

The Third Week of Easter

Monday of the Third Week of Easter – Prayer for the Week

O God, through the humiliation of Your Son You raised up the fallen world. Grant to Your faithful people, rescued from the peril of everlasting death, perpetual gladness and eternal joys; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

I have, over my ministry, come to love and appreciate Paul's little letter to the Philippians. Imprisoned and facing death, Paul writes a letter/sermon to the folks in Philippi about joy. He does not complain but he bears witness to his surpassingly great joy. In the first chapter he writes:

"it is my eager expectation and hope that I will not be at all ashamed, but that with full courage now as always Christ will be honored in my body, whether by life or by death."

For Paul it stopped being about him a long time ago, on a road to Damascus when an arrogant and zealous man had his pretensions and pride shattered by the resurrected Christ. Paul's life revolved around the Jesus who shockingly had been humiliated on a cross and, thereby, rescued us all from that peril of everlasting death.

There is much to be sad and fearful about today, some of it even involves a pandemic. Christ has jumped into this world of sin and death and plumbed its deepest depths. He died the tortuous death of crucifixion. Somewhere on his ascent from those turbid depths to heavenly glory and life he finds you, gathers you to himself, and brings you along. I am not telling you that your fear, anxiety, or anger are inappropriate responses to this situation. But I am pointing you to another way which begins with Christ's humiliation and trusts that He has rescued us from our biggest foe. Because of Christ, we can have a joy which the world cannot take away.

God be with you until we meet again. In Jesus' love and mercy, Pastor Wulf