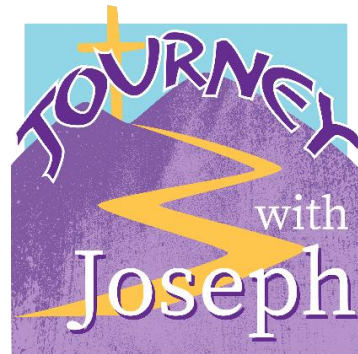


LENTEN MIDWEEK 4

A Lenten Journey with Joseph
"Chased by a Dirty Conscience"
March 30, 2022

INVOCATION

- L:** In the name of the Father and of the + Son
and of the Holy Spirit.
C: Amen.



OPENING SENTENCES *Psalm 51:1-9*

- L:** In this Lenten season,
we journey with Joseph in Genesis
C: and come to the cross of Christ on Calvary.
- L:** Joseph's journey in Genesis came full circle when his brothers journeyed to Egypt in need of food as a famine struck the land. With their sinful actions from decades prior left unresolved, they and their consciences bowed down before their brother Joseph. We, too, know what a guilty conscience feels like, yet we also are given the knowledge of where to bring our sin and shame. We respond with the psalmist:
- Have mercy on me, O God, according to Your steadfast love; according to Your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions.
- C:** Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin!
- L:** For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me.
C: Against You, You only, have I sinned and done what is evil in Your sight, so that You may be justified in Your words and blameless in Your judgment.
- L:** Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me.
C: Behold, You delight in truth in the inward being, and You teach me wisdom in the secret heart.
- L:** Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.
C: Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones that You have broken rejoice.
- L:** Hide Your face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities.

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION 1 John 1:8–9

- L: If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.**
C: If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.
- L: That we may have a conscience at peace, let us then confess our sins to God our Father.**

Most merciful God,

- C: we confess that we are by nature sinful and unclean. We have sinned against You in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved You with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We justly deserve Your present and eternal punishment. For the sake of Your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in Your will and walk in Your ways to the glory of Your holy name.**
- L: Having interrogated Jesus, Pontius Pilate spoke to the chief priests and the crowds and rightly declared, “I find no guilt in this man.” But he washed his hands of any responsibility as he handed over the Son of God to be crucified. Yet, this was God’s plan as Jesus Himself foretold saying, “You know that after two days the Passover is coming, and the Son of Man will be delivered up to be crucified” (Matthew 26:2). Though he was sinless, He became our sin-bearer. Jesus Christ was given to die for us, and for His sake God forgives us all our sins. To those who believe in Jesus Christ He gives the power to become the children of God and bestows on them the Holy Spirit. May the Lord, who has begun this good work in us, bring it to completion in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.**
- C: Amen.**

HYMN No. 702 “My Faith Looks Up to Thee”

**My faith looks up to Thee,
Thou Lamb of Calvary, Savior divine,
Now hear me while I pray; Take all my guilt away;
O let me from this day Be wholly Thine!**

**May Thy rich grace impart
Strength to my fainting heart; My zeal inspire!
As Thou hast died for me, Oh, may my love to Thee
Pure, warm and changeless be, A living fire!**

While life's dark maze I tread
And griefs around me spread, Be Thou my guide;
Bid darkness turn to day, Wipe sorrows's tears away,
Nor let me ever stray From Thee aside.

When ends life's transient dream,
When death's cold, sullen stream Shall o'er me roll,
Blest Savior then, in love, Fear and distrust remove;
O bear me safe above, A ransomed soul!

OPENING SENTENCES *Psalm 51:10–12*

- L: Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.
C: Cast me not away from Your presence, and take not Your Holy Spirit from me.
- L: Restore to me the joy of Your salvation,
C: and uphold me with a willing spirit.

