

CONFESSING CHRIST - DAILY LECTIONARY AND PRAYERS

Pentecost-Trinity Seasons, 2009 (Part 2)

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"God in Christ has forgiven you. Therefore, be imitators of God as beloved children, and live in love as Christ has loved us."

(Ephesians 5:1-2)

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Sunday, 8/02 9 Pentecost/8 Trinity	Psalm 51:1-4	Joan Hunt Weston, MA
Monday, 8/03	Psalm 51:6-9	Dorothy Hutch Branford, CT
Tuesday, 8/04	Psalm 51:10-12 +64, Martyrs of Nero's Persecution	Steve Jaberg West Bend, WI
Wednesday, 8/05	Psalm 78:1-4	Clifford J. Janssen New Castle, IN
Thursday, 8/06	Psalm 78:23-29 1945, Atomic Bomb, Hiroshima (Day of Remembrance and Mourning) 1965, Voting Rights Act	Laverne R. Joseph Long Beach, CA
Friday, 8/07	Ephesians 4:1-6	Harvey Kandler Kaukauna, WI
Saturday, 8/08	Ephesians 4:7-16 1945, U.S. Ratification of UN Charter	Robert Kasper Elgin, IL
Sunday, 8/09 10 Pentecost/9 Trinity	Psalm 24 1945, Atomic Bomb, Nagasaki	Christoph Keienburg Paderborn, Germany
Monday, 8/10	Psalm 130	William Kesting Cleveland, WI
Tuesday, 8/11	Psalm 34:1-3	Kibler, Ray F. Claremont, CA
Wednesday, 8/12	Psalm 34:4-7 1949, Geneva Convention of Protection of War Victims	Russell Kimmerly Harrison, OH

Thursday, 8/13	Psalm 34:8-10 +1910, Florence Nightingale	Stoddon G.N. King Orange, CT
Friday, 8/14	Psalm 34:11-14 +1941, Maximilian Kolbe 1846, Henry David Thoreau jailed (War tax resistance)	Paul Kittlaus Claremont, CA
Saturday, 8/15	Psalm 34:15-22 *1917, Oscar Romero	Armin F. Klemme Union, MO
Sunday, 8/16 11 Pentecost/10 Trinity	Ephesians 5:15-20 1908, Gandhi's "Bonfire of Certificates"	Russell Knoth Germantown, WI
Monday, 8/17	John 6:35-40	Robert Koenig Wernersville, PA
Tuesday, 8/18	John 6:41-51	Paul Koepke Goshen, IN
Wednesday, 8/19	John 6:52-58 +1622, Blaise Pascal	Gerhard & Ruth Koslowsky Bruehl, Germany
Thursday, 8/20	Proverbs 9:1-6 +1153, Bernard of Clairvaux	David Kratz Seattle, WI
Friday, 8/21	Hebrews 2:1-4	Dale Kuck Merrill, WI
Saturday, 8/22	John 9:1-7 *1964, International Red Cross	Karl Kuhn Kiel, WI
Sunday, 8/23 12 Pentecost/11 Trinity	Psalm 84:1-4 1535, Calvin's Institutes *1948, World Council of Churches	Juergen Kunellis Issum, Germany
Monday, 8/24	Psalm 84:5-12	Fred Kurkowski Clemmons, NC
Tuesday, 8/25	Colossians 4:2-6	Thomas B. Lane Bradenton, FL
Wednesday, 8/26	Philippians 2:12-13 1920, U.S. Voting Rights for Women	Andy Lang Cleveland, OH
Thursday, 8/27	Philippians 2:14-18 *1910, Mother Teresa	Allen Lang Oxford, NY

