to him and to the other apostles, “Brothers, what should we do?”

Peter replied, “Each of you must repent of your sins and turn to God, and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. Then you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. This promise is to you, and to your children, and even to the Gentiles—all who have been called by the Lord our God.” Then Peter continued preaching for a long time, strongly urging all his listeners, “Save yourselves from this crooked generation!”

Those who believed what Peter said were baptized and added to the church that day—about 3,000 in all.

All the believers devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching, and to fellowship, and to sharing in meals (including the Lord’s Supper), and to prayer.

A deep sense of awe came over them all, and the apostles performed many miraculous signs and wonders. And all the believers met together in one place and shared everything they had.

They sold their property and possessions and shared the money with those in need. They worshiped together at the Temple each day, met in homes for the Lord's Supper, and shared their meals with great joy and generosity— all the while praising God and enjoying the goodwill of all the people. And each day the Lord added to their fellowship those who were being saved.

Lord's Prayer:

Our Father in heaven. Let your holiness be revealed
Let your kingdom come. Let your will be done on earth as in heaven
Give us today our daily bread. Erase our debts as we erase the debts of others.
Keep us from temptation and Rescue us from evil.
For kingdom, power and glory belong to you for ever and ever.
Amen.

Evening Psalm: Isaiah 40:6-11

A voice said, "Shout!"
I asked, "What should I shout?"

"Shout that people are like the grass.
Their beauty fades as quickly
as the flowers in a field.
The grass withers and the flowers fade
beneath the breath of the Lord.
And so it is with people.
The grass withers and the flowers fade,
but the word of our God stands forever."

O Zion, messenger of good news,
shout from the mountaintops!
Shout it louder, O Jerusalem.
Shout, and do not be afraid.
Tell the towns of Judah,
"Your God is coming!"
Yes, the Sovereign Lord is coming in power.
He will rule with a powerful arm.
See, he brings his reward with him as he comes.
He will feed his flock like a shepherd.
He will carry the lambs in his arms,
holding them close to his heart.
He will gently lead the mother sheep with their young.

Intercession:

Concluding Prayer: Lord Jesus stay with us, for evening is at hand and the day is past. Be our companion in the way, kindle our hearts and awaken hope, that we may know you as you are revealed in Scripture and the breaking of bread. Grant this for the sake of your love. Amen.