PRAYER

- L: Let us pray.
Lord Jesus Christ, as we journey with Joseph together in this Lenten season, we, like Joseph's brothers, carry consciences that are heavy and burdened by our sins. At Your invitation and command, we know we can bring before You all our faults and failings and be assured of Your grace and forgiveness through Your completed work as our one and only Savior from sin. Strengthen us and preserve us to walk faithfully with You in humble repentance this season and always, for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
C: Amen.

GOSPEL Luke 23:1-25 (Jesus before Pilate). (Stand – see insert)

- L: The Gospel according to St Luke, the 23rd chapter.
C: Glory to You, O Lord.

Then the whole company of them arose and brought him before Pilate. And they began to accuse him, saying, "We found this man misleading our nation and forbidding us to give tribute to Caesar, and saying that he himself is Christ, a king." And Pilate asked him, "Are you the King of the Jews?" And he answered him, "You have said so." Then Pilate said to the chief priests and the crowds, "I find no guilt in this man." But they were urgent, saying, "He stirs up the people, teaching throughout all Judea, from Galilee even to this place."

When Pilate heard this, he asked whether the man was a Galilean. And when he learned that he belonged to Herod's jurisdiction, he sent him over to Herod, who was himself in Jerusalem at that time. When Herod saw Jesus, he was very glad, for he had long desired to see him, because he had heard about him, and he was hoping to see some sign done by him. So he questioned him at some length, but he made no answer. The chief priests and the scribes stood by, vehemently accusing him. And Herod with his soldiers treated him with contempt and mocked him. Then, arraying him in splendid clothing, he sent him back to Pilate. And Herod and Pilate became friends with each other that very day, for before this they had been at enmity with each other.

Pilate then called together the chief priests and the rulers and the people, and said to them, "You brought me this man as one who was misleading the people. And after examining him before you, behold, I did not find this man guilty of any of your charges against him. Neither did Herod, for he sent him back to us. Look, nothing deserving death has been done by him. I will therefore punish and release him."

But they all cried out together, "Away with this man, and release to us Barabbas"— a man who had been thrown into prison for an insurrection started in the city and for murder. Pilate addressed them once more, desiring to release Jesus, but they kept shouting, "Crucify, crucify him!" A third time he said to them, "Why? What evil has he done? I have found in him no guilt deserving death. I will therefore punish and release him." But they were urgent, demanding with loud cries that he should be crucified. And their voices prevailed. So Pilate decided that their demand should be granted. He released the man who had been thrown into prison for insurrection and murder, for whom they asked, but he delivered Jesus over to their will.

L: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to You, O Christ.

SERMON READING *Genesis 42:6–24.*
(Joseph's brothers face their guilt and shame)

Now Joseph was governor over the land. He was the one who sold to all the people of the land. And Joseph's brothers came and bowed themselves before him with their faces to the ground. Joseph saw his brothers and recognized them, but he treated them like strangers and spoke roughly to them. "Where do you come from?" he said. They said, "From the land of Canaan, to buy food." And Joseph recognized his brothers, but they did not recognize him. And Joseph remembered the dreams that he had dreamed of them. And he said to them, "You are spies; you have come to see the nakedness of the land." They said to him, "No, my lord, your servants have come to buy food. We are all sons of one man. We are honest men. Your servants have never been spies."

He said to them, "No, it is the nakedness of the land that you have come to see." And they said, "We, your servants, are twelve brothers, the sons of one man in the land of Canaan, and behold, the youngest is this day with our father, and one is no more." But Joseph said to them, "It is as I said to you. You are spies. By this you shall be tested: by the life of Pharaoh, you shall not go from this place unless your youngest brother comes here. Send one of you, and let him bring your brother, while you remain confined, that your words may be tested, whether there is truth in you. Or else, by the life of Pharaoh, surely you are spies." And he put them all together in custody for three days.