Friday, 8/28	Philippians 4:4-7 +430, Augustine 1963, Martin Luther King, Jr. address "I Have A Dream"	David Lauer Elkhart Lake, WI
Saturday, 8/29	Philippians 4:8-9 +1943, Simone Weil	Mr. & Mrs Carl W. Lavin New Braunfels, TX
Sunday, 8/30 13 Pentecost/12 Trinity	Psalms 19:1-6 +1688, John Bunyan	John Lengel Richland, PA
Monday, 8/31	Psalms 19:7-10	Wanda Lester Salisbury, PA
Tuesday, 9/01	Isaiah 43:1-2 1939, World War II begins	Raymond A. Ley Huntingburg, IN
Wednesday, 9/02	Isaiah 43:10 1945, World War II ends (Tokyo)	John C. Lombard Concord, MA
Thursday, 9/03	Psalms 108:1-4	Ann Lutz Lancaster, PA
Friday, 9/04	Psalms 133 1948, First World Council of Church's Peace Message +1965, Albert Schweitzer	Brad S. Lutz Fort Lauderdale, FL
Saturday, 9/05	1 Corinthians 12:4-11	Charles Mackley Clear Springs, MD
Sunday, 9/06 14 Pentecost/13 Trinity	Psalms 130 *1860, Jane Addams	Robert J. MacLeod Millbury, MA
Monday, 9/07	Psalms 138:1-3	Alan Macy Great Barrington, MA
Tuesday, 9/08	Romans 11:33-36 1675, Spenser's "Pia desideria"	James Martin & Jennifer Dawson Fond du Lac, WI
Wednesday, 9/09	1 John 4:1-6 *1828, Leo Tolstoy	George C. Martz New Bloomfield, PA
Thursday, 9/10	1 John 4:7-11	James McCutcheon Brewster, MA
Friday, 9/11	1 John 4:12-21 Day of Memorial and Prayer	Maureen McDonnell Madison, WI
Saturday, 9/12	Hebrews 11:1-3 +1977, Stephen Biko	Duane McDonough Cedarville, IL

Sunday, 9/13 15 Pentecost/14 Trinity	Psalm 116:1-7	Robert Meyer Fontana, WI
Monday, 9/14	Psalm 116:8-19	David Michael Madison, WI
Tuesday, 9/15	James 3:1-5	Carl Miehke Arlington Heights, IL
Wednesday, 9/16	James 3:13-18 + 1963, Martyred Children of Albany, NY Birmingham, Alabama	John U. Miller
Thursday, 9/17	1 Corinthians 15:1-10 +1179, Hildegard of Bingen	Joseph Mills, III Westchester, IL
Friday, 9/18	Philippians 1:3-11 +1961, Dag Hammarskjod	Larry Mitchell Chico, CA
Saturday, 9/19	Philippians 1:12-19	John C. Modschiedler Chicago, IL
Sunday, 9/20 16 Pentecost/15 Trinity	Psalm 1 *1848, Universal Peace Conference (Brussels)	Henry A. Mol Elkhorn, WI
Monday, 9/21	Ephesians 5:1-2	Donald & Grace Morgan Rocky Hill, CT
Tuesday, 9/22	Romans 14:1-4 *1961, U.S. Peace Corps	Ray Morris, Jr. Gowanda, NY
Wednesday, 9/23	Romans 14:5-6	David Moyer DeForest, WI
Thursday, 9/24	Romans 14:7-9	Calvin F. Mutti Brewster, MA
Friday, 9/25	Romans 14:10-12	Edwin M. Neff Newland, NC
Saturday, 9/26	Romans 14:13-19 *1924, Declaration of the Rights of the Child	David C. Norling Northfield, ME
Sunday, 9/27 17 Pentecost/16 Trinity	1 Peter 5:6-11 1937, Finkewalde Seminary closed	Robert O'Donnell New Market, NH
Monday, 9/28	2 Thessalonians 1:2-4	Walter & Ruth Olsen Mequon, WI

Tuesday, 9/29	Galatians 1:11-12 1795, Kant's "Perpetual Peace"	Julie Overton Norton, MA
Wednesday, 9/30	1 Corinthians 9:24-27	Doris Paine Wernersville, PA
Thursday, 10/01	Romans 12:1-2 +1968, Romano Guardinia	Nancy Panzer Kewaskum, WI
Friday, 10/02	Romans 12:3-13 *1869, Mohandas Gandhi	John Payne Lancaster, PA
Saturday, 10/03	Romans 12:14-21 +1226, Francis of Assisi +1958, George Bell	Roger D. Perl Tiffin, OH

