



Celebrate

Sunday, August 24, 2025
11th Sunday after Pentecost

Remember the sabbath day. Call the sabbath a delight. This is the Lord's day, and the Lord will do for us what the Lord does: feed us, forgive us, help and heal us. Rejoice at all the wonderful things God is doing.

Prayer of the Day

O God, mighty and immortal, you know that as fragile creatures surrounded by great dangers, we cannot by ourselves stand upright. Give us strength of mind and body, so that even when we suffer because of human sin, we may rise victorious through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

First Reading

Isaiah 58:9b-14

God promises those who have returned from exile that where justice and mercy prevail, the ruins will be rebuilt and light will rise in the darkness. It is a day for new beginnings.

If you remove the yoke from among
you,
the pointing of the finger, the
speaking of evil,
¹⁰if you offer your food to the hungry
and satisfy the needs of the
afflicted,
then your light shall rise in the
darkness
and your gloom be like the
noonday.

¹¹The LORD will guide you
continually,
and satisfy your needs in parched
places,
and make your bones strong;
and you shall be like a watered
garden,
like a spring of water,
whose waters never fail.

¹²Your ancient ruins shall be rebuilt;
you shall raise up the foundations
of many generations;

you shall be called the repairer of the
breach,
the restorer of streets to live in.

¹³If you refrain from trampling the
sabbath,
from pursuing your own interests
on my holy day;
if you call the sabbath a delight
and the holy day of the LORD
honorable;

if you honor it, not going your own
ways,
serving your own interests, or
pursuing your own affairs;
¹⁴then you shall take delight in the
LORD,
and I will make you ride upon the
heights of the earth;

I will feed you with the heritage of
your ancestor Jacob,
for the mouth of the LORD has
spoken.

Psalm

Psalm 103:1-8; refrain, Ps. 103:4



- Bless the LORD, ¹ O my soul,
and all that is within me, bless God's ¹ holy name.
- ²**Bless the LORD, ¹ O my soul,**
and forget not ¹ all God's benefits—
- ³who forgives ¹ all your sins
and heals all ¹ your diseases;
- ⁴**who redeems your life ¹ from the grave**
and crowns you with steadfast ¹ love and mercy; R
- ⁵who satisfies your desires ¹ with good things
so that your youth is renewed ¹ like an eagle's.
- ⁶**O LORD, you provide ¹ vindication**
and justice for all who ¹ are oppressed.
- ⁷You made known your ¹ ways to Moses
and your works to the chil- ¹ dren of Israel.
- ⁸**LORD, you are full of compas- ¹ sion and mercy,**
slow to anger and abounding in ¹ steadfast love. R

Using images of Moses, the writer presents a striking vision of the new covenant of God made possible in Christ. There is no longer fear, only awe in the new promise in Christ into which we are invited.

You have not come to something that can be touched, a blazing fire, and darkness, and gloom, and a tempest,¹⁹ and the sound of a trumpet, and a voice whose words made the hearers beg that not another word be spoken to them.²⁰ (For they could not endure the order that was given, "If even an animal touches the mountain, it shall be stoned to death."²¹ Indeed, so terrifying was the sight that Moses said, "I tremble with fear.")²² But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable angels in festal gathering,²³ and to the assembly of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God the judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect,²⁴ and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the

sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel.

²⁵See that you do not refuse the one who is speaking; for if they did not escape when they refused the one who warned them on earth, how much less will we escape if we reject the one who warns from heaven!²⁶ At that time his voice shook the earth; but now he has promised, "Yet once more I will shake not only the earth but also the heaven."²⁷ This phrase, "Yet once more," indicates the removal of what is shaken—that is, created things—so that what cannot be shaken may remain.²⁸ Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us give thanks, by which we offer to God an acceptable worship with reverence and awe;²⁹ for indeed our God is a consuming fire.

Gospel

Luke 13:10-17

Jesus heals a woman on the sabbath, offering her a new beginning for her life. When challenged by a narrow reading of the sabbath command, Jesus responds by expanding "sabbath work" to include setting people free from bondage.

Now [Jesus] was teaching in one of the synagogues on the sabbath.¹¹ And just then there appeared a woman with a spirit that had crippled her for eighteen years. She was bent over and was quite unable to stand up straight.¹² When Jesus saw her, he called her over and said, "Woman, you are set free from your ailment."¹³ When he laid his hands on her, immediately she stood up straight and began praising God.¹⁴ But the leader of the synagogue, indignant because Jesus had cured on the sabbath, kept saying to the crowd, "There are six days on

which work ought to be done; come on those days and be cured, and not on the sabbath day."¹⁵ But the Lord answered him and said, "You hypocrites! Does not each of you on the sabbath untie his ox or his donkey from the manger, and lead it away to give it water?¹⁶ And ought not this woman, a daughter of Abraham whom Satan bound for eighteen long years, be set free from this bondage on the sabbath day?"¹⁷ When he said this, all his opponents were put to shame; and the entire crowd was rejoicing at all the wonderful things that he was doing.

Prayers of Intercession

The prayers are prepared locally for each occasion. The following examples may be adapted or used as appropriate.

Let us pray for the church, the creation, and the whole people of God, for God is near.

A brief silence.

You call your church to proclaim liberation and freedom to all. Give wisdom to bishops, synod councils and staff, and congregation leaders (*leaders may be named*) as they pursue a more just and equitable church and society. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

You inspire all creation to sing and bless your holy name. Send healing rains to parched places and relief to flooded lands. Lead us to enact policies to rebuild ruined ecosystems and habitats. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

You work vindication and justice for all who are oppressed. Strengthen the resolve of world leaders and local officials in the way of love and mercy, so that all persons may experience abundant life. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

You satisfy your people with good things. In your steadfast love, receive the cries of all who are bent over under the weight of addiction, isolation, and mental or physical illness (*especially*). Manifest your healing presence in their midst. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

You call us to delight in the sabbath. Invigorate worship planners and leaders with creativity to aid this assembly in fresh and faithful prayer and praise. Enable all who gather here to be nourished and renewed. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

With (*Bartholomew and*) all your apostles, prophets, and saints, we give thanks and bless your holy name. As they now rest from their labors, guide us by the witness of their lives to pursue your reign, which can never be shaken. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Confident in God's presence and promise, we entrust our prayers to the one who always receives them; through Jesus Christ, our wisdom and companion.

Amen.

Preparing for Next Week

Monday (Bartholomew, Apostle [transferred]) John 1:43-51. **Tuesday** Psalm 109:21-31. **Wednesday** Luke 6:6-11. **Thursday** (commemoration of Augustine, Bishop of Hippo, c. 430; Moses the Black, monk, martyr, c. 400) Psalm 112. **Friday** 1 Peter 4:7-11. **Saturday** Proverbs 21:1-4, 24-26. **12th Sunday after Pentecost** Proverbs 25:6-7 or Sirach 10:12-18; Psalm 112; Hebrews 13:1-8, 15-16; Luke 14:1, 7-14.

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