On the third day Joseph said to them, "Do this and you will live, for I fear God: if you are honest men, let one of your brothers remain confined where you are in custody, and let the rest go and carry grain for the famine of your households, and bring your youngest brother to me. So your words will be verified, and you shall not die." And they did so. Then they said to one another, "In truth we are guilty concerning our brother, in that we saw the distress of his soul, when he begged us and we did not listen. That is why this distress has come upon us." And Reuben answered them, "Did I not tell you not to sin against the boy? But you did not listen. So now there comes a reckoning for his blood." They did not know that Joseph understood them, for there was an interpreter between them. Then he turned away from them and wept. And he returned to them and spoke to them. And he took Simeon from them and bound him before their eyes.

HYMN "The Old Rugged Cross"

On a hill far away stood an old rugged cross
The emblem of suffering and shame
And I love that old cross where the dearest and best
For a world of lost sinners was slain

Refrain:

So I'll cherish the old rugged cross
Till my trophies at last I lay down
I will cling to the old rugged cross
And exchange it some day for a crown

Oh, that old rugged cross, so despised by the world
Has a wondrous attraction for me;
For the dear Lamb of God left His glory above
To bear it to dark Calvary. (refrain)

To the old rugged cross, I will ever be true
It's shame and reproach gladly bear
Then he'll call me some day to my home far away
Where his glory forever I'll share. (refrain)

SERMON “Chased by a Dirty Conscience”. Seminarian Matt Martin

OFFERING

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH *Psalm 51:10*

L: Let us pray for the whole people of God in Christ Jesus, and for all people according to their needs.

Heavenly Father, we see with Joseph’s brothers what a guilty conscience does to ourselves and to our relationships. As we journey with him and look to the cross of Christ through it all, we thank You for the invitation to confess our sins and through Your Son to release our shame and to receive Your forgiveness and grace. Create in me a clean heart, O God,

C: and renew a right spirit within me.

L: Bless us in this Lenten season in all we do, serving You in our respective vocations, families, homes, and relationships with others. Give us strength and courage as we live as Your witnesses and speak Your truth in love. Create in me a clean heart, O God,

C: and renew a right spirit within me.

L: Be with those whose hearts are far from You, that their guilt be relieved, doubts be conquered, fears be given peace, dread given joy, and hopelessness given faith and trust in You. Be with all who face struggles in their earthly journeys. Create in me a clean heart, O God,

C: and renew a right spirit within me.

L: Into Your hands, O Lord, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in Your mercy, through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

C: Amen.

L: We now join together all petitions in the prayer our Lord has taught us saying:

LORD’S PRAYER *Matthew 6:9–13*

**All: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name,
thy kingdom come, thy will be done
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses
as we forgive those who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory
forever and ever. Amen.**

CLOSING PRAYER *Luther's Evening Prayer*

**C: I thank You, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Your dear Son, that You have graciously kept me this day; and I pray that You would forgive me all my sins where I have done wrong, and graciously keep me this night.
For into Your hands I commend myself, my body and soul, and all things. Let Your holy angel be with me, that the evil foe may have no power over me. Amen.**

CLOSING SENTENCES *1 John 1:8–9*

L: In this Lenten season, we journey with Joseph in Genesis

C: and come to the cross of Christ on Calvary.

L: If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

C: But if we confess our sins, God, who is faithful and just, will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

BLESSING OF THE LORD *Numbers 6:24–26*

CLOSING HYMN No. 878 **"Abide with Me" (vss. 1, 3 & 6)**

**Abide with me, fast falls the eventide.
The darkness deepens; Lord, with me abide.
When other helpers fail and comforts flee,
Help of the helpless, O abide with me.**

**Come not in terrors, as the King of kings,
But kind and good, with healing in Thy wings;
Tears for all woes, a heart for ev'ry plea.
Come, Friend of sinners, thus abide with me.**

**Hold Thou Thy cross before my closing eyes;
Shine through the gloom, and point me to the skies.
Heav'n's morning breaks, and earth's vain shadows flee;
In life, in death, O Lord, abide with me.**

SENDING

L: Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.