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RESOURCES FOR USE IN THE PENTECOST/TRINITY SEASONS, 2009 (PART 2)

Prayers in the Pentecost/Trinity Seasons:

O Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, we beseech you, send your Holy Spirit into our hearts through your blessed Word, that you may rule and guide us according to your will. Strengthen us in every trial and need, and lead us past all error into your truth; that we may stand fast in faith, increase in love and all good works, and by the sure hope of your grace, which you have obtained for us by your death, be saved eternally, for you reign together with the Father and the Holy Spirit forever and ever.

(Veit Dietrich, revised)

God of all peace and consolation, who has gloriously fulfilled the great promise of the gospel by sending your Holy Spirit into our midst, to establish your grace, your power and your presence among us: grant in your mercy this same gift of the Spirit to renew, illumine, refresh and sanctify our fragile souls. Be over and around us like the light and dew of heaven, and be in us evermore as a well-spring to eternal life; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom with you and the Holy Spirit, ever one God, be honor and glory, world without end.

(An Order of Worship for the Reformed Church, 1866, revised)

O God, who has been pleased to send to your disciples the Holy Spirit in the burning fire of your love, grant to your people throughout the world to be fervent in the unity of faith, that, abiding in you forever, they may be found both steadfast in faith and active in work; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

(Provisional Liturgy, Reformed Church, 1866, revised)

O Lord God, almighty, eternal, immortal, invisible, the mysteries of whose being are un-searchable; accept, we ask you, our praises for the revelation which you have made of yourself, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, three persons, and one God; and mercifully grant that, ever holding fast this faith, we may

magnify your glorious name in word and deed, for you live and reign among us, one God, world without end.

(John Dowden, *The Book of English Collects*, 1940, revised)

O God, to whom glory is sung in the highest, while on earth peace is proclaimed among women and men of good will, grant that same good will to all your servants. Cleanse us from evil and give peace to all your people, through your mercy, O blessed One, who lives and governs all things, forever and ever.

(Mozarabic Rite, revised)

Almighty God, who has called us through Jesus Christ to be priests to our sisters and brothers: teach us to bear one another's burdens and to share the sorrows of the world. Open our eyes to see the woes of our land, the despair of others, and the shameful injustices that cry to be put right. Grant us no rest until you have accomplished in the Church your work of compassion, that generations yet unborn may come to praise your name, for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord.

(Collects and Prayers, Muhlenberg, 1948, revised)

You speak words of promise, and we answer. A thousand times we answer, in a thousand tongues—we answer in hymns of praise, we answer in songs of thanksgiving, we answer in lyrics of gladness, we answer in candor about hurt, we answer in abrasive anger, we answer in deep abandonment. We answer and draw close to you. And in answering we are changed: given freedom, come to truth, bound in obedience. We answer and are yours, all yours, not our own, yours, and glad that we belong to you our faithful savior.

(Walter Brueggemann in "Prayers for a Privileged People," Nashville, Abingdon Press, 2008)

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Transformed Non-Conformists:

This hour in history needs a dedicated circle of transformed non-conformists. The saving of our world from pending doom will come not from the actions of the conforming majority, but through the creative maladjustment of a dedicated minority. (In the writings of Martin Luther King, Jr.)

If the World Were Merely Seductive:

If the world were merely seductive, that would be easy. If it were merely challenging, that would be no problem. But I arise in the morning torn between a desire to improve (or save) the world, and a desire to enjoy (or savor) the world. This makes it hard to plan the day. (E. B. White)

The Duty of Prayer:

Prayer is "the duty of all, not only the ordained. The basic reason why a minister must pray is not because he or she is a minister, but because he or she is a poor, needy creature dependent on God's grace. Never forget that in your congregation there will be those who (believed) before you were born at all." (James Stewart)

"They're All the Same to Me":

Tomato, tomahto,
 potato, potahto...
 Some say one tastes better
 than the other, but
 they're all the same to me.
 Some are yellow, others red,
 brown, white or green.
 How about we all sit at the same
 table to enjoy them together!

(Gerald Bertsch in "In This Land: Poetic Reflections War and Peace" Sheboygan, 2008)

"Across the Danube":

On April 17 our path led down into the valley of the Danube, where the muddy river flows between steep white cliffs. On that spring day the river valley was beautiful. We walked less than a mile upstream, and crossed the river into the town of Weltenburg, lying on the south bank. An ancient ferry took us over. The current was rather swift, and something had to keep the boat from slipping downstream. An overhead wire stretched across the river. One end of a rope was tied to the ferry boat, and the other end slid along the wire on a little wheel. The woman who ran the ferry poled the boat slowly across the river, and the rope kept it from going with the current. With male gallantry, we felt that we should do the work, but none of us knew how.

(Roger L. Shinn in "Wars & Rumors of Wars," Nashville, Abingdon, 1972)

"Continuous Reformation":

God by his Word captivates us, and we serve as witnesses to his victory. But our serving and witnessing must be fueled by ever new and fresh commitments. Such commitments are events of a continuously on-going reformation. Alas, it is exactly here that we constantly fall, being fettered by idols. After we have crushed the old ones, new idols sprout in us. Some of them, in the guise of alluring modernity, are hardly detectable. It is difficult to differentiate between a wholesome patriotism and an uncritical worship of our nation. Greed and the lust for power create in us ever-new patterns and stages of idolatry. And there seems to be no end of various sorts of "isms" and cults. The newly formed pseudo-gods of pseudo-religions hold their sway, and like hydra heads must be continually chopped off by the two-edged sword of our witnessing to God's eternal Word and against the false philosophies and ideologies of our own—and every—age.

(Bela Vassady in "Limping Along... Confessions of a Pilgrim Theologian,"
 Grand Rapids, Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1985)

"The gods We Create"

It does not take long to learn that the false gods we have fashioned out the most beautiful impulses of our soul are indeed false. We lose our monies and get satiated with self-indulgence and find that religion does not necessarily lead to spirituality. Shock sets in when we finally detect that idol-worship is not about underestimating the effect of bad things. It is about overestimating the value of good things. (This) is a difficult and liberating time. The gold that made the golden calf turns to powder before our eyes. Drinking life to its dregs spoils the cup and leaves us dry. But without the revelation that empty

things are empty, that false gods are false, there is no hope for fullness of life, no chance of coming to better taste. Time passes so that we may become disillusioned with the idol-worship stage of life. Time passes so that God can become God to us again...

(Joan Chittister in "There is a Season," Maryknoll, Orbis Books, 1995)

The Pipe Organ:

At Christmas Lutheran Church in Bethlehem (near Jerusalem) is an old pipe organ with a unique history. Made in Germany 110 years ago, the organ traveled by ship in 1893 to Jaffa, a small port on the Mediterranean that was then part of the great Ottoman Empire. In service for more than a century, the pipe organ survived two World Wars and more than ten regional wars. In 1967, an Israeli bomb fell near it. In 1987, Israeli soldiers were firing within a few feet of it. And in 2002, Israeli tanks stood just outside of the sanctuary that houses it. This organ saw the Ottomans ruling Bethlehem, then the British, the Jordanians, and the Israelis, as well as the Palestinian Authority. Most of these ruling authorities have come and gone, but the organ has remained faithful, standing in its place in the balcony. It has been played during baptismal services, weddings, and funerals... like a faithful spouse, in good times and bad, in sickness and in health, for richer and for poorer...

(Mitri Raheb in "Bethlehem Besieged: Stories of Hope in Times of Trouble,"
Minneapolis, Fortress Press, 2004)

The Question of Peace and Nuclear War:

The question of peace is important, it seems to me, and so important that I do not believe anyone who takes his (or her) Christian faith seriously can afford to neglect it. I do not mean to say that you have to swim out to Polaris submarines carrying a banner between your teeth, but it is absolutely necessary to take a serious and articulate stand on the question of nuclear war. And I mean against nuclear war. The passivity, the incoherence of so many Christians on this issue, and worse still the active belligerency of some religious spokesmen, especially in this country, is rapidly becoming one of the most frightful scandals in the history of Christendom. I do not mean these words to be in any sense a hyperbole. The issue is very grave. It is also, of course, very complex... What is worst about the Catholic silence on this subject (the Popes have certainly spoken out) is the idea that moral theology obligates one, almost, to take the lowest and most secularized position. We have actually got to the point where moralists are almost saying in so many words that the Sermon on the Mount is unchristian and that the Christian way of "sacrifice" is to bow one's neck under the sweet yoke of pharaoh. This, I submit, is going pretty far and it smells somewhat of sulphur...

(Thomas Merton in "Cold War Letters," Maryknoll, Orbis Books, 2006)

How to Remain Human in the Skyscrapers:

We must not tire of reminding the world that something is asked of (human beings). Surely God will always receive a surprise of a handful of fools... There will always remain a spiritual underground where a few brave minds continue to (struggle). Yet our concern is not how to worship in the catacombs but rather how to remain human in the skyscrapers... The genuine task of our traditions is to educate... a sensitivity to God's demand.

(Abraham Joshua Heschel in "The Insecurity of Freedom: Essays on Human Existence,"
New York, Schocken Books, 1972)

Torture and the Faith of the Church:

"If," wrote Martin Luther, "I profess with the loudest voice and clearest exposition every portion of the truth of God except precisely that little point which the world and the devil are at the moment attacking, I am not confessing Christ, however boldly I may be professing him. Where the battle rages, there the loyalty of the soldier is proved and to be steady on all the battlefield, except there, is mere flight and disgrace if one flinches at that point. (quoted by George Hunsinger in "Disruptive Grace")

Hunsinger emphasizes that faithfulness to Jesus of Nazareth is always situational, that one can spout impeccably orthodox theological truths and still be "fatally disloyal." Genuine loyalty is proven where it counts—in the pitch of battle, where it really costs something. Writing 22 years ago, Hunsinger was already addressing what he called "an overwhelming spiritual collapse, in which we have lost touch with even minimal standards of morality."

"The prevailing sense seems to be that, if the demands of biblical morality contradict the dictates of national security, so much the worse for biblical morality... Dungeons,... torture, and death are described as belonging to the 'free world.' ... War criminals in high places we honor. ... Acts of aggression we celebrate as noble deeds... Orwell has become our destiny. ... The passive acquiescence of a Christian community, which has lost its moral conscience in matters of state contributes substantially... to misery and oppression..."

In 1948, the French author/philosopher, Albert Camus, addressed a Dominican monastery of friars who had asked what an "unbeliever" thought of Christians in light of their behavior during the 1930s and 1940s.

"For a long time during those frightful years, I waited for a great voice to speak up in Rome. I, an unbeliever? Precisely! For I knew that the spirit would be lost if it did not utter a cry of condemnation... It has been explained to me since that the condemnation was indeed voiced. But that it was in the style of encyclicals, which is not all that clear. The condemnation was voiced and it was not understood. Christians should voice their condemnation loud and clear, in such a way that never a doubt, never the slightest doubt, could rise in the heart of the simplest person. (Christians) should get away from abstraction and confront the blood-stained face history has taken on today."

And today? True to form, laudable statements and papers have been produced and placed in in-boxes in the bowels of the bishops' bureaucracy, but they rarely find their way to the pulpit on Sunday... "A church that doesn't provoke any crisis, a gospel that doesn't unsettle, a word of God that doesn't get under anyone's skin, a word of God that doesn't touch the real sin of the society in which it is being proclaimed, what kind of gospel is that?" (Oscar Romero)

(Ray McGovern, former CIA analyst, "Tell the Word," Church of the Saviour, Washington, DC, July 31, 